Strategies for Promoting Sustainable Fashion via Social Media:

A Study of Startup Dynamics and Consumer Behavior in China

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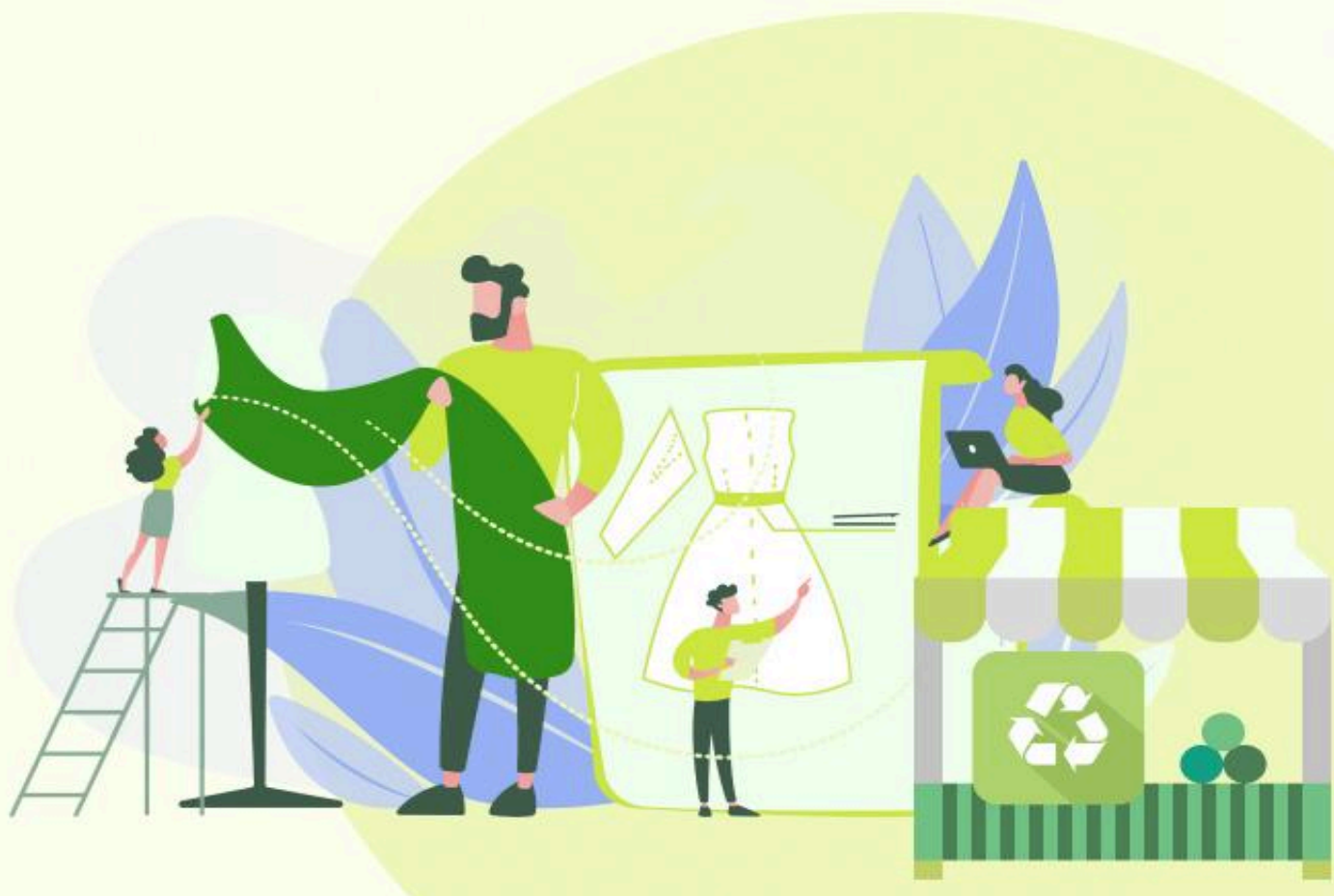
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Abstract

This study investigates effective social media strategies for startups to promote sustainable fashion in China, with a particular focus on the Little Red Book platform. By leveraging circular economy principles and addressing the specific needs of Chinese consumers, the research explores how startups can function as intermediaries between sustainable fashion brands and consumers. Employing a mixed-methods approach, this study encompasses content analysis of social media platforms, surveys, and interviews with key influencers and consumers. The findings underscore the pivotal role of social media influencers in shaping consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion, the efficacy of interactive campaigns in fostering consumer engagement, and the integration of digital and physical experiences to enhance consumer involvement. Moreover, the research identifies significant challenges, including cultural resistance to second-hand fashion and the necessity for transparency to build consumer trust. The implications of this study suggest that leveraging social media, particularly Little Red Book, can substantially contribute to the promotion of sustainable fashion in China, enhancing consumer awareness, engagement, and adoption of sustainable practices. This research provides valuable insights for startups and brands aiming to influence sustainable consumer behavior through strategic social media engagement.

Keywords: Circular Economy, Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Fashion, Developing Countries, Social Media Influence, Consumer Behavior.

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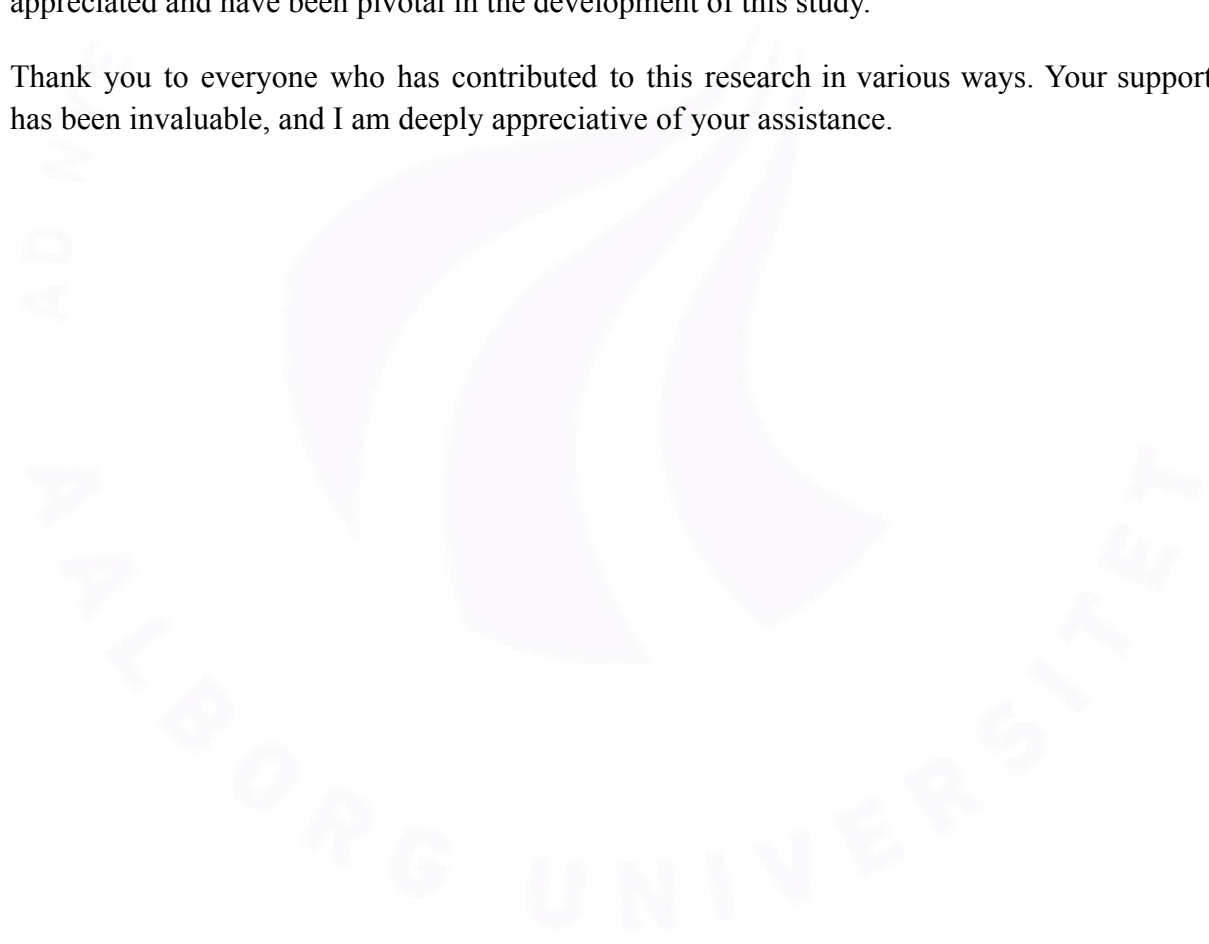
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Globally, the fashion industry is experiencing a significant shift towards sustainable development. The vision of the EU Textile Strategy is that "fast fashion will be obsolete" by 2030 (European Union, 2022, Mortensen, 2023). Supported by the European Commission, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) coordinates the SWITCH initiative across three regions to promote more sustainable consumption and production patterns. These initiatives emphasize ethical production, waste reduction, and consumer awareness. They also highlight the substantial purchasing power of developing countries, suggesting that sustainable transformation in these regions can drive the global market towards a green economy (UN Environment Programme).

The EU and China are the two largest trading partners globally. China stands as the world's largest clothing retail market and manufacturing industry and serves as the EU's primary partner for clothing imports and exports (European Union, 2023). Given China's pivotal role in the global apparel industry, promoting sustainable fashion transformation within China will positively impact the EU and the broader global sustainable fashion industry.

Compared to Western countries, sustainable development in China's fashion industry has been relatively slow. The promotion of sustainable transformation in China's fashion industry faces various challenges, with consumer behavior being one of the most significant obstacles (Zhang et al., 2019). Due to China's large population, robust economy, and diverse social development, the market is highly complex, exhibiting significant generational, gender, and regional differences among consumers (Jiang & Chen, 2019). These factors have led to varied levels of enthusiasm for sustainable consumption, complicating efforts to foster a widespread adoption of sustainable practices. While China has initiated measures to promote sustainable fashion transformation, the challenges posed by consumer behavior remain a crucial, yet underestimated, factor (Zhang et al., 2019).

In recent years, the rise of social media in China has fundamentally transformed consumer behavior. Among the platforms with the most significant impact is Little Red Book, also known as Little Red Book. Founded in Shanghai in 2013, Little Red Book is a lifestyle platform and consumer decision-making portal where users can share their lifestyles, record everyday moments, and interact through short videos, pictures, and texts based on their interests（Jiasou Technology, 2023). Utilizing Little Red Book for brand marketing has become an extremely popular and effective strategy in China (Chen, 2024).

Although research suggests that social platforms play a key role in promoting sustainable transformation in China's contemporary marketing landscape (Hu et al, 2024), there is a noticeable lack of specific research on how exactly social media can drive sustainable consumption in China from customers' perspective (Liu et al., 2024).

China's strategy of leveraging social media to promote sustainable fashion offers valuable insights for enhancing global sustainable development initiatives. Key factors influencing sustainable consumer behavior in China include financial benefits, the convenience of online transactions, self-management, environmental awareness, and social trends. These elements are crucial in understanding marketing, consumption behaviors, as they shape consumer interactions driven by social media consumption. Emphasizing personal organization and detachment from property is vital in this context. However, significant challenges such as communication barriers, platform issues, security concerns, and logistics problems also impact consumers. Addressing these challenges is essential for fostering a more sustainable and effective social media-driven fashion industry (Liu et al., 2024).

In the process of innovation of sustainable fashion transformation, circular startups are seen as pivotal in disrupting traditional industry models, shifting from linear to resource-saving circular systems. To achieve significant change, circular business models need to go beyond traditional recycling and focus on strategies emphasizing reduction and regeneration (Ki et al., 2023).

This study aims to bridge the gap between global and local dynamics to gain a comprehensive understanding of how startups can effectively promote sustainable fashion in China through digital platforms.

1.2 Research Question and Sub-Questions

Hence, the research question of this study was formulated as:

How can startups effectively leverage Little Red Book(Little Red Book) to encourage sustainable fashion consumption within a circular economy framework in China?

Sub- questions:

How do specific social media platforms influence Chinese consumers' awareness and adoption of the 'R' strategies (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair, Refurbish, Remanufacture, Repurpose, Recover, Resell) in sustainable fashion?

What are the specific barriers and facilitators to implementing 'R' strategies in the Chinese fashion industry, and how can startups, given their resources and capabilities, use social media to overcome these challenges?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the roles of different actors in the context of sustainable fashion and how they influence each other through interaction, using actor-network theory (Callon, 1986) as its theoretical framework. Additionally, social practice theory is employed to explore detailed small-scale interactions and examine how Little Red Book can drive changes in sustainable consumer behavior (Liu et al., 2024).

The research focuses on effective social media strategies to promote sustainable fashion by identifying key influencers and content creators, developing engaging and informative content, leveraging various social media platforms, and creating interactive and participatory campaigns. It also emphasizes the importance of combining online and offline engagement using data analysis and insights to increase resonance and immersion with consumers. By exploring these areas, the study aims to develop a comprehensive social media strategy to enhance the promotion of sustainable fashion and raise consumer awareness, engagement, and adoption of environmentally friendly practices.

A survey on effective social media strategies to promote sustainable fashion in China highlighted the crucial role of influencers, educational content, interactive campaigns, community building, and transparent storytelling. These strategies, driven by the China-EU partnership, are essential to encourage the fashion industry to adopt the "R" strategies of the circular economy (Valencia et al., 2023). By leveraging social media, stakeholders can raise awareness, influence consumer behavior, and promote sustainable practices, ultimately contributing to the sustainable and responsible development of China's fashion industry.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study offers a comprehensive analysis of the behaviors and motivations of Chinese consumers in the context of online fashion consumption, especially on platforms like Little Red Book. It highlights the complex interplay between consumer habits, social norms, and the digital environment. Key findings indicate that participation in circular fashion practices, such as second-hand clothing resale, is on the rise, driven by influences from Western cultures, local cultural perceptions, and social media trends. Social media influencers and community-driven platforms are instrumental in reshaping these perceptions, making sustainable fashion practices more attractive and socially acceptable.

Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the consumer dynamics of circular fashion in China. It demonstrates that with the right strategies, there can be a significant shift towards more sustainable fashion consumption practices. The findings also emphasize the need for ongoing research and innovative approaches to overcome cultural and social barriers, ensuring a more sustainable future for China's fashion industry.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This article will begin with a literature review that forms the foundation of the study, followed by an overview of the theoretical framework and research methods employed. Subsequently, the first phase, characterized by research and analysis of the sustainable fashion industry, will be discussed. This discussion will utilize the roles of different actors on social media and their interactions and mutual influences as a case study. Based on this analysis, key focus areas and research questions will be defined, serving as the starting point for the second research phase. In this phase, the identified focus areas will be further analyzed to provide a basis for developing design solutions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In recent years, the fashion industry has faced increasing controversy for its significant environmental and social impacts, prompting a shift towards more sustainable development (Ethixbase, 2023). This literature review serves as a reference point for my research by examining the intersection of sustainable fashion, social media influencers, and consumer behavior. The review aims to identify effective strategies for startups to promote sustainable practices in the Chinese fashion market.

By analyzing the policies currently adopted by China towards the fashion industry, the challenges it faces, and existing global research on promoting sustainable fashion through social media, this review seeks to understand the current landscape. It explores the role of social media influencers on platforms like Little Red Book and various consumer engagement techniques. The goal is to uncover innovative methods that can be integrated into social media strategies to enhance the promotion of sustainability in the fashion industry, particularly in the context of this research.

Overall, the review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing sustainable fashion in China and offer insights into potential strategies for fostering a more sustainable fashion industry through the use of social media (See figure 1).

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Structure of Literature Review
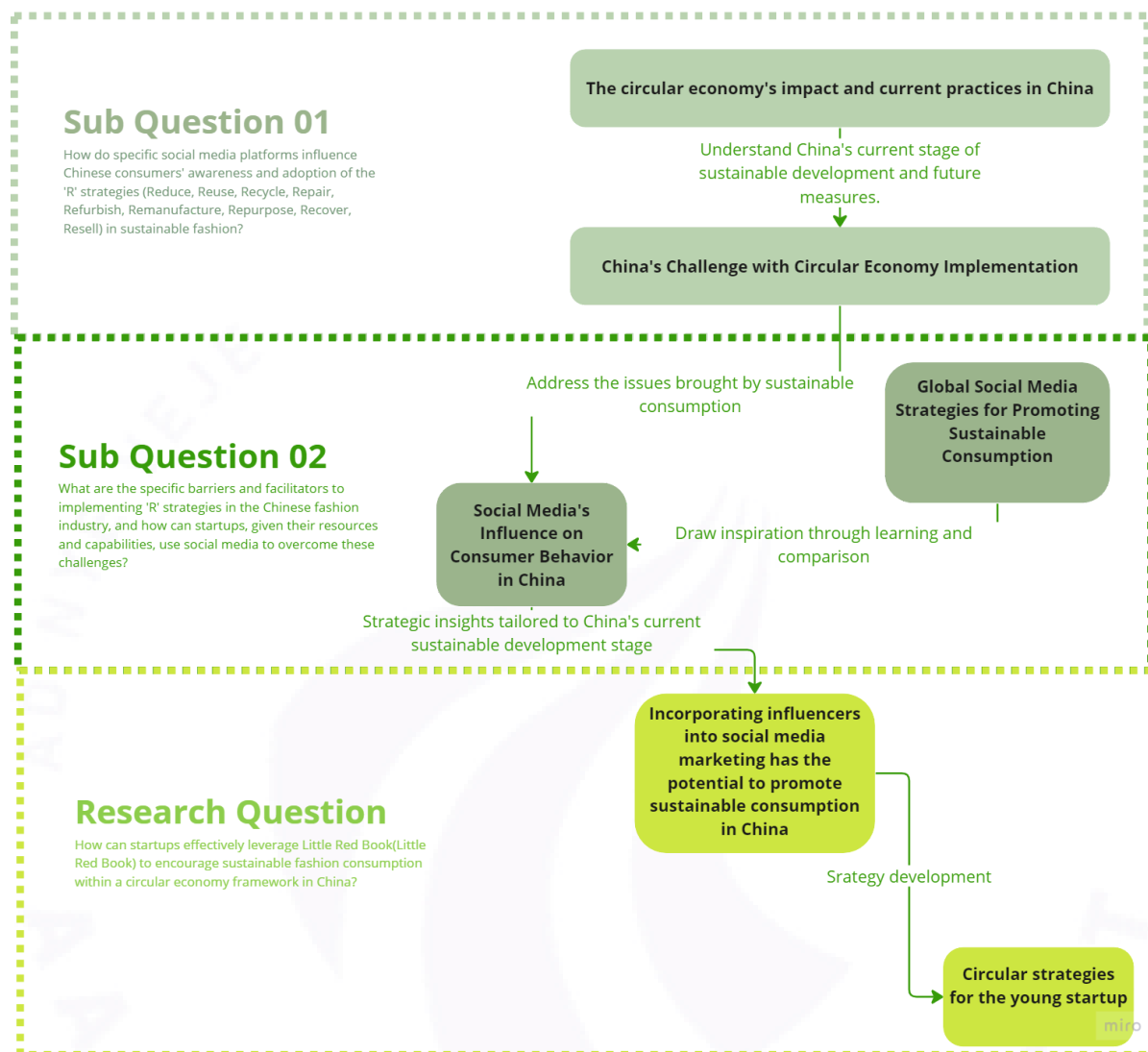
Figure 1: The structure of literature review (Authors own figures).

2.1 The circular economy's impact and current practices in China:

The Chinese government has set ambitious targets for sustainable circular economy (CE) practices to be achieved by 2025 (State Council of China, 2023). However, there is uncertainty about whether fashion organizations in China are ready to fully integrate CE into their operations (Ki et al., 2023b). Despite being one of the largest economies and experiencing rapid growth, China's resale market still lags behind its Western counterparts in three key areas: the presence of niche industries, business models, and customer acceptance (Liu et al., 2023c).

Ki et al. (2023b) also highlighted that China faces significant challenges, including increased resource consumption and environmental impacts stemming from its linear economy (LE) system. Circular business models encounter difficulties, particularly in managing expectations within the fashion resale market. Nonetheless, circular startups are playing a

pivotal role in steering the industry towards circularity by focusing on reduction and regeneration rather than traditional recycling methods (Henry et al., 2020). These startups are crucial in fostering innovation and driving the adoption of sustainable practices within the fashion sector.

2.2 China's Challenge with Circular Economy Implementation

Liu, S., Lang, C., and Liu, C. (2023) analyzed Chinese consumer engagement in the fashion resale market, identifying five drivers: economic, environmental, hedonic, social, and fashion benefits. They also highlighted multiple barriers and challenges, including a lack of marketing regulation, complicating the market's global competitiveness.

Existing literature on the circular economy (CE) in fashion covers supply chains, design, consumer perceptions, and business models but often overlooks consumer roles and resistance to recycled goods. Effective consumer communication is crucial (Ikram, 2022).

China's CE policy underestimates consumer involvement, reflecting in literature gaps that highlight challenges in consumer acceptance and sustainable transformation (State Council of China, 2023).

Access to sustainable alternatives and actionable information can drive sustainable purchases (Turunen & Halme, 2021). Social media influencers, especially Gen Z, advocate for circular fashion (Gazzola et al., 2020), but without political support, awareness may not convert to purchases (Zhang et al., 2021).

2.3 Social Media's Influence on Consumer Behavior in China

In China, social media has become a significant influencer of consumer habits, driving demand for personalized products (Shamu et al., 2024). The fashion market, particularly among young urban consumers from Generation Y and Generation Z, values self-expression , will be the focus of this study (Pew, 2021).

Influencers on platforms like Douyin (TikTok) and Little Red Book promote sustainable fashion practices, but research on their effectiveness is limited (Xu, 2023). Little Red Book, known for its lifestyle content, is key for this study. Marketing on Chinese social media uses emotional engagement to boost purchases (Zhang et al., 2023), showing its potential to promote sustainable fashion.

2.4 Global Social Media Strategies for Promoting Sustainable Consumption

Socially responsible fashion brands use social media to highlight sustainable practices, promote product attributes, and host events like pop-up stores (Casais & Ribeiro Gomes, 2022; Rosenbaum et al. 2021). There's a gap between marketing strategies and consumer attitudes toward pricing, which social media can help bridge (Puspita & Chae, 2021).

Non-luxury brands find social media campaigns effective in areas with high sustainability awareness, although engagement doesn't always lead to purchases (Kong et al., 2020). Content aligned with corporate social responsibility enhances followers' happiness (Castillo-Abdul et al., 2021). Influencers promote sustainable practices, and the "de-influence" movement opposes overconsumption (Haines et al., 2023; Vladimirova, 2023). More research is needed on effective social media strategies for sustainable fashion (Mayer, 2023). Leveraging social media for sustainable fashion requires understanding market segments, creating engaging content, and addressing economic concerns to link engagement to sustainable purchasing behavior.

2.5 The potential of influencers in social media marketing in China

Liu S., Liu C., and Lang C.（2024）explored Chinese consumers' engagement in the circular fashion economy via online fashion resale. They found that consumer behavior is shaped by cultural, economic, and social factors, highlighting the importance of increasing awareness and accessibility to boost participation in sustainable fashion.

Hu and Li, in a related study, identified strategies for sustainable marketing through social media, such as collaborating with influencers, personalizing content, and prioritizing transparency. These strategies help Chinese brands develop long-term sustainability in a rapidly changing digital environment.

2.6 Circular strategies for the young startup:

Startups drive innovation in the circular economy by challenging traditional institutions and promoting sustainable practices (Lewandowski, 2016; Spender et al., 2017; Rizos et al., 2016). They encourage established companies to adopt sustainable innovations and meet environmental standards (Hockerts & Wüstenhagen, 2010). Despite this, research on their strategic approaches is limited.

There's a gap in understanding consumer behavior in China's circular economy, indicating potential for more consumer engagement. While social media can promote sustainable consumption, specific strategies are lacking. This study explores how startups can leverage social media to promote circular fashion and influence sustainable consumer behavior, aiming to develop effective strategies for China's fashion market by integrating Western insights with local needs.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction to Theories Underpinning the Study

In this section, I will elaborate on the foundational theories guiding this research, they interact with each other, collectively forming the theoretical framework of this study:

- Social Practice Theory (SPT): I will discuss how SPT provides a lens through which to examine the everyday practices related to fashion consumption, focusing on how materials, competences, and meanings are interconnected. I'll explain how social media can be a catalyst for change by influencing these elements, leading to more sustainable consumer practices.
- Actor-Network Theory (ANT): Here, I'll detail how ANT will be applied to map the network of relationships between human (consumers, influencers, businesses) and non-human actors (social media platforms, sustainable fashion items) that affect sustainable fashion consumption. This analysis will help identify how startups can navigate and influence these networks to promote sustainability.
- Circular Economy Principles: This section will outline how the circular economy's reduce, reuse, recycle, and other related principles can be applied to the fashion industry. I'll discuss how social media can raise awareness and encourage the adoption of these principles among consumers, thus contributing to a more sustainable fashion industry in China.

3.2 Theories Underpinning the Study

3.2.1 Social Practice Theory (SPT)

Social Practice Theory (SPT) offers a framework for analyzing the everyday behaviors and routines associated with fashion consumption, particularly through the lens of sustainability. It focuses on three interconnected elements: materials, competences, and meanings, which together provide a deeper understanding of how sustainable practices can be integrated into daily life (Shove, Pantzar & Watson, 2012) (See figure 2).
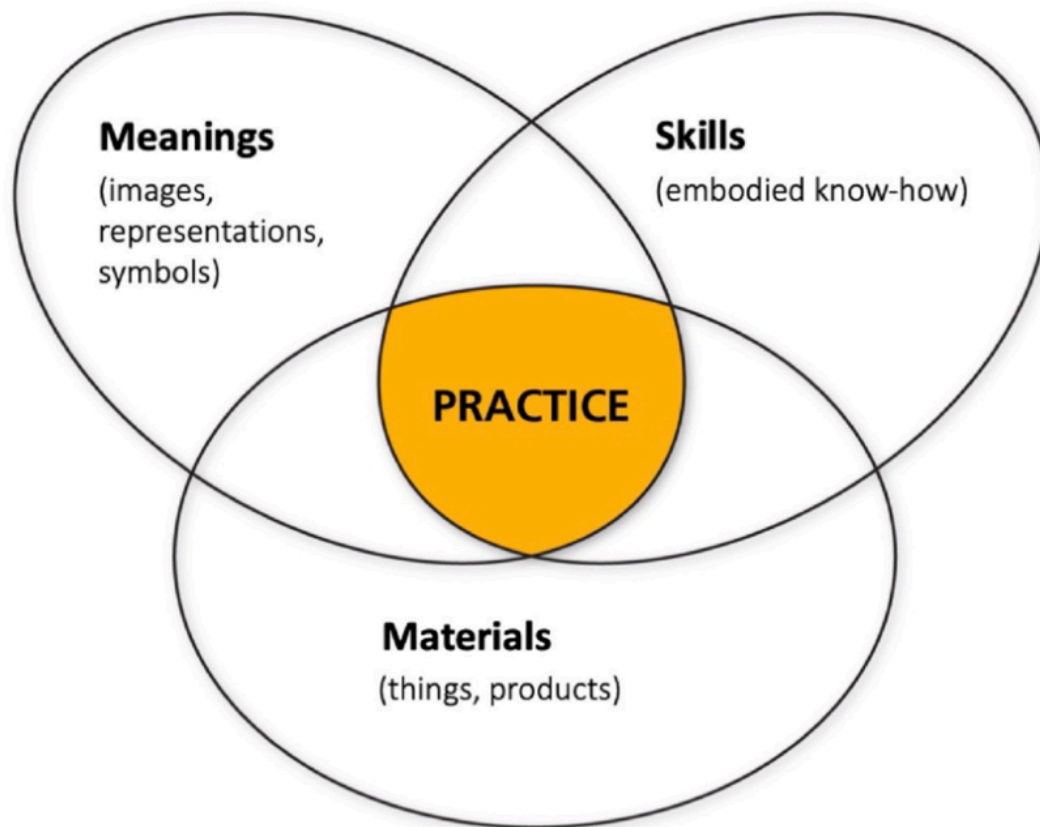
Figure 2: Tripartite model of social practice theory. Sources: Shove et al. (2012), adapted by Coleman (2016) and used by Lach et al. (2022).

● Materials: SPT emphasizes the role of physical objects and infrastructure in shaping practices. This includes clothing, market environments, and online shopping platforms which promote or restrict sustainable consumption. For example, the Chinese fashion market lacks competitiveness and channels for sustainable fashion brands, thus creating resistance to consumer behavior practices.

● Competences: Capabilities refer to the skills and knowledge required to carry out practices. This includes consumer awareness of sustainability, understanding fashion trends or the financial ability to practice sustainable consumption. Within the framework of Social Practice Theory (SPT), examining how competencies are acquired and shared within social networks helps understand how individuals are influenced in sustainable fashion consumption. This approach highlights the importance of social interactions and shared knowledge in shaping sustainable consumption behaviors.

● Meanings: The cultural values and significance associated with sustainable fashion often compete with the allure of fast fashion. Social media influencers and brands can play a crucial role in reshaping these perceptions by curating content that highlights the identity and status linked to ethical consumption, thereby aligning sustainability with prestige and responsibility.

Social practice theory (SPT) provides a framework to find perspectives on how social media can promote sustainable consumption in the fashion industry by understanding and influencing the everyday practices and behaviors of individuals and groups in society (Spotswood et al., 2021). This approach involves changing cultural norms and meanings around fashion and consumerism to emphasize the value of sustainability and ethical production. Community engagement and social influence play a vital role in shaping consumer behavior, as networks of like-minded individuals and influencers can reinforce sustainable practices. By incorporating SPT principles into efforts to promote sustainable fashion, stakeholders can work to create a more sustainable and equitable fashion ecosystem.

3.2.2 Actor-Network Theory (ANT)

ANT provides a framework for understanding the intricate web of interactions behind sustainable fashion consumption. By considering both human and non-human actors, the theory helps identify how social media can serve as a channel for the dissemination of sustainable development narratives (Callon, 1986).

Mapping Relationships: Through ANT, we can visualize the network formed by consumers, influencers, brands, and social media platforms. This mapping reveals the pathways through which information about sustainable fashion circulates, highlighting potential barriers and opportunities for intervention.

Influencing Networks: Startups, by engaging with key influencers and optimizing content for social media algorithms, can amplify their reach, embedding sustainable practices within the consumer's digital ecosystem. Identifying key actors and nodes within this network allows for targeted strategies that can scale the impact of sustainability initiatives.

Actor-network theory provides a comprehensive framework to gain a nuanced understanding of the complex, interrelated factors that influence sustainable fashion consumption in China. By leveraging actor-network theory, this study can reveal the complex dynamics of actor networks, providing valuable insights for promoting sustainable consumer behavior through targeted social media strategies.

3.2.3 Circular Economy Principles

The principles of the circular economy offer a blueprint for reducing waste and extending the life cycle of fashion products. By embracing reduce, reuse, recycle, and more, the fashion industry can mitigate its environmental impact (Esposito *et al.*, 2023).

- Social media has become a powerful tool to educate and inspire consumers about the circular economy. Campaigns that highlight the ease and impact of adopting an "R" strategy can demystify the complexity and expertise of the process, encouraging more consumers to engage in sustainable consumption.

- Promoting 'R' Strategies: Startups can utilize social media to promote circular practices, such as designing durable fashion, facilitating second-hand exchanges, and offering recycling options. By making these practices accessible and trendy, social media can significantly influence consumer behavior towards sustainability.

The literature review indicates that the current Circular Economy (CE) framework in China positions the consumer more as a passive recipient than an active participant. This study will adopt and expand upon this viewpoint by incorporating Social Practice Theory, Actor-Network Theory, and CE principles into the thesis's theoretical framework. This integrated approach aims to deepen the analysis of how social media can influence sustainable fashion consumption among consumers. By grounding the proposed strategies in a robust theoretical base, this multifaceted approach not only enriches the analysis but also ensures the applicability of the strategies. The thesis endeavors to offer valuable insights into using social media to promote sustainable fashion practices in China and proposes a model that other markets could adopt to enhance their sustainability transitions (Schuit, Baldassarre and Bocken, 2017).

3.2.4 Theoretical framework integration

This conceptual framework outlines how social media can be strategically employed to foster a sustainable transformation in the Chinese fashion industry through the lens of Circular Economy principles and supported by Social Practice Theory and Actor-Network Theory. This approach not only highlights the potential of social media as a driver of change but also underscores the necessity of understanding and manipulating the complex network of interactions that influence consumer behavior in sustainability.

Integrating Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and Social Practice Theory (SPT) into initiatives for sustainable consumption in the fashion industry involves understanding the intricate web of actors, networks, and practices within the industry and leveraging these insights to promote more sustainable behaviors and outcomes. By applying ANT theory, stakeholders can identify the diverse range of actors involved in fashion consumption, including consumers, producers, retailers, policymakers, and influencers, and analyze their interactions and relationships to pinpoint key points of intervention (Aka & Labelle, 2021). This approach allows for the enrollment of new actors into networks that support sustainable practices, fostering collaborations and alliances that drive systemic change. Meanwhile, SPT provides a lens through which to understand the everyday practices and behaviors that underpin fashion consumption, such as shopping habits, clothing care routines, and personal style expressions (Pettersen, 2015), and interactions within a network of diverse set of actors, from consumers to policy makers (Öztekin & Gaziulusoy, 2020). By examining the cultural norms, meanings, and social structures that shape these practices (Spotswood et al., 2021), stakeholders can promote sustainable alternatives, such as repairing and mending clothing, embracing slow fashion principles, and fostering communities of practice that support sustainable behaviors (Kuijer, 2014; Kuijer & Bakker 2015). Additionally, addressing structural constraints, such as

policy barriers and industry norms, is essential for promoting sustainable consumption. By advocating for policy changes, industry reforms, and challenging dominant narratives, stakeholders can create an enabling environment for sustainable fashion initiatives to thrive. Overall, integrating ANT and SPT perspectives allows for an understanding of the complex dynamics of social life within the fashion industry and enables stakeholders to develop targeted interventions that promote sustainability and equity (Savaget et al., 2019).

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study employs a mixed methods research design to explore the intricate relationship between social media usage and sustainable consumer behaviors within the Chinese fashion industry. This mixed methods approach is essential because it allows for the quantification of social media's impact upon sustainable fashion behaviors while also exploring the underlying motivations and perceptions that drive these behaviors. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, this approach aligns with my goal of leveraging platforms like Little Red Book to influence sustainable fashion consumption. This comprehensive approach provides robust, data-driven insights into how social media platforms shape consumer behaviors and promote sustainable practices. Through this study, we aim to understand the effectiveness of social media in driving sustainable fashion choices among Chinese consumers and identify strategies that can enhance the promotion of sustainability in the fashion industry.

4.1.1 Quantitative Research Component

The quantitative portion of this research involved collecting data through surveys distributed to users of Little Red Book who engage with fashion content. The survey was distributed online through the Little Red Book app. Potential biases were addressed by using random sampling to select participants, ensuring the sample was representative of the broader population of Little Red Book users. This method effectively gathers measurable data that can reveal patterns and trends. The survey assessed participants' awareness, attitudes, and behaviors regarding sustainable fashion influenced by social media. The goal was to measure the extent to which social media can change consumer behavior and promote sustainable practices in the fashion industry. This directly supports my research objective by providing data to develop strategies that encourage sustainable fashion consumption in China (Sheard, 2018).

4.1.2 Qualitative Research Component

Complementing the quantitative analysis, the qualitative research component of my study included open-ended interviews and content analysis of social media posts on Little Red Book. These methods aimed to gain a deeper understanding of how social media influences sustainable fashion consumption in China. Interviews were conducted with all relevant stakeholders to gather insights into their experiences and perceptions of social media's role in promoting sustainable practices. These interviews were developed through collaborative workshops involving all stakeholders in the actor network, focusing on key themes such as motivations, challenges, and the impact of social media on sustainable behavior. Additionally, a detailed content analysis examined selected posts, comments, and user interactions discussing fashion sustainability. This analysis revealed the thematic and narrative structures of how social media shapes consumer attitudes and behaviors towards sustainability, directly aligning with my research objective of using social media to promote sustainable fashion consumption in China (Tenny et al., 2022).

4.1.3 Integration of Methods

Integrating quantitative and qualitative methods allows for a nuanced analysis, where qualitative insights explain trends identified through quantitative data. This mixed methods approach enhances the reliability and validity of findings, providing a holistic view of social media's role in advancing sustainable fashion practices among Chinese consumers. The research design effectively addresses the questions by exploring broad patterns and detailed experiences, yielding strategic insights for industry practices and policy-making in sustainable fashion. This aligns with my goal of leveraging social media to drive sustainable fashion consumption in China (Symstad et al., 2017).

4.2 Data Collection Methods

Integrating quantitative and qualitative methods provides a nuanced analysis where qualitative insights explain quantitative trends, enhancing the reliability and validity of findings. Each method directly addresses the research questions: surveys assess consumer awareness and behavior changes influenced by Little Red Book, while interviews with stakeholders explore strategies for promoting Circular Economy 'R' strategies through social media. Content analysis of social media posts identifies effective thematic and narrative structures. This mixed methods approach yields strategic insights for industry practices and policy-making in sustainable fashion, aligning with my goal of leveraging social media to drive sustainable fashion consumption in China.

4.2.1 Desk Research

This study begins with a thorough desk research phase, reviewing secondary sources such as academic journals, industry reports, and market studies. This phase focused on the past decade and examined the impact of social media on sustainable consumer behavior in the Chinese fashion industry. The desk research identified gaps in the literature, refined the research questions, and provided a theoretical foundation for the main research methods. Insights gained from this phase informed the design of the survey and interview instruments, ensuring alignment with the latest research and industry trends (Thomas, 2006).

4.2.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire collected quantitative data on consumers' attitudes and behaviors towards sustainable fashion, with a focus on the influence of social media. The questionnaire was developed and validated through pilot testing on a small group of users to ensure clarity, fairness and validity of the questionnaire. Existing validation tools were adapted wherever possible. This survey targeted users of Little Red Book, aiming to provide the necessary statistical insights into how social media influences sustainable practices in the Chinese fashion industry (Jacobs et al., 2023).

4.2.3 Open Interview

Open interviews in this study explore personal insights into how social media influences sustainable fashion. An interview guide was developed to outline key topics and questions, ensuring consistency across interviews. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. This approach to conducting interviews allows participants from the Chinese fashion industry to freely share their experiences, providing in-depth qualitative data that complements the quantitative survey findings. This approach offers an enhanced understanding of the motivations, challenges, and impacts of social media on sustainable consumer behavior (Robinson, et al., 2021).

4.2.4 User Observation

This study employs user observation to directly record consumer interactions with sustainable fashion content on Little Red Book. Observations were documented through open notes on Little Red Book, capturing user interactions with the content. This approach focused on specific behaviors and engagements with sustainable fashion posts. The data gathered through these observations enrich the understanding of social media's impact on consumer habits in the Chinese fashion industry, complementing the findings from surveys and interviews (van Boeijen et al., 2014).

4.2.5 Collaborative design game

The collaborative design game is an interactive method used in this study to develop innovative solutions for sustainable fashion. Participants were selected based on their roles in the fashion industry and sustainability efforts. The game sessions were structured to facilitate collaboration and creativity, with groups working together to create and prototype new sustainable practices. All the stakeholders worked together in a gamified setting to create and prototype new sustainable practices. This approach generated creative solutions and provided practical insights into collaborative sustainability efforts in the fashion industry (Vaajakallio et al., 2014).

4.3 Data Analysis

This section details the data analysis methods employed in this study, including thematic analysis of qualitative data and statistical analysis of quantitative data. Analytical models were developed based on the theoretical frameworks provided by Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and Social Practice Theory to map stakeholder interactions, aiming to understand Chinese consumer behavior, attitudes towards traditional and sustainable fashion, and the current status of the Chinese fashion market. This approach identifies the challenges and opportunities in promoting consumer transformation and lays the groundwork for strategy development.

4.3.1 Actor-Network Mapping:

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Actor-Network Mapping was used to analyze the complex relations between stakeholders in promoting sustainable fashion via social media. This involved identifying and diagramming human and non-human actors—such as consumers, influencers, digital platforms, and policy frameworks. The resulting network maps clarified how these actors interacted and influenced sustainable practices within the Chinese fashion industry, highlighting key connections and potential areas for intervention. Strategies to validate network maps and interpretations were discussed (Aka et al., 2019).

Chapter 5. Research design

5.1 Desk Research

The initial phase of the study involved conducting comprehensive desktop research to gather data for an extensive market analysis. This analysis aims to understand the current status and challenges of sustainable fashion transformation in China. Additionally, it examines user demographics to identify the characteristics of Chinese consumers and the factors influencing their behavior. The goal is to explore the role of social media in shaping consumer behavior toward sustainable fashion.

5.1.1 The introduction of Little Red Book(Xiao Hong Shu)

Little Red Book (Xiao Hong Shu) effectively merges social media and e-commerce, creating a dynamic platform where users engage deeply with content, community, and commerce. Its structure supports user-generated content, seamless shopping experiences, and influencer partnerships, making it an influential hub for trends, particularly in fashion and beauty. The platform's integrated approach enhances user engagement, builds trust through community interactions, and offers brands unique opportunities to connect directly with a responsive and trend-conscious audience. This blend of social and shopping functionalities positions Little Red Book as a powerful player in China's digital landscape.（See Figure 3）
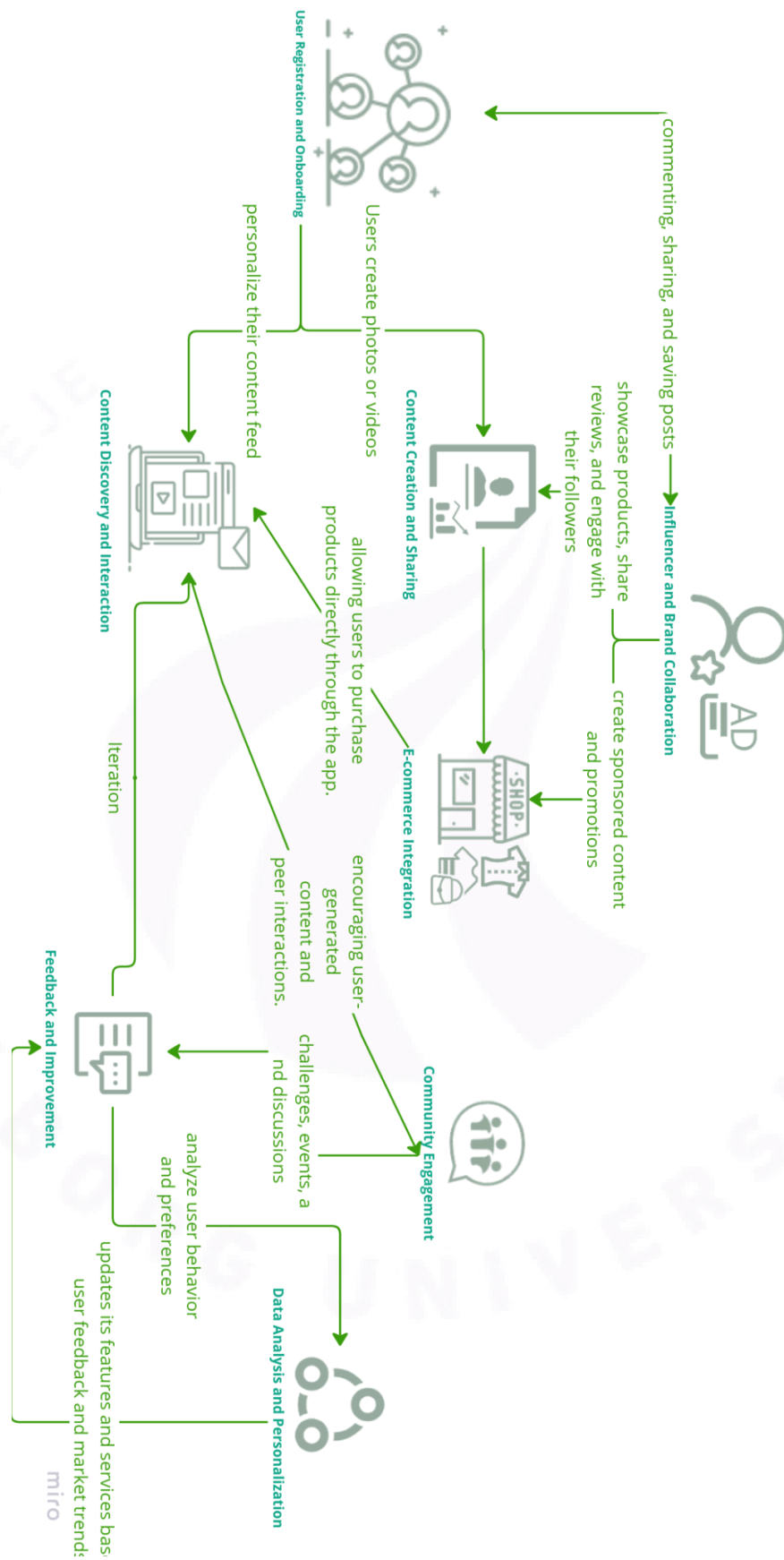
Figure 3: The workflow of Little Red Book (Authors own figures).

5.1.2 User Research

In the context of actor-network theory (ANT), the fashion section on Little Red Book can be viewed through a network of interconnected actors, each contributing to the dynamic interactions within the platform. Here's a breakdown of the main actors involved（See figure 4):
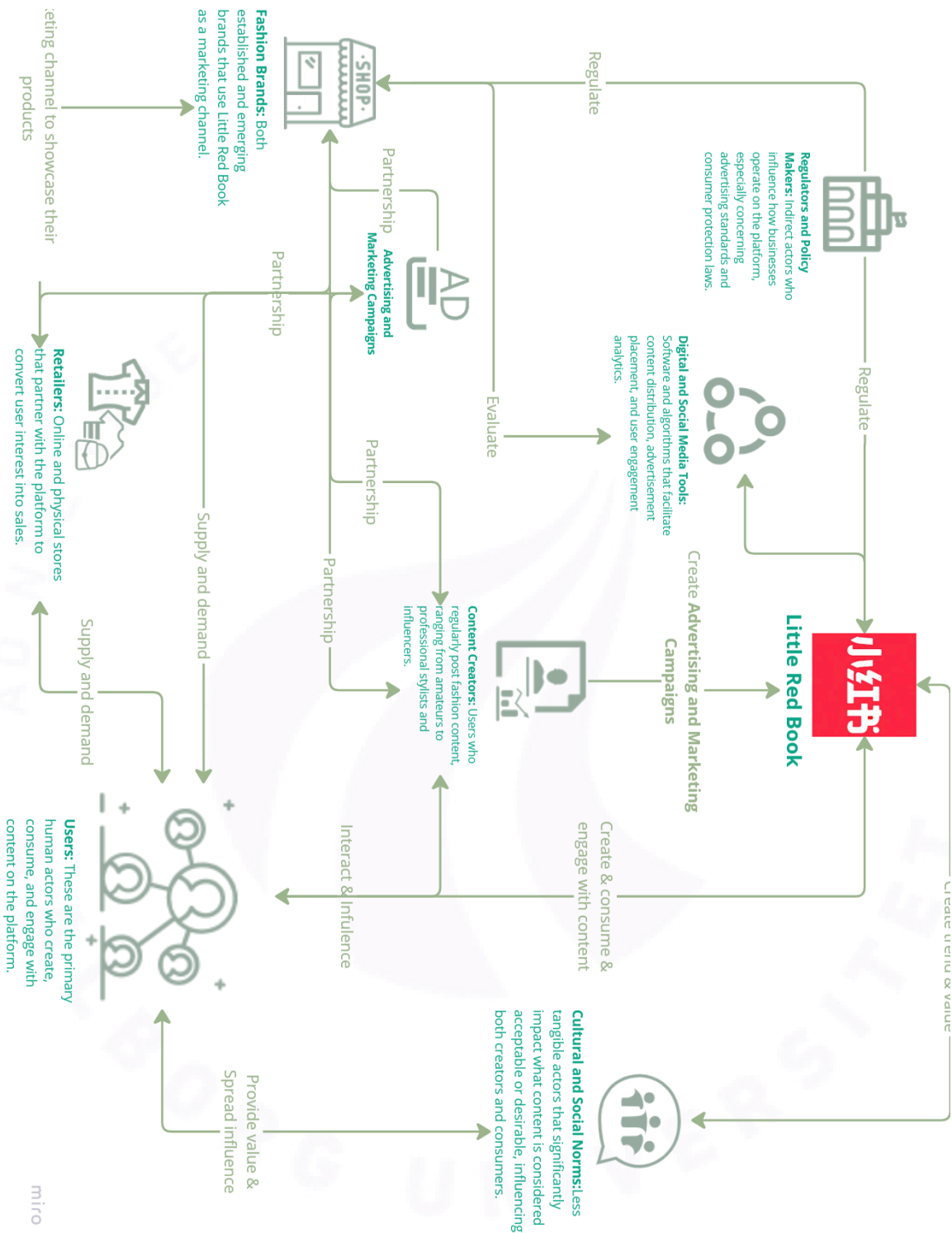
Figure 4: Actor network mapping, adapted from Callon (1989).

Content creators, consumers, fashion brands, retailers, digital and social media tools, regulators, and cultural and social norms collectively shape the ecosystem of fashion content on Little Red Book, with creators pivotal in generating engagement, consumers influencing post popularity, brands leveraging the platform for marketing, retailers converting interest

into sales, tools facilitating distribution and analytics, regulators setting standards, and norms guiding acceptable content (Gu, 2021).

Little Red Book merges social media dynamics with online shopping, creating a vibrant community where fashion-forward, brand-conscious users share and explore content. Influencer endorsements and robust community interactions play critical roles in shaping buying behaviors. These users place a high premium on the quality and authenticity of products, often preferring to purchase international brands through cross-border transactions. This emphasis on credible peer reviews and influencer recommendations significantly influences their purchasing decisions, underscoring the unique commercial ecosystem Little Red Book fosters.

In China, the fashion consumption market is primarily dominated by young urban consumers, particularly those in the millennial and Gen Z demographics. These groups tend to have higher disposable incomes, are more digitally savvy, and are influenced by global fashion trends (Qian Gua Data, 2022) (See figure 5).

User Persona

Demographics

Age: The millennial and Gen Z
Gender: Female
Location: Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou
Occupation: All
Income: Middle to High Income

Psychographics

Lifestyle: Urban, fashion-forward, tech-savvy, health-conscious
Values: Quality, authenticity, sustainability, and social connection
Interests: Fashion, beauty, travel, fitness, and sustainable living
**Personality:** Trendsetter, socially active, environmentally aware, and brand-conscious

Online Behavior

Social Media Usage: Active daily user of Little Red Book, WeChat, and Instagram
Content Engagement: Frequently engages with fashion and beauty content, follows influencers, leaves reviews, and participates in community discussions
Shopping Habits: Prefers online shopping for convenience, values peer reviews and influencer recommendations, often buys international brands through cross-border transactions

Goals

Stay Updated: Keep up with the latest fashion trends and beauty tips
Seek Inspiration: Find new ideas for outfits, makeup looks, and travel destinations
Engage with Community: Connect with like-minded individuals and share personal experiences
Promote Sustainability: Learn about and support sustainable fashion and beauty practices

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Figure 5: User portraits of Little Red Book 's major fashion consumers (Authors own figures).

Young, urban, trend-conscious, brand-aware, socially engaged, quality and authenticity seekers, and influencer-driven, Little Red Book users are predominantly well-educated females in their 20s and 30s residing in urban areas, highly aware of international and domestic fashion trends, actively engaging in content creation and consumption while valuing

peer opinions, prioritizing product quality and authenticity, and often participating in cross-border shopping to access desired brands and products.

At this stage, secondary data from desktop research was utilized to describe the user profile of the target group for this study. An actor-network map of Little Red Book and fashion consumption was developed, offering a preliminary understanding of the basic characteristics of the target users and the influence of other stakeholders on their consumption behavior. This groundwork sets the stage for the next phase of data collection.

5.2 Further data gathering

Based on the data from the previous stage of desktop research, this study derives target user profiles and a theoretical framework of how social media affects consumer behavior. At this stage, further user research and data collection, including public interviews, has been conducted to verify whether various activities on Little Red Book positively impact sustainable consumption behavior and how Little Red Book influences consumers. The interviews covered all stakeholders involved in Little Red Book's sustainable consumption behavior. The collected data were iteratively analyzed using the theoretical framework provided by Social Practice Theory (SPT) to gain a deeper understanding of consumer behavior and the dynamics that influence sustainable fashion practices. This comprehensive approach aims to deepen the understanding of how social media can effectively promote sustainable fashion in China.

5.2.1 Collaborative Workshop

As of April 28, 2024, the fashion hashtag created by Little Red Book has garnered 8,375.7 million views, generating significant economic benefits for the fashion industry. In comparison, the hashtag for "sustainable fashion" has accumulated only 248.6 million views (Little Red Book, 2024).

Although posts about sustainable fashion are not widely discussed, consumers are subtly engaging in sustainable consumption behaviors influenced by various factors. Since 2017, the growth of the internet has popularized second-hand fashion, especially vintage clothing, on Little Red Book. This trend is largely driven by celebrities and bloggers, who have made vintage shopping a fashionable activity among young consumers on the platform (Xiaoyi, 2023). However, this trend does not directly align with sustainable fashion principles in all aspects. A similar phenomenon was observed among European consumers in my previous research (Cong, 2024). Based on these observations, it is hypothesized that Little Red Book positively influences consumers' participation in sustainable consumption, even if the consumers lack sufficient awareness or willingness regarding sustainability. To further investigate this hypothesis, a user participation workshop was conducted to study the specific factors affecting users' sustainable consumption behaviors.

5.2.2 Workshop Introduction

The workshop was divided into two stages. The first stage involved collecting quantitative data to test the hypothesis: Little Red Book positively influences consumers to engage in sustainable consumption, even when they lack sufficient sustainability awareness or willingness. The second stage consisted of offline focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of how Little Red Book affects consumer behavior. The goal of this workshop was to assess users' awareness levels, attitudes, and consumption behaviors regarding sustainable fashion, as well as to evaluate the influence of Little Red Book on consumer behavior and identify opportunities within this context.

In the first stage, 50 Little Red Book users were invited to participate in an online workshop. Participants were asked to respond to a series of questions designed to collect data on their consumption choices, awareness, and attitudes towards sustainable fashion and sustainable consumption. Additionally, the questions aimed to assess the extent to which Little Red Book influences their consumption behavior. This approach provided valuable insights into the participants' perspectives and behaviors related to sustainable fashion (See appendix 1).

The user data collected in the first stage revealed the following insights: only 4% of users have a preliminary understanding of sustainable fashion, and none of the participants prioritize sustainability in their primary consumption decisions. The majority of participants believe that sustainable fashion does not relate to them, which hinders their progress towards sustainable consumption. However, 68% of users engage in behaviors such as vintage shopping, second-hand purchases, and remaking items, which are part of sustainable consumption. All of these users indicated that their behaviors were influenced by Little Red Book through posts, blogger recommendations, trends, and organized offline activities. (See figure 6).
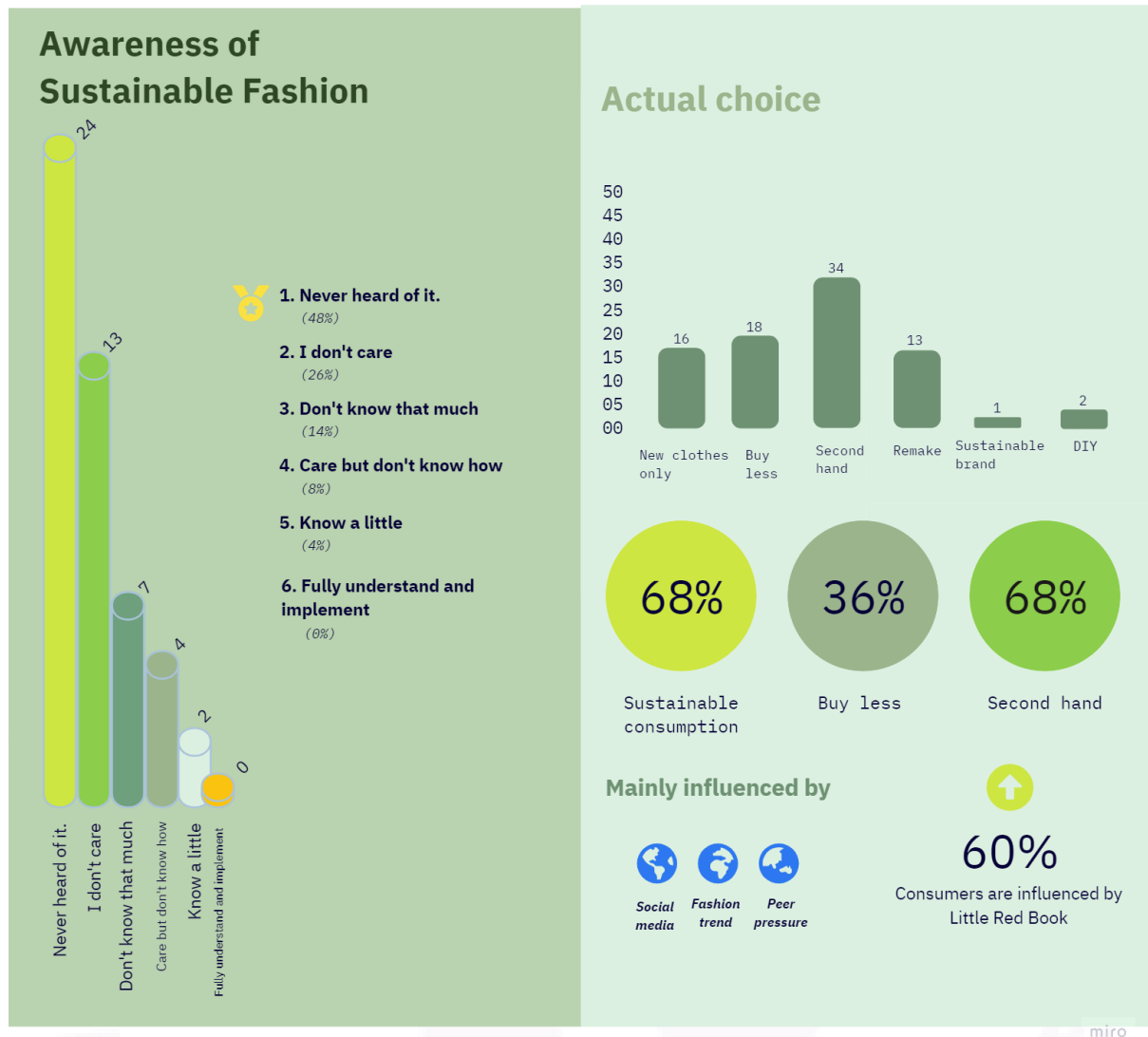
Figure 6 : Result of online workshop (Authors owe figure).

The research at this stage verified the hypothesis that Little Red Book positively impacts guiding consumers toward sustainable consumption, even when their sustainability awareness is limited. This conclusion indicates that Little Red Book holds significant potential to influence consumer behavior positively. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Little Red Book affects sustainable consumption behavior, the next stage of the workshop will explore: How can Little Red Book continuously influence sustainable consumption behavior in the fashion industry?

Following the verification of the hypothesis in the first stage, the second stage of the workshop involves inviting various stakeholders for group open interviews and discussions. Initially, participants will identify the actors they represent on the Actor Network Map.

Specific questions are not pre-set to encourage unrestricted thinking among participants. As the facilitator of the workshop, I will guide the discussions. Participants will articulate their

perspectives and interact with other actors through broad, open-ended questions that I have prepared. Each invited actor will participate in public interviews and discussions.

The main objectives of this phase are to identify the current status of sustainable fashion on Little Red Book, understand the attitudes of various stakeholders towards sustainable fashion, and uncover any common understandings or misunderstandings of the concept. Additionally, this phase aims to examine the dynamics of traditional fashion in the Chinese market through the perspectives of different actors. The goal is to reveal the challenges of promoting sustainable consumption in the fashion sector via Little Red Book and explore how the platform can effectively influence sustainable consumption behaviors.

Upon concluding the discussions, each participant will identify the three most influential actors that impact Little Red Book's ability to promote sustainable consumption behavior. This comprehensive approach is designed to provide deeper insights into the network dynamics and the roles of different actors in fostering sustainable consumption within the fashion industry.

5.2.3 Workshop Result

During the workshop, various actors shared their perspectives on sustainable fashion, including their attitudes, measures taken, challenges hindering sustainable consumption, and the role of social media in promoting sustainable consumption transformation. I categorized and analyzed the recorded conversations among different actors, uncovering the multi-faceted challenges currently faced in the transformation of sustainable fashion consumption in China. This analysis also highlighted how social media influences consumer behavior and the opportunities it presents for promoting sustainability (See figure 7):
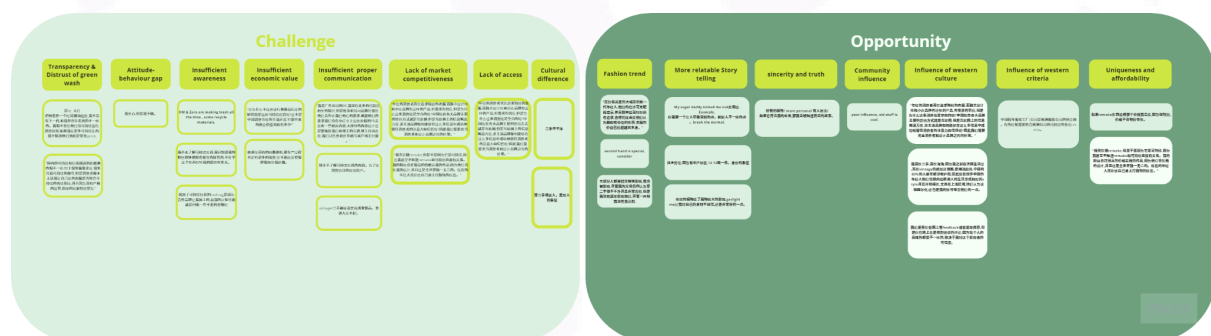
Figure 7: Results of Data Classification Collected from the Workshop (Authors owe figure).

Based on the conversations during the workshop, I classified the challenges currently encountered in the transformation of sustainable fashion consumption in China at multiple levels as follows:

Insufficient Awareness: Compared to some Western markets, sustainability awareness in the Chinese fashion industry is still in its infancy. Most people believe that sustainability is irrelevant to them, and many have never heard of the concept of sustainable fashion. Due to

China's status as a developing country and the significant gap between the rich and the poor, many individuals are primarily concerned with basic needs. This group emphasizes less on fashion needs. For the relatively affluent class, the luxury goods market remains the mainstream focus of fashion consumption in China.

Cultural Differences: Mainstream consumers still view fashion products as symbols of status, and purchasing second-hand items is often seen as undignified and a sign of poverty. Consequently, mainstream consumers are relatively resistant to second-hand fashion products. For instance, the pursuit of animal fur fashion products remains prevalent.

Lack of Access: In the Chinese fashion market, there are few sustainable fashion brands, both domestic and international, and their market share is low. Consumers lack sufficient channels to access and understand sustainable fashion brands.

Transparency and Distrust of Greenwashing: The fashion industry's supply chain is typically complex, involving multiple stages such as raw material procurement, production, processing, transportation, and distribution, which makes management and supervision challenging. Promoting sustainable consumption requires all supply chain stages to comply with environmental protection requirements, necessitating strengthened supervision and cooperation. This complexity has led to the prevalence of 'greenwashing' at various levels, resulting in consumer distrust of brands and significantly impacting their choices.

Attitude-Behavior Gap: Consumers' sustainability awareness does not directly translate into sustainable consumption behavior because other factors, such as price, are more heavily valued. Sustainable fashion products often require higher cost investments due to the use of environmentally friendly materials and sustainable production processes, leading to increased product costs. In China, consumers can purchase products that meet their quality and style needs at very low prices. The lack of a clear price advantage for sustainable fashion products negatively impacts consumers' purchasing intentions.

Insufficient Economic Value: The economic value of sustainable fashion in China is insufficient due to various factors, including cost considerations, lack of awareness, market competition, trade-offs between sustainability and fashion, supply chain challenges, and the regulatory environment. These challenges hinder the widespread adoption of sustainable fashion practices and limit their economic impact on the Chinese market. As a result, most stakeholders do not prioritize the sustainable fashion market.

Lack of Market Competitiveness: Competition among fashion brands on Little Red Book is fierce, with information being updated very quickly. Sustainable fashion brands are less competitive than traditional fashion brands across various aspects, making it challenging for them to gain market traction.

Insufficient Proper Communication: Interacting with Chinese consumers on the topic of sustainable development is challenging. Compared to sustainability, Chinese consumers are

more inclined to pay for content that directly relates to their personal interests. Sustainable fashion encompasses various aspects beyond environmental friendliness, such as addressing the harmful effects of toxic fabrics in fast fashion, countering the toxic beauty standards promoted by the traditional fashion industry, and highlighting the cruelty of animal fur products. The transformation towards sustainable fashion aims to improve these issues, which are often concerns for Chinese consumers. However, effective communication of these benefits through content creators and brand accounts on social media is lacking. Due to the insufficient dissemination of knowledge and awareness about sustainable fashion, consumers do not fully understand the positive impacts that sustainable fashion transformation can have on their living environment.

Vicious Marketing: In recent years, second-hand and vintage fashion have gained popularity on Little Red Book. This trend was initially a promising starting point for Chinese consumers to embrace sustainable consumption. However, some unscrupulous entities have exploited this trend by labeling cheap fast fashion products as second-hand or vintage, artificially inflating prices to luxury levels. This practice has made such fashion items unaffordable for ordinary consumers, leading to resistance and distrust. Consequently, second-hand and vintage fashion have lost their original meaning and are often used by some merchants and bloggers as tools for profit.

Opportunities Arising from the Influence of Social Media on Promoting Sustainable Consumption:

Fashion Trends: Social media, especially platforms like Little Red Book, significantly influences consumer behavior, creating opportunities to promote sustainable consumption. Due to the influence of celebrities and influencers, sustainable fashion practices such as buying second-hand, vintage, remaking, and repairing clothes are becoming increasingly popular. Often, consumers start engaging in these practices because they are seen as trendy. Gradually, more young consumer groups are overcoming traditional cultural prejudices against second-hand and vintage clothing.

Revealed Truth: The exposure of fast fashion scandals on Little Red Book has led to a shift in consumer attitudes. More young consumers are unwilling to support fast fashion brands. For example, the documentary "Brandy Hellville & The Cult of Fast Fashion" about the brand Brandy Melville has sparked significant discussion on Little Red Book. The documentary revealed the brand's harmful practices, such as producing only small sizes and promoting the idea that only very thin women can wear BM clothing, along with instances of racial discrimination. These revelations have resonated with many consumers, leading to boycotts of BM and other brands with similar practices. This backlash against fast fashion creates opportunities for sustainable fashion to gain traction and expand its influence.

Influence of Western Culture: An increasing number of young Chinese are studying in European and American countries, and they share Western perspectives on Little Red Book. This has fueled interest in European and American culture, including the minimalist and

low-carbon lifestyles that have become popular topics on Little Red Book. Since 60% of people in China do not have passports and have never traveled abroad, there is a strong curiosity about Western lifestyles. Through Little Red Book, many young people are learning about sustainable practices from European and American countries and are starting to adopt these practices in their own lives.

In conclusion, while challenges remain, the influence of social media provides significant opportunities to promote sustainable fashion. By leveraging fashion trends, exposing the unethical practices of fast fashion, and drawing inspiration from Western cultural influences, sustainable consumption behaviors can become more widely accepted and practiced among Chinese consumers.

Influence of Western Criteria: Although China's policies on sustainable fashion development are not stringent, many Chinese clothing factories and brands now collaborate with European companies. To meet the cooperation requirements, Chinese companies often need to adhere to the sustainability criteria set by their European counterparts.

Uniqueness and Affordability: Young Chinese consumers typically enjoy better economic conditions and have higher material and spiritual aspirations. They are often willing to pay for unique and personalized fashion products, as long as these products are reasonably priced.

More Relatable Storytelling: Sustainable fashion offers content that is often unfamiliar to Chinese consumers but has the potential to resonate deeply with them. For instance, the mainstream beauty standards in China, which emphasize whiteness, thinness, and youthfulness, have led to toxic aesthetic norms affecting the consumer market and marketing strategies. Various fashion brands, similar to BM, promote these harmful trends. As the concept of Western diversity gains visibility among Chinese youth through Little Red Book, more voices of resistance emerge, influencing brands to change their marketing approaches. These changes include using models of diverse shapes, races, and genders, encouraging women to accept their bodies rather than pursuing toxic beauty standards. Such shifts in marketing provide sustainable fashion brands with inspiration to communicate more effectively with consumers.

Community Influence: People often share online and offline community activities on Little Red Book. Community-based activities can enhance information exchange with consumers and leave a lasting impression in an era of information overload. For example, the concepts and creative fashion shows from Copenhagen Fashion Week have left a deep impression on many users.

Interacting with Chinese consumers on the topic of sustainable development presents several challenges. The transformation of China's fashion consumption towards sustainability faces obstacles such as insufficient awareness, cultural differences, restricted access, transparency issues, attitude-behavior gaps, insufficient economic value, lack of market competitiveness,

and communication barriers. However, social media also offers potential solutions to these challenges at various levels.

To understand how these challenges and opportunities interact and ultimately affect consumer behavior, this study will develop an analytical model based on the theoretical framework provided by Social Practice Theory (SPT). This framework will help us to better understand the challenges in promoting sustainable consumption transformation in the Chinese fashion industry via the Internet, how these challenges influence each other, and determine the most feasible response measures. Based on the theoretical framework provided by Social Practice Theory, two analytical models have been developed (See figure 8).
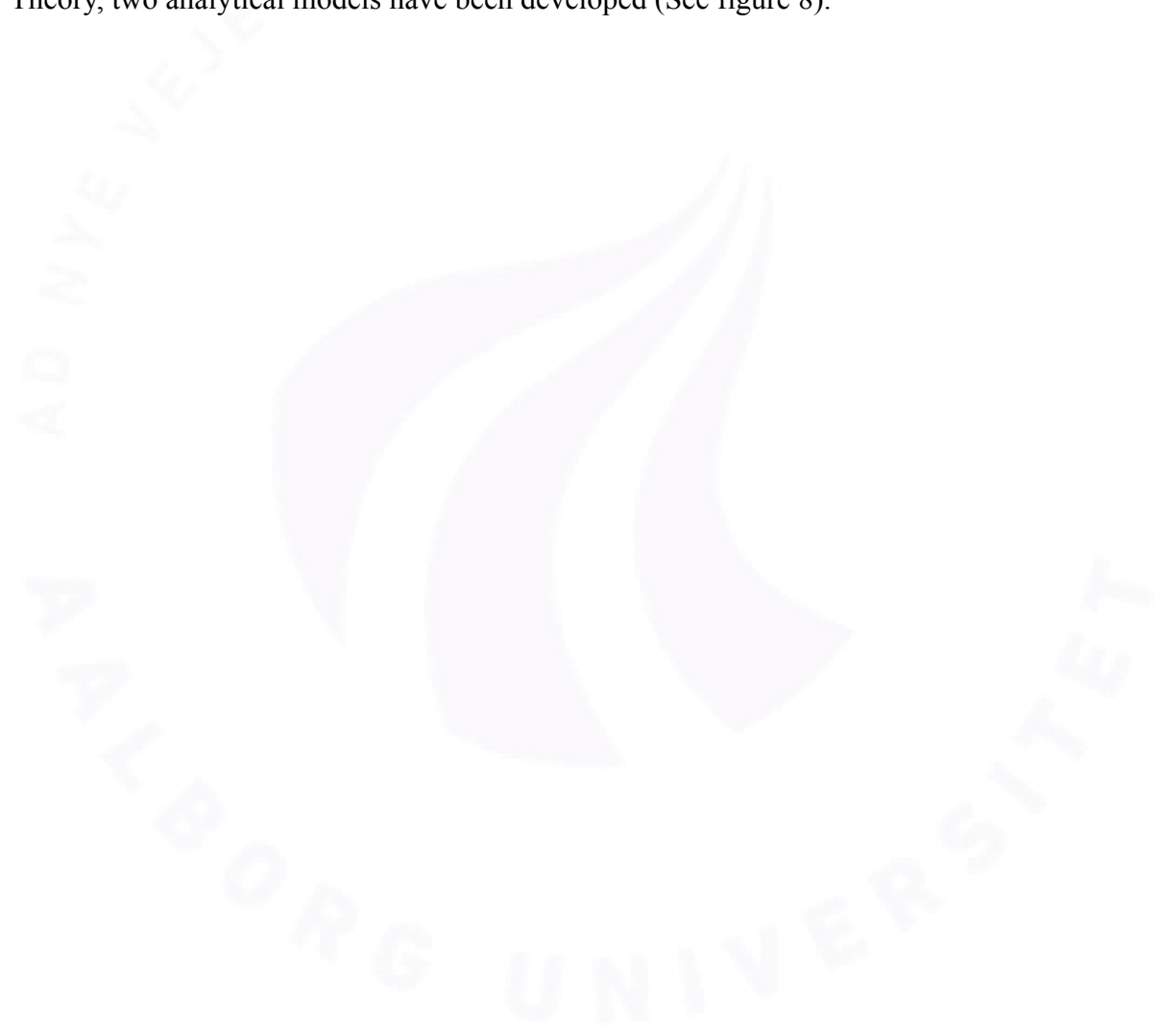
Figure 8: Consumer behavior analysis based on SPT theory framework 01(Authors own figures, developed through application of Social Practice Theory).

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The first analytical model aims to understand how these challenges hinder sustainable consumption behavior and to identify the correlations between the different challenges.（See figure 9）.
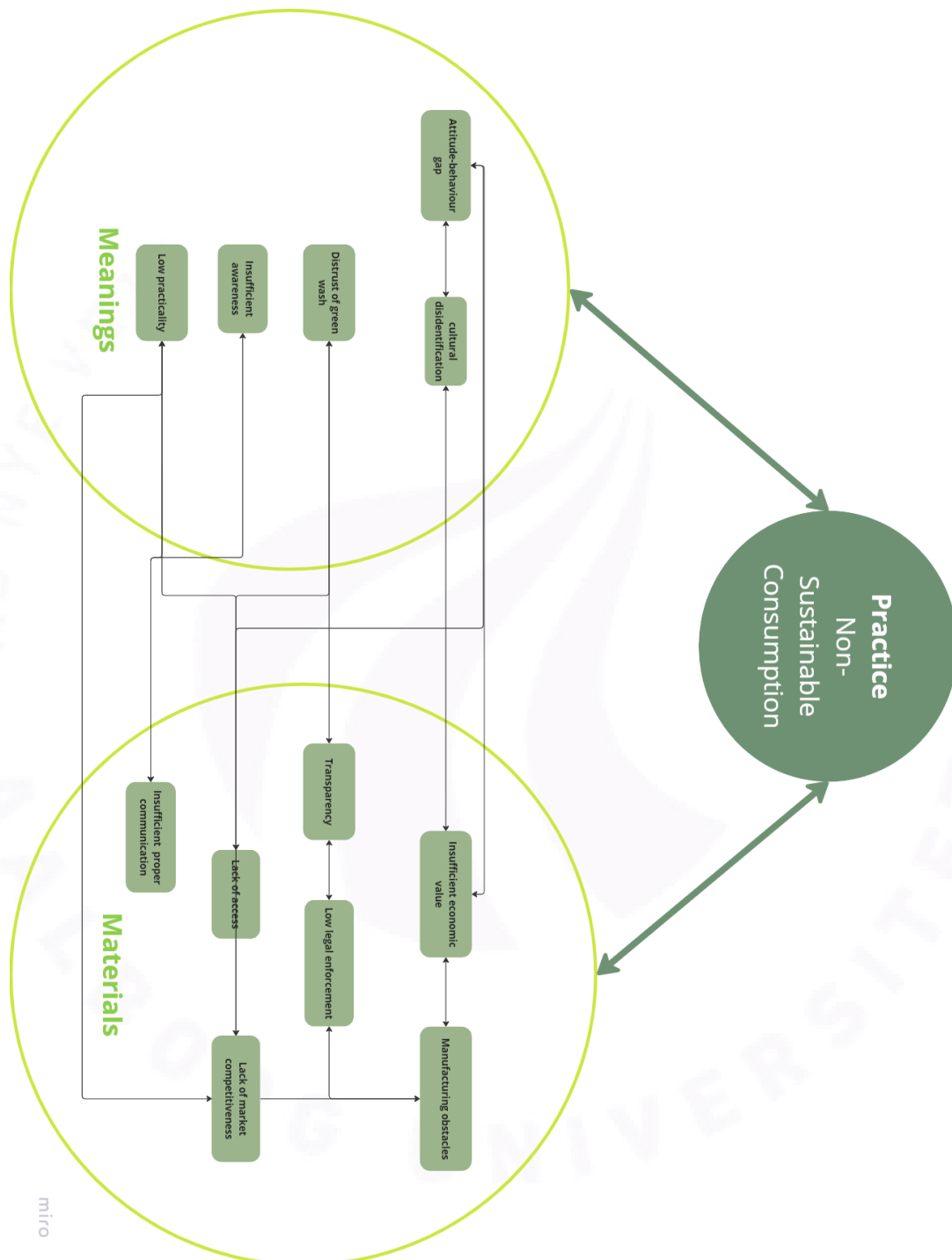
Figure 9: Consumer behavior analysis based on SPT theory framework 02(Authors own figures, developed through application of Social Practice Theory).

Taken together, the multiple challenges faced by China's fashion consumption in its transition to sustainable fashion are intertwined and collectively shape current unsustainable consumption practices. First, consumers' lack of awareness and education about sustainable fashion, along with cultural differences, leads them to favor traditional fashion brands. Secondly, limited market access to sustainable fashion brands, combined with a lack of competitiveness and transparency, further fuels consumer distrust. Additionally, the gap between consumer attitudes and behaviors, coupled with price barriers, diminishes the appeal of sustainable fashion brands. Poor communication and malicious marketing also contribute to consumer resistance to sustainable fashion. These challenges interact to form a cycle that exacerbates the continuation of unsustainable consumption patterns in the Chinese market.

The second analytical model examines how these opportunities can address the challenges at various levels to effectively and sustainably influence consumer behavior (See figure 10).
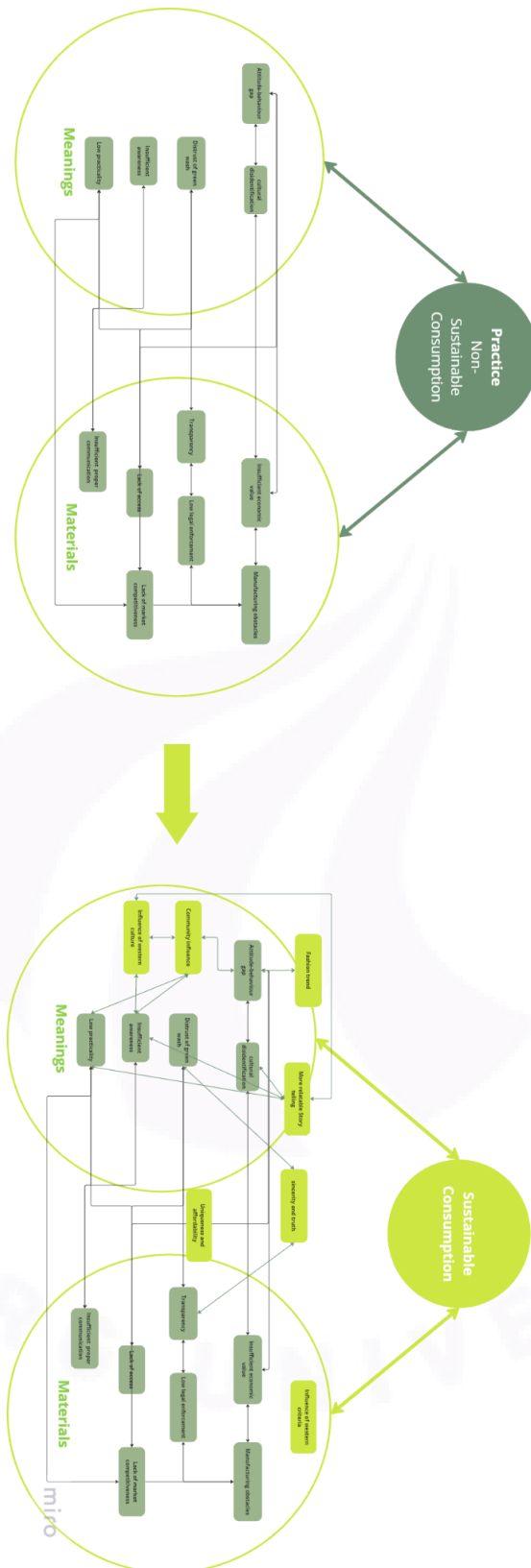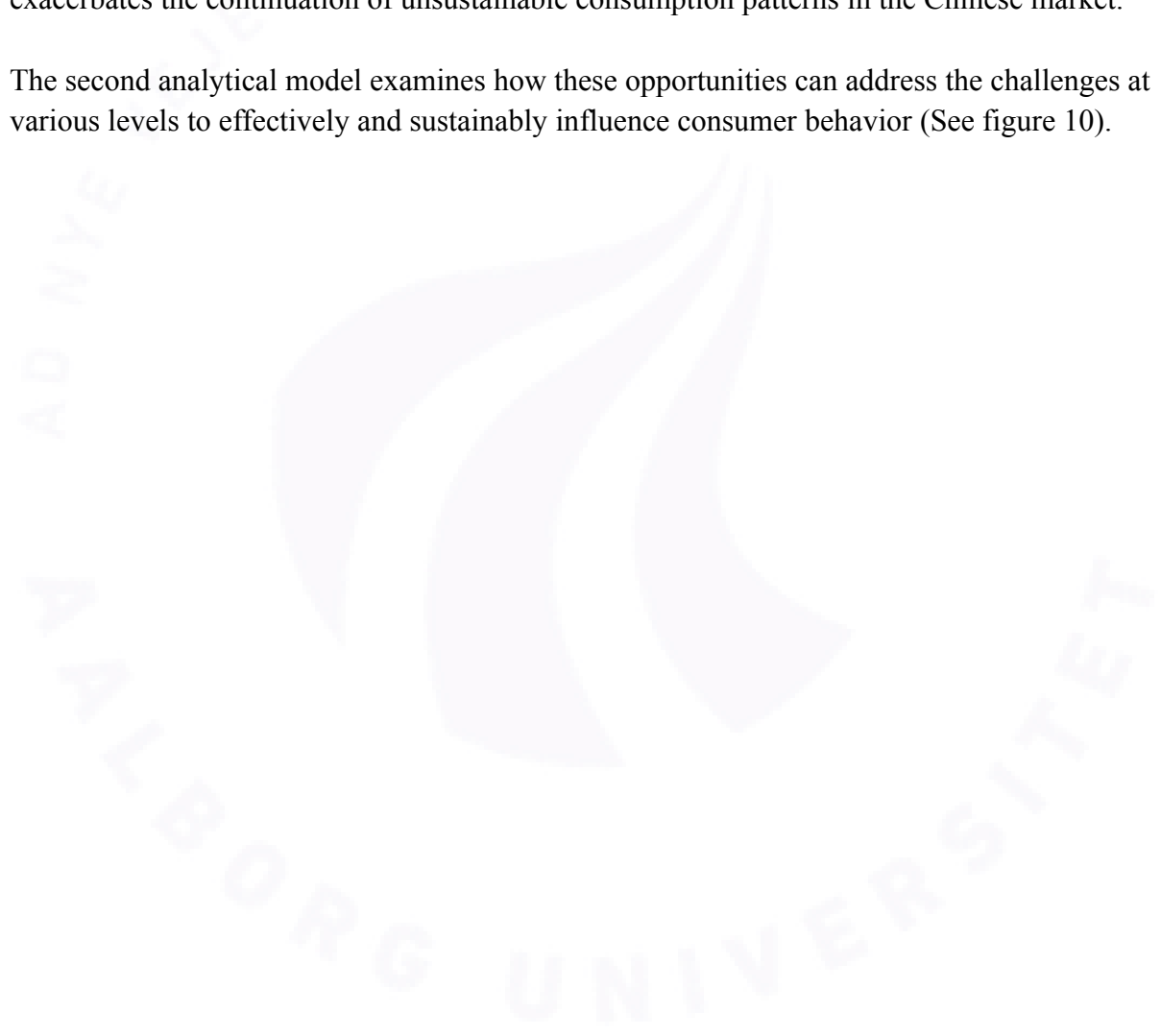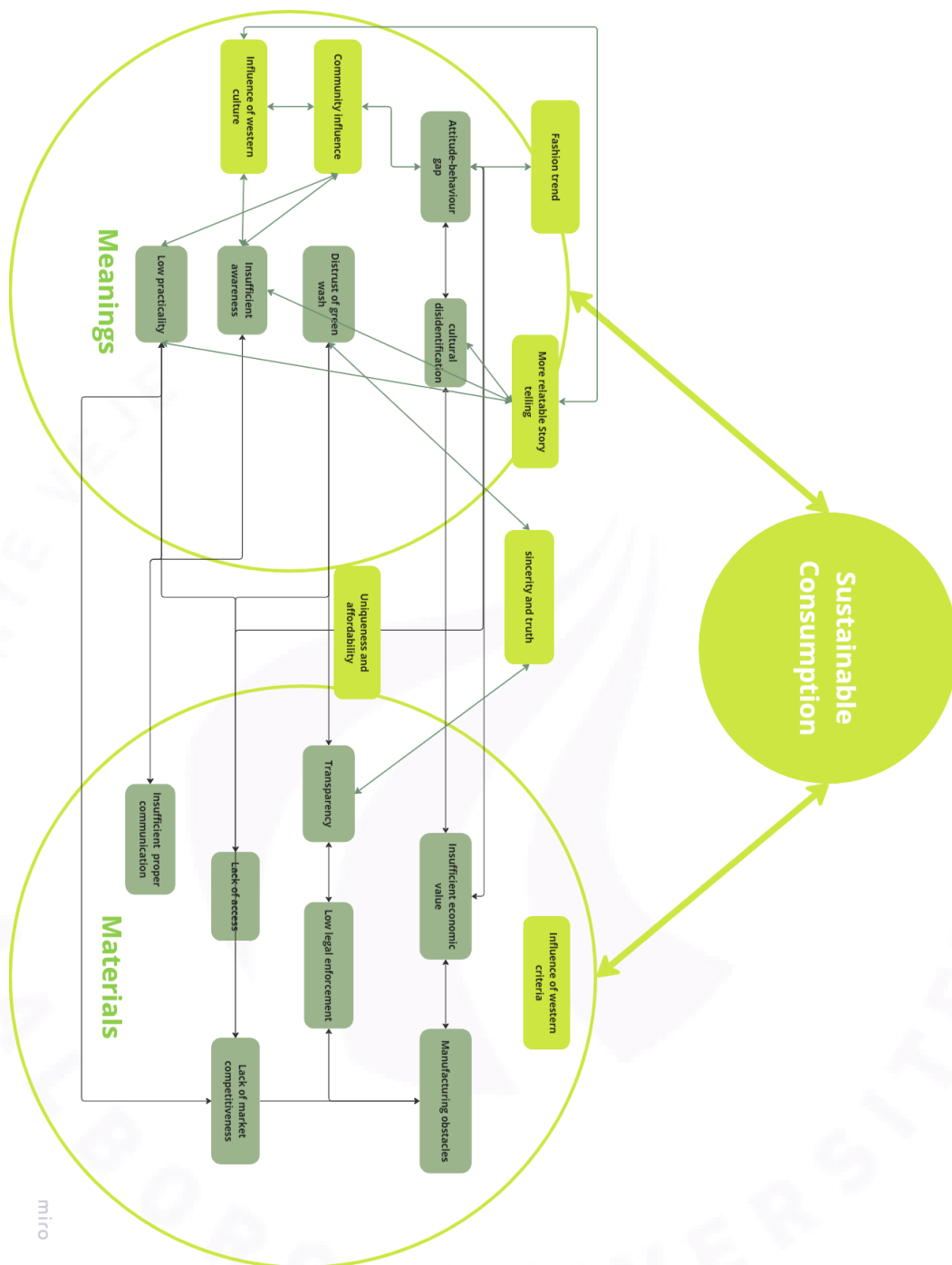
Figure 10: Consumer behavior analysis based on SPT theory framework (Authors own figures, developed through application of Social Practice Theory).

As a significant aspect of social practice, social media has facilitated the gradual acceptance of second-hand, vintage, and other sustainable fashion-related behaviors through the influence of celebrities and influencers, making them an integral part of fashion consumption practices. Social media's transparency and information-sharing capabilities enable consumers to learn about the scandals behind fast fashion, fostering resistance to fast fashion brands and creating opportunities for sustainable fashion brands to thrive. Furthermore, influenced by Western culture and standards, Chinese consumers have begun to admire European and

American lifestyles, leading to greater acceptance of sustainable fashion concepts and behaviors. This shift has enhanced the recognition of sustainable fashion in the Chinese market. Additionally, the collaboration between Chinese and European/American companies, which requires adherence to sustainable standards, has driven Chinese companies to improve their sustainability practices, further increasing the influence of sustainable fashion in the Chinese market.

In summary, social media, as a platform for social practice, offers significant opportunities and support for promoting the sustainable transformation of China's fashion consumption. It plays a crucial role in advancing the development and popularization of sustainable fashion in the Chinese market.

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that the opportunities brought by social media cannot directly address the challenges at the Materials level, as these challenges encompass policies, supervision, and technology in clothing production. However, social media can influence the Materials level by addressing challenges at the Meanings level. These opportunities most directly impact three actors: users, content creators, and fashion brands. This conclusion aligns with the results obtained in the workshop (See appendix 2). Participants unanimously agree that users, content creators, and fashion brands are the three most critical actors on Little Red Book for promoting the transformation towards sustainable consumption in the fashion industry. (See figure 11):
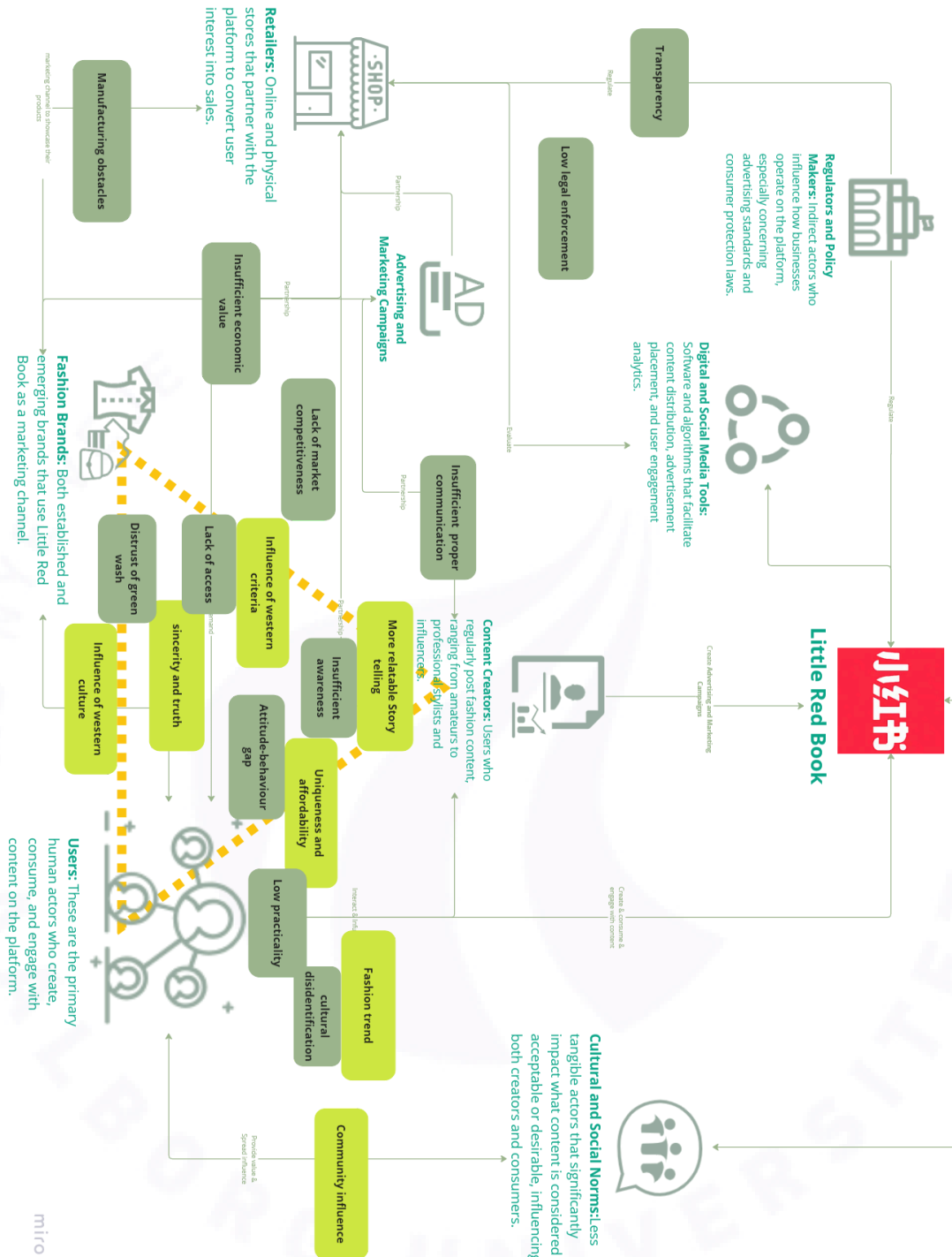
Figure 11: Opportunities revolve around the three most crucial actors (Adapted from Actor Network Theory, authors own figures).

Little Red Book shapes sustainable consumption in the fashion industry through the lens of Social Practice Theory (SPT), providing a dynamic space for the formulation, negotiation, and transformation of fashion-related practices. Users on Little Red Book engage in various fashion practices, including content creation, brand discovery, and purchasing decisions, all influenced by evolving sociocultural norms and values. Sustainable fashion practices, such as

recognizing environmentally friendly brands and embracing ethical consumption, are carried out and shared within the platform, reflecting the importance of environmental awareness and social responsibility. Influencers and key opinion leaders (KOLs) play a crucial role in shaping these meanings, leveraging their cultural capital to promote sustainable fashion choices among their followers.

The material arrangement of the platform, including its digital features and user-generated content, mediates and facilitates fashion consumption practices while enabling sustainable fashion brands to effectively reach and engage their target audiences. Through the interplay of practices, meanings, and material arrangements, Little Red Book contributes to the normalization and dissemination of sustainable fashion practices, driving awareness, demand, and adoption of eco-friendly alternatives within digital communities.

At this stage, consumers' awareness of sustainability on Little Red Book is relatively weak. The significant gap between the rich and the poor in society means that few consumers consider sustainability in their purchasing decisions. In China, many consumers still perceive wearing second-hand products as undignified or unhygienic. Additionally, the rapid pace of information updates on social media leaves consumers with limited access to sustainable brands and knowledge.

Positively, some young groups follow Western trends and lifestyles, leading them to engage in sustainable consumption behaviors, often unconsciously. While direct communication on sustainable topics may be challenging, addressing other interests relevant to consumers can increase their engagement with sustainable consumption. The new generation of Chinese youth, who enjoy better economic conditions, are willing to pay for fashion that highlights their individuality and are more open to the positive values from the Western world. Moreover, due to China's unique political system, the opportunities brought by social media can primarily address the challenges among consumers, content creators, and sustainable brands, thereby narrowing the research focus of this study. Social media holds positive potential for influencing the transformation toward sustainable consumption. However, given the rapid pace of information updates on Little Red Book, many traditional fashion brands also leverage the platform for marketing, making it challenging for sustainable brands to compete effectively.

Relying solely on social media to promote sustainable fashion may not leave a lasting impression on consumers. Therefore, it is crucial to combine online efforts with offline community activities to enhance consumer engagement. While direct communication on sustainability with Chinese consumers is challenging, addressing content that consumers are more interested in can guide their shift towards sustainable consumption. The negative impacts of fast fashion have increasingly dissatisfied consumers, and sustainable fashion offers solutions to these issues at various levels. This creates an entry point for aligning consumer interests with sustainable fashion, promoting changes in consumption behavior.

Based on these insights, the next phase of research will focus on strategy development. The research directions are as follows (See figure 12):

Figure 12: Insights for strategy development (Authors own figures).

1. Identify how sustainable fashion can address the existing conflicts between traditional fashion and consumers at the levels of consumers, content creators, and sustainable brands, and discover opportunities to establish common ground with consumers on sustainable fashion topics.

2. Explore how to combine the influence of social media with various types of offline community activities to create more engaging communication channels with consumers.

3. Determine what type of startup would be best suited to bridge the gap between sustainable fashion and consumers in China, thereby promoting the development of sustainable fashion in the Chinese market.

Chapter 6. Strategy Development

Based on the conclusions of the previous stage, the research on strategy development will focus on finding ways to solve the existing contradictions between traditional fashion and consumers at the levels of consumers, content creators, and sustainable brands. This includes looking for opportunities to establish common topics with consumers in the field of sustainable fashion. Additionally, the research will explore how to use the influence of social media, combined with appropriate types of offline community activities, to establish a more attractive communication medium with consumers. Furthermore, it will investigate the types of startups that are suitable to become a bridge connecting sustainable fashion and consumers in China, thereby promoting the development of sustainable fashion in the Chinese market.

To identify startups that aim to bridge the gap between consumers and sustainable fashion brands, we need a more comprehensive understanding and analysis of the concept of sustainable fashion. This includes examining the existing conflicts between traditional fashion brands and consumers and discovering how sustainable fashion can address these conflicts, creating an effective entry point for resonating and communicating with consumers.

Through data analysis from previous workshops and observations on Little Red Book, we identified the existing conflicts between traditional fashion brands and consumers (See figure 13):

Journey phases	Design and Concept Development	Pattern Making and Prototyping	Production Planning	Mass Production	Distribution and Logistics	Marketing and Retail	Sales and Customer Interaction
Jobs to be done	• Trend Research • Sketching and Ideation • Material Sourcing	• Pattern Creation • Sample Production	• Costing and Budgeting • Manufacturing Orders	• Cutting and Sewing • Quality Control	• Packaging • Shipping	• Branding and Promotion • Retail Placement	• Sales Strategies • Customer Service
Pains	• **Lack of Inclusion:** Designs may not cater to diverse body types, cultural backgrounds, or personal styles. • **Transparency Issues:** Consumers are often unaware of the design process and the rationale behind certain trends.	• **Fit Issues:** Inconsistencies in sizing and fit between prototypes and final products can lead to dissatisfaction. • **Material Mismatch:** Expectations of fabric quality and texture might not align with the final product.	• **Cost Implications:** Lack of clarity on why certain products are priced high due to production costs and logistics. • **Delay in Availability:** Prolonged production timelines can lead to delays in product availability.	• **Quality Variability:** Mass production can lead to variations in quality, causing consumer distrust. • **Toxic Fabric** • **Ethical Concerns:** Consumers are increasingly concerned about the ethical practices of manufacturing.	• **Carbon emissions :** during product transportation • **High Shipping Costs:** Expensive shipping fees can be a deterrent, especially for international purchases.	• **Over-Promotion:** Aggressive marketing strategies can sometimes lead to consumer fatigue and skepticism. • **Inaccessibility:** Limited availability of products in certain regions or stores, making it hard for consumers to access desired items.	
Emotion							

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Figure 13: Existing conflicts between traditional fashion brands and consumers (Authors own figures).

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that the lowest user sentiment in the traditional fashion user journey stems from several factors: the lack of inclusivity and diversity in traditional fashion, the immaturity of local sustainable brands, the negative influence of bloggers, and the limited market and policy environment. Different concepts of sustainable fashion can address these pain points, offering viable solutions (See figure 14):

Figure 14: Sustainable fashion solves the dissatisfaction that traditional fashion brings to consumers (Authors own figures).

Traditional fashion often lacks inclusivity and diversity: The traditional fashion industry often sets unhealthy aesthetic standards, promoting slim figures which lead to detrimental working environments in both the fashion and modeling industries and negative psychological impacts on consumers. The recent discussions about the BM brand documentary on Little Red Book have sparked debates, with more female users calling for the acceptance of healthy and natural bodies and the pursuit of diverse aesthetics. This has influenced a few brands to adopt more diverse models. The concept of "cultural sensitivity" in sustainable fashion, which respects cultural differences and ensures inclusivity, is a solution to this contradiction.

The immaturity of local sustainable brands: Although China has established some sustainable fashion brands in recent years, their ratings on platforms like "Good on You" are generally low. This indicates that the development of local sustainable fashion brands still requires time, and local brands alone cannot completely overcome consumer distrust. Introducing more established European sustainable fashion brands can set an example for local brands and expand the influence of European brands in China, the world's largest fashion market.

The Negative Influence of Bloggers: Bloggers play a crucial role in guiding consumers. Traditional fashion bloggers often promote over-consumption when collaborating with brands and fail to convey proper values. If bloggers start by advocating basic R strategies, such as recycling clothes, and use their influence, they can guide more consumers to take their first steps towards sustainable fashion.

Limited Market and Policy Environment: In China, sustainable fashion has not yet become a strong marketing label, and the government lacks effective policies and actions for the sustainable transformation of the fashion industry. Sustainable brands lack competitiveness in the market, with more capital and attention still focused on traditional fashion. Therefore, relying solely on social media promotion is insufficient. Combining it with offline community activities can create a more tangible and lasting impact on consumers.

Brands Collaborating with Bloggers: Currently, many bloggers lack a sufficient understanding of sustainable fashion and fail to convey sustainable fashion concepts in a way that resonates with users. Traditional big brands are not well-suited for transformation and often lack government supervision, being primarily profit-oriented. Startups, on the other hand, are more flexible and suitable as pioneers of market transformation in China. They can better grasp the sustainable concepts from Western countries and adapt them to the Chinese market, introducing Nordic brands and supporting new sustainable brands. Startups should serve as effective communicators between sustainable fashion and consumers.

6.1 Conclusion of Strategy Development

The design outcome will integrate key elements addressing both environmental and social issues. Effective communication with consumers requires emphasizing relevant entry points, such as promoting social aspects. It is crucial to challenge traditional beauty standards by incorporating diverse and inclusive aesthetic standards that celebrate different body shapes, ages, ethnicities, and gender identities. This approach broadens the appeal of sustainable fashion while promoting a healthier and more inclusive sense of beauty.

Offline activities such as sustainable fashion markets, workshops, and community events are essential for raising awareness and engaging consumers meaningfully. These events provide tangible experiences where consumers can learn about sustainable fashion, see and feel the quality of sustainable products, and understand their impact. By creating interactive and

educational activities, the design will foster a deeper connection between consumers and sustainable fashion, encouraging more informed and responsible purchasing decisions.

Introducing well-known international sustainable brands to the Chinese market is crucial. These brands bring proven sustainable practices that can set a benchmark for local brands. Their presence helps raise the standard of sustainable fashion in China, provides consumers with high-quality, sustainable options, and encourages local brands to improve their practices to compete. Bloggers and influencers play an important role in shaping consumer behavior, especially in the fashion industry. Leveraging their reach and credibility, brands can promote sustainable fashion to a wider audience and cultivate a community that values and advocates for sustainability.

Startups play a key role in driving the sustainable fashion movement. They bring innovation, agility, and new perspectives to the industry. As pioneers in market transformation, startups can experiment with new business models and collaborate with global brands. They also serve as an important bridge for consumer education, spreading awareness about sustainable practices and the benefits of sustainable fashion. By focusing on these key areas, China's sustainable fashion market is expected to grow steadily. Environmental responsibility, healthy aesthetic standards, the presence of international brands, the influence of bloggers, and engaging offline events will collectively increase consumer awareness and engagement in sustainable fashion. Startups will drive innovation and education, leading the Chinese fashion industry towards a more sustainable future.

Chapter 7. Result

7.1 Introduction to the Design Concept:

Influencers on social media significantly enhance consumers' willingness to buy promoted products and encourage impulse purchases, a trend that also extends to sustainable fashion. For instance, a study of Korean YouTube video bloggers found that social connections with viewers increased the likelihood of purchasing sustainable fashion. Viewers are more inclined to buy sustainable products if a celebrity recommends or advocates for conscious consumption (Vladimirova et al., 2023b). Survey results also show that traditional fashion bloggers on Little Red Book have greatly influenced consumers' fast fashion consumption behavior. By correctly guiding these influencers, startups can leverage their large influence to promote sustainable consumption behaviors among their fan groups, potentially setting off a sustainable fashion trend on Little Red Book.

However, relying solely on Little Red Book marketing may not be sufficient due to the rapidly changing nature of social media information. Sustainable fashion needs to be as competitive as traditional fashion to resonate with consumers. Combining online efforts with offline communities and activities can enhance consumer engagement. In recent years, there has been an increase in offline fashion fairs and workshops in China, which many consumers are eager to attend. These events provide excellent opportunities for publicity and educational outreach (Tencent News, 2024).

To better engage consumers, more creative activities that align with their interests are necessary. The contrast between traditional fashion and sustainable fashion often presents opportunities for the latter to resonate more deeply with consumers. Traditional fashion events, such as major fashion weeks, often set exclusive thresholds, making ordinary consumers feel distanced from fashion and fostering unhealthy psychological effects (Lenkin, 2023). This exclusivity contradicts the diversity and inclusiveness inherent in sustainable fashion.

By breaking down the perceived barriers between traditional fashion and consumers, sustainable fashion can attract more interest and engagement. If sustainable fashion can bridge this gap, it is likely to foster greater consumer interest and participation in sustainable practices.

Therefore, the final outcome of this study is a fashion market concept that revolutionizes the traditional retail experience by integrating sustainability, inclusivity, and dynamic engagement. The design concept aims to bridge the gap between sustainable fashion and consumers by leveraging social media promotion to encourage participation in offline community activities. The objective is to translate sustainable fashion into a language that resonates with consumers, fostering meaningful communication.

Each event will feature nine themed booths, carefully curated to reflect the principles of the Circular Economy 9 R strategy (Hunger, Arnold and Ulber, 2024) . These themes will be

transformed into engaging and consumer-friendly communication methods through captivating fashion shows. This setup will allow suppliers to showcase their products in an immersive and interactive fashion show experience, effectively communicating the concept of sustainable fashion to consumers (See figure 15).
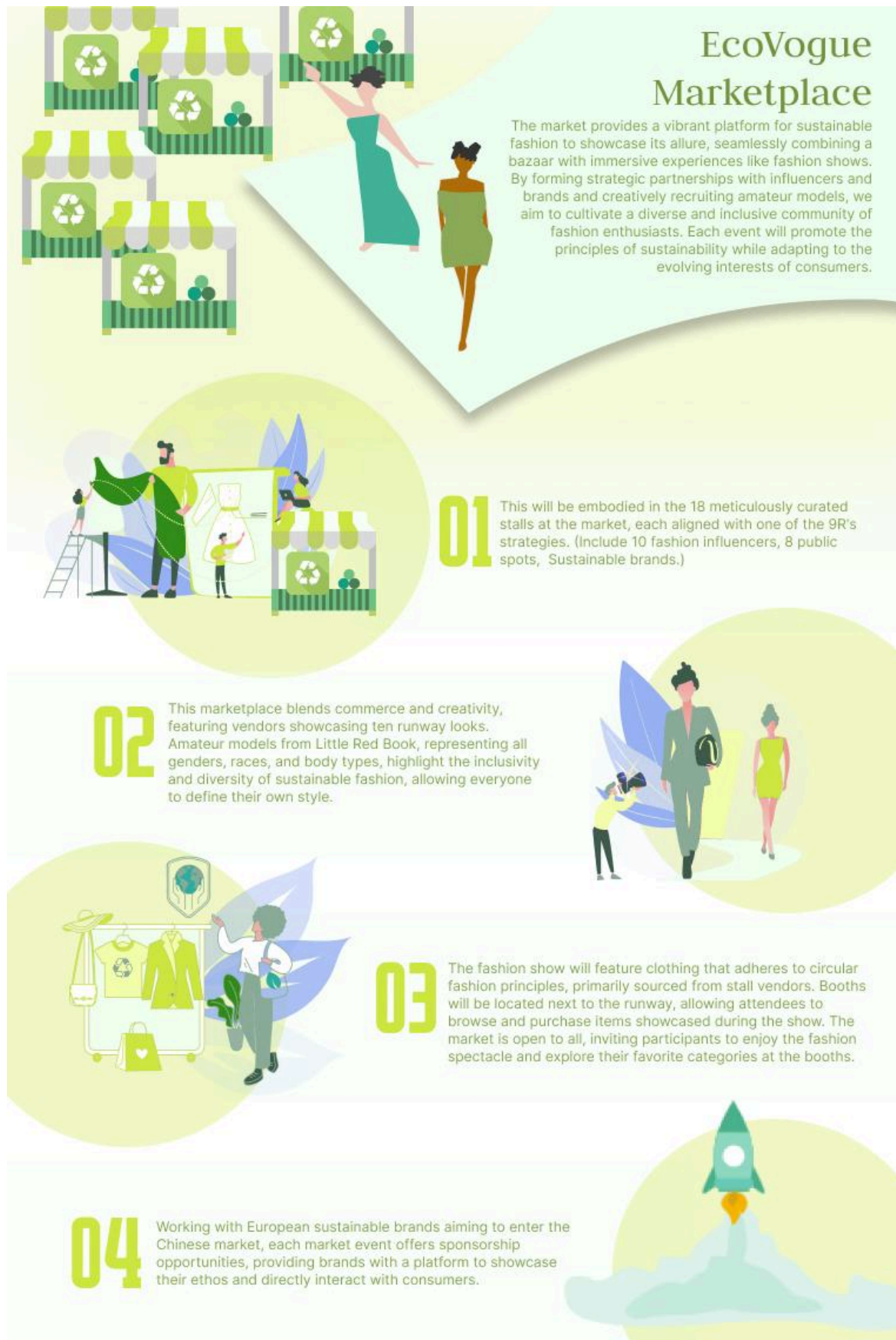
EcoVogue Marketplace

The market provides a vibrant platform for sustainable fashion to showcase its allure, seamlessly combining a bazaar with immersive experiences like fashion shows. By forming strategic partnerships with influencers and brands and creatively recruiting amateur models, we aim to cultivate a diverse and inclusive community of fashion enthusiasts. Each event will promote the principles of sustainability while adapting to the evolving interests of consumers.

01 This will be embodied in the 18 meticulously curated stalls at the market, each aligned with one of the 9R's strategies. (Include 10 fashion influencers, 8 public spots, Sustainable brands.)

02 This marketplace blends commerce and creativity, featuring vendors showcasing ten runway looks. Amateur models from Little Red Book, representing all genders, races, and body types, highlight the inclusivity and diversity of sustainable fashion, allowing everyone to define their own style.

03 The fashion show will feature clothing that adheres to circular fashion principles, primarily sourced from stall vendors. Booths will be located next to the runway, allowing attendees to browse and purchase items showcased during the show. The market is open to all, inviting participants to enjoy the fashion spectacle and explore their favorite categories at the booths.

04 Working with European sustainable brands aiming to enter the Chinese market, each market event offers sponsorship opportunities, providing brands with a platform to showcase their ethos and directly interact with consumers.

Figure 15: Market service process (Authors own figures).

The essence of this concept is to effectively communicate the principles of sustainable fashion in a way that resonates with consumers. This will be embodied in the 18 meticulously curated stalls at the market, each aligned with one of the 9R's strategies (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Refurbish, Remanufacture, Repurpose, Recycle, Recover). The market will recruit 10 traditional fashion influencers who, due to frequent purchases and sponsorships, possess a surplus of clothing. These influencers will inaugurate the marketplace by selling their excess garments. Subsequently, the remaining eight stalls will be themed around the R strategies of the circular economy, with invitations extended to relevant influencers, designers, and merchants to display and sell their sustainable fashion creations. This approach ensures a diverse and engaging consumer experience, effectively communicates the principles of sustainable fashion, and leverages the influence of key figures to guide more consumers towards sustainable fashion practices.

Working with European sustainable brands aiming to enter the Chinese market, each market event offers sponsorship opportunities, providing brands with a platform to showcase their ethos and directly interact with consumers. Additionally, participants can be incentivized with customized rewards such as freebies or discounts for sharing their experiences on social media platforms like Little Red Book.

This innovative marketplace seamlessly blends commerce and creativity. Each vendor will showcase ten looks on the runway, embracing diversity and challenging traditional beauty standards. Amateur models will be recruited through platforms like Little Red Book, without any restrictions on gender, race, or body shape, to highlight the inclusivity and diversity advocated by sustainable fashion, allowing everyone to define their own sense of fashion.

The clothes featured in the fashion show adhere to the concept of circular fashion and are primarily sourced from the stall vendors. Booths from different vendors will be located next to the fashion show, enabling participants to make selections by watching the runway displays. The market is open to everyone, inviting attendees to witness the fashion spectacle and explore their favorite categories at the booths.

Each booth will communicate its concept in a language that is more acceptable to consumers, combining the 9R principles of the circular economy. As consumer interests evolve, the themes of each event will be iterated based on feedback and trends.

7.2 Role of Little Red Book

By inviting traditional fashion bloggers on the Little Red Book platform to participate in market fashion shows as stall owners, we achieve two key objectives. First, it helps bloggers manage the surplus clothes they no longer need. Second, since traditional fashion bloggers already have a substantial fan base on Little Red Book, their participation in the market fashion show will attract and influence their followers to engage with the market. This exposure allows fans to discover and learn more about sustainable fashion (See figure 16).
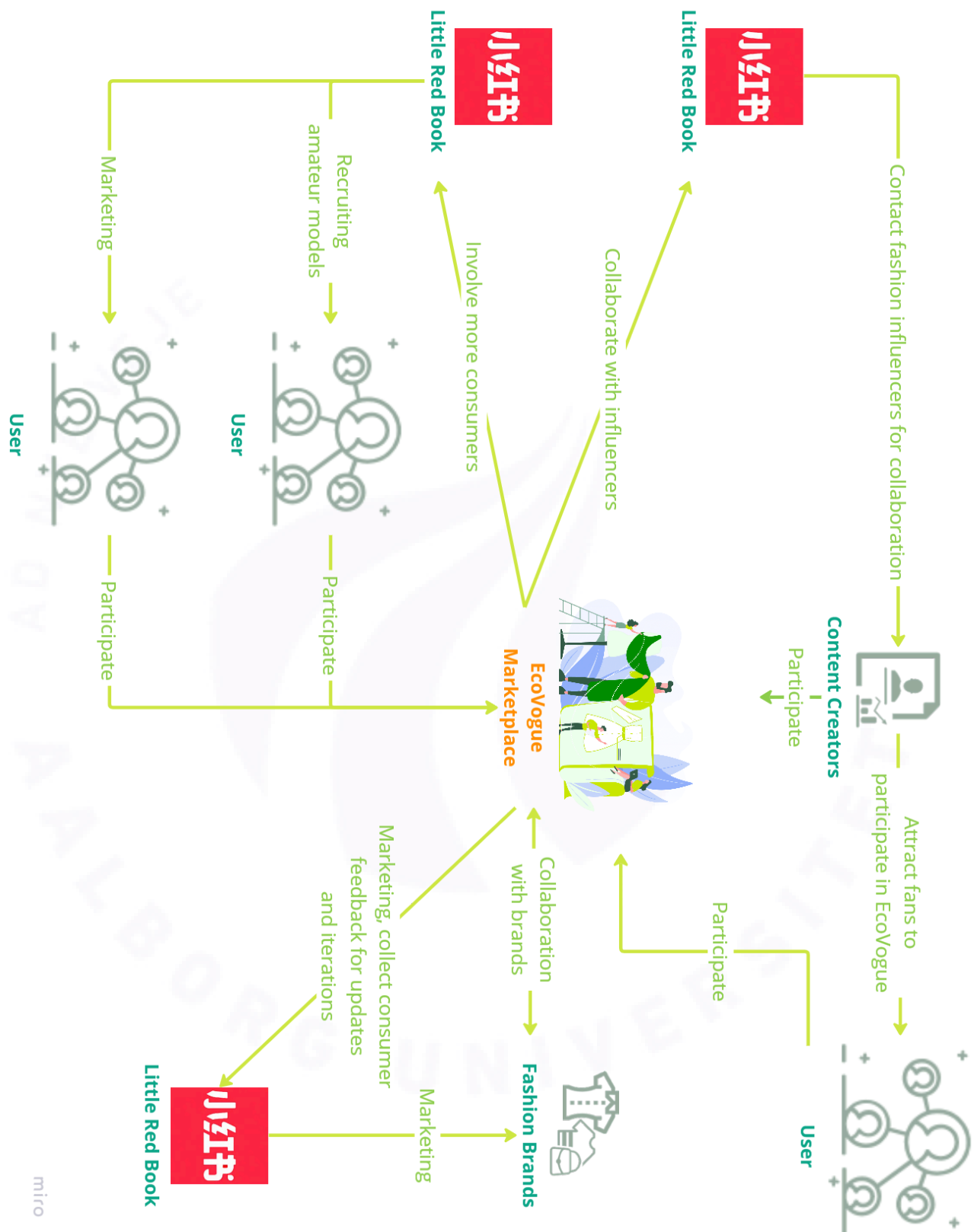
Figure 16: The role of Little Red Book (Authors own figures).

Recruiting diverse amateur models through the Little Red Book platform can spark the interest of many everyday fashion enthusiasts while demonstrating that sustainable consumption challenges the unhealthy aesthetic values imposed by traditional fashion. Unlike traditional fashion, which sets rigid standards for models and misleads consumers with harmful ideals, sustainable fashion promotes aesthetic diversity and inclusivity.

By leveraging the power of social media and inviting influencers, we can expand market reach and attract new audiences to the world of sustainable fashion.

7.3 Final Outcome - Business plan for startup

In essence, our fashion market concept is not just a shopping destination but a catalyst for change, sowing the seeds of sustainable fashion in the minds of consumers. By diversifying its revenue streams and offering a range of value-added services, the startup can create a sustainable business model that meets the needs of Nordic sustainable fashion brands entering the Chinese market through social media.

The startup facilitates the entry of Nordic sustainable fashion brands into the Chinese market via social media, and its comprehensive business plan will outline the company's vision, mission, goals, strategy, and operational details. Here is an overview of the key components to be included in the business plan:

Executive Summary:

The business plan outlines the creation of a sustainable fashion marketplace that leverages the power of social media to connect European sustainable fashion brands with Chinese consumers. This marketplace will offer vendors a dynamic platform to showcase their products, seamlessly blending commerce with immersive experiences such as fashion shows. Through strategic partnerships with influencers and brands, along with the innovative recruitment of amateur models, we aim to cultivate a diverse and inclusive community of fashion enthusiasts. Each event will advance the principles of sustainability while catering to the evolving interests of consumers.

Business Description:

The sustainable fashion marketplace will operate as a platform for vendors to sell their products to Chinese consumers. The marketplace will focus on promoting sustainable fashion practices and brands, aligning with the growing demand for eco-friendly alternatives in the fashion industry. Events will be held in major cities across China, providing vendors with access to a wide audience of fashion-conscious consumers.

Market Analysis:

China's fashion market is developing rapidly and is one of the largest retail markets in the world. However, various factors have led to consumer purchasing choices that do not align with sustainable development. Due to China's unique cultural environment, effective

communication with consumers on 'sustainable' topics can be challenging. Despite this, Little Red Book's influence on consumer behavior presents opportunities to address this challenge. Our target market includes environmentally conscious consumers, traditional fashion enthusiasts, and individuals seeking unique and socially responsible products.

Marketing Strategy:

The marketing strategy will leverage social media platforms like Little Red Book to engage the target audience and increase brand awareness. Campaigns will collaborate with influential figures and brands to promote our activities and engage with consumers online.

Financial Plan:

Sustainable fashion market revenues will come from supplier fees, sponsorships, and ticket sales for fashion show events, with potential for additional income through advertising and brand collaborations. The financial plan includes expenses for venue rental, marketing, staffing, and administration.

The project aims to promote sustainable consumer behavior in China's fashion market by developing social media strategies that leverage influencers and content creators. These strategies combine digital engagement with physical events to create a cohesive consumer experience. Data-driven insights will tailor communication methods to consumer behavior and preferences, enhancing effectiveness.

The project educates consumers about the environmental impact of fashion, encouraging sustainable practices and reducing the industry's footprint by promoting the 9R circular economy strategy: refuse, reduce, reuse, repair, refurbish, remanufacture, repurpose, recycle, and recover.

It also promotes social inclusion and diversity by challenging traditional beauty standards. By recruiting amateur models and hosting inclusive fashion shows, the project encourages self-acceptance and reduces body image issues.

Economically, the project supports European sustainable fashion brands entering the Chinese market, fostering growth and innovation in sustainable materials and production. It empowers consumers with knowledge to make informed fashion choices.

This initiative aligns with the EU 2030 "EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles" and prepares for future cooperation between Chinese and EU fashion industries. The marketplace has the potential to become a leading platform for sustainable fashion in the region.

Overall, the project advances sustainable fashion in China through innovative communication strategies, combining digital and physical experiences, and using data-driven insights. Its impacts include raising awareness, reducing environmental impact, promoting a circular

economy, enhancing social inclusion, creating economic opportunities for sustainable brands, and empowering consumers.

Chapter 8. Discussion

The results of this study highlight several key insights into promoting sustainable fashion in China through social media, which align with and extend the existing literature. This section will link to the literature review, analyze the alignment and differences between this study's results and previous research, and discuss the implications for start-ups and sustainable fashion development.

The literature review highlights the critical role of social media in shaping consumer behavior, with platforms such as Little Red Book playing a leading role in China's digital landscape. The results indicate that social media have key potential to promote sustainable fashion. Previous research has pointed out, working with local influencers has been shown to be effective in bridging the gap between sustainable brands and consumers.

However, this study differs from the earlier studies, revealing the nuanced ways in which localized storytelling can enhance emotional connections with Chinese consumers. While previous research often emphasizes the importance of general sustainability messages, our results show that tailoring these messages to Chinese cultural values (such as frugality and community-oriented initiatives) can significantly increase engagement. This difference highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity in crafting effective sustainability narratives.

Despite these positive findings, start-ups in the sustainable fashion sector face numerous challenges, such as budget limits and intense competition with traditional fashion. The research suggests that focusing on cost-effective marketing strategies, building strong community connections, and targeting niche markets can help overcome these barriers. This is consistent with the literature on start-up strategies in the circular economy, as highlighted by Hockerts and Wüstenhagen (2010), which emphasizes the flexibility and innovative potential of start-ups in driving sustainable change.

The implications for start-ups are clear: leveraging social media, especially through strategic influencer collaborations and culturally resonant storytelling, can significantly increase consumer engagement and market penetration. Start-ups should also prioritize transparency and interactive content to build trust and educate consumers on the benefits of sustainable fashion.

For policymakers, supporting the integration of EU sustainability clauses into Chinese market practices can promote smoother collaboration between European brands and Chinese partners, giving a positive boost to the sustainable transformation of the Chinese fashion industry.

Overall, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how social media has the potential of promoting sustainable fashion in China. By addressing cultural differences and leveraging the power of digital platforms, brands can effectively engage consumers and drive sustainable practices. The insights gained from this study offer positive directions for startups and policymakers aiming to promote a more sustainable fashion industry.

Chapter 9. Practical Implications

This study provides guidelines and strategies for start-ups aiming to promote sustainable fashion through social media to address potential challenges and provide solutions to effectively navigate the competitive digital environment.

For European brands entering the Chinese market, collaborating with compliant Chinese companies can help reduce resistance. Identifying niche markets and unique selling propositions is essential for breaking into saturated markets. Research indicates that effectively communicating sustainability issues with Chinese consumers requires a fully localized approach, considering cultural differences and varying levels of awareness. Leveraging social media influencers is crucial, as platforms like Little Red Book, WeChat, and Weibo are highly active among consumers. Each platform has different user demographics, so it's important to select the one that best aligns with the product's target audience.

Partnering with trusted local influencers who can authentically convey the brand's sustainability values helps bridge the gap with consumers, making sustainability more relatable and meaningful. Localized storytelling is also vital; tailoring sustainability messages to fit local contexts and cultural values helps build strong emotional connections. Emphasizing themes that resonate with Chinese traditions, such as thriftiness and community initiatives, can be particularly effective.

Highlighting the practical benefits of sustainable fashion, like superior quality, longer durability, and cost-effectiveness, appeals to pragmatic consumers. Additionally, promoting the use of non-toxic and environmentally friendly materials can address health and safety concerns, further engaging the audience. Combining these strategies creates a robust and authentic presence in the sustainable fashion space, effectively promoting sustainability in the Chinese market.

Chapter 10. Contribution to Sustainable Design Engineering

This study contributes to the existing principles of sustainable design engineering by highlighting the significant role of social media in promoting sustainable fashion and suggesting that sustainable design engineering must consider digital influence as a critical factor in consumer behavior and market dynamics. By emphasizing localized storytelling and cultural values, the study expands the principles of sustainable design to include cultural sensitivity, ensuring that sustainability initiatives are more effectively communicated and accepted by diverse consumer groups. The emphasis on interactive and educational content introduces a new dimension to sustainable design engineering, where consumer education and engagement are central to driving sustainable practices. The combination of online and offline activities to promote sustainability highlights the need for holistic engagement strategies, ensuring that consumers have multiple touchpoints with sustainable fashion, enhancing their overall experience and commitment.

10.1 Design for Sustainable Behavior (DfSB)

The research underscores the critical importance of Design for Sustainable Behavior (DfSB) principles in promoting sustainable fashion consumption in China through social media. DfSB involves creating products, services, and systems that encourage sustainable behaviors while discouraging unsustainable ones. This aligns seamlessly with my research goal of leveraging social media platforms such as Little Red Book to influence consumer behavior towards achieving sustainable development (Ceschin and Gaziulusoy, 2016).

To effectively implement the DfSB, it is crucial to develop clear and understandable language and tools for both consumers and professionals. My research emphasizes the importance of creating jargon-free guidelines and user-friendly tools tailored to the Chinese market, such as design checklists and behavior mapping frameworks. Disseminating these resources through workshops and webinars can ensure widespread adoption and impact.

In summary, my research on promoting sustainable fashion in China via social media closely aligns with the principles of the DfSB. By understanding consumer behavior, developing accessible tools, creating reliable evaluation metrics, and testing strategies in real-world settings, we can significantly promote sustainable fashion consumption. This approach not only supports the goals of the DfSB but also provides valuable insights for startups and policymakers aiming to foster a more sustainable fashion industry in China and beyond.

10.2 Reflection

Because this is a personal project with limited time, it requires consultation with more professionals from various fields to gather feedback on the concept's feasibility and user reactions for iterative improvements. My research emphasizes the importance of leveraging social media platforms like Little Red Book to influence consumer behavior towards

sustainability. Engaging with experts in digital marketing, sustainability, and Chinese consumer behavior can provide critical insights to refine the concept further.

Since most European sustainable fashion brands have their manufacturing factories in Europe, facilitating their entry into the Chinese market necessitates research into how Chinese factories can meet the sustainable criteria of European companies. This includes ensuring that local factories adhere to environmental standards, ethical labor practices, and efficient resource management, which are pivotal for maintaining the integrity of European sustainable brands. Establishing a certification system or partnering with third-party auditors could be potential solutions to ensure compliance.

The goal of the fashion show market is to promote sustainable fashion in China, so a comprehensive implementation plan is needed to ensure resources and carbon emissions are minimized in venue setup and other logistics. This involves using eco-friendly materials for the setup, selecting centrally located venues to reduce transportation emissions, and implementing recycling programs during events. My research suggests that incorporating educational segments within the market, such as workshops on sustainable fashion and recycling, can enhance the event's impact.

Initial engagement between influencers and consumers might be challenging, so alternative strategies must be developed to enhance consumer participation. My research indicates that engaging storytelling and interactive content can significantly boost consumer interest. Developing partnerships with local influencers who are genuinely passionate about sustainability and who resonate with the target demographic can bridge the initial engagement gap. Additionally, creating gamified experiences or offering exclusive incentives for participation can encourage more consumer involvement.

In summary, the project requires a multi-faceted approach that includes expert consultation, stringent sustainability compliance for local manufacturing, a detailed implementation plan for the fashion show market, and innovative engagement strategies to ensure successful promotion of sustainable fashion in China.

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