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Fashion Brand Involvement and Hedonic Consumption Antecedents in a Fast Expanding Market

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Abstract:- The observed intense competitive fashion market and the fragmented knowledge in fashion involvement which is largely skewed towards utilitarian dimension have combined to trigger this study. Accordingly, this paper seeks to unravel hedonic antecedents of fashion involvement and consumption in a fast-expanding market of a typical developing sub-Saharan African country context; and to posit a framework to guide private brand fashion consumer research in fast-expanding markets from developing country context. Data were collected through the aid of structured questionnaire from fashion consumers in top fashion outlets in Lagos metropolis. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique was deployed to process data regarding hypothesized causal relationships using SmartPLS 2.0 software. Support was found for three hedonic drivers and support was not for one. Fashion belief was found as strong mediator between fashion involvement and fashion consumption. The study develops a theory that reflects hedonic drivers of fashion involvement by providing strategic insights for local fashion brand entrepreneurs, especially as they compete with established global brands. Theoretical and managerial implications of the findings were discussed.

Keywords: - Fashion consumption, consumer involvement, fashion brands, Fast expanding market (FEM), fashion private brands, sub-Saharan Africa.

1 Introduction

There is a global rise in 'fashionistas' and fashion consumers, especially among youths and women in the sub-Saharan African (SSA) region. Fashion-SMEs, with private fashion brands, have emerged as a response to the needs of the fast rising fashion consumer type in the region. In Africa (and indeed SSA), where an emerging fashion industry is slowly picking up steam, fashion-SMEs seems to be ruling the industry. There is over 90% private brand fashion-SMEs that makeup the fashion industry [1]. Albeit an emerging industry dominated by private brand SMEs, the percentage rate of businesses that survive after the first 4 years of operation in the fashion industry is estimated to

be 47% [1]. This leaves the average failure rate of private fashion brand in SSA to be about 53%. This is worrisome for an industry still embryonic. The low success rate has been appropriated to the competitive nature of the industry and the increased lack of industry knowledge and understanding of the fashion market by new entrants of private brands [2]. The gap of knowledge insufficiency about the fashion market in SSA, which is a necessary precursor for dealing with competition, is this study's primarily concern. In filling the gap, earlier studies had focused on socio-demographic drivers of fashion consumers [3, 4, 5]. Hence, fashion entrepreneurs can benefit from research that focus on psychographic fashion consumption

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drivers which examines the activities, interests, thinking and opinions of consumer behaviours, is of significant value to this study. This is critical as the study will provide deeper insights into their target markets' psychological and emotional motivations, which is essential in shaping digital marketing and beyond [6, 7].

1.1 Problem Formulation

The global fashion industry is ever in a state of flux due to rapid change in the taste, style, and desire for fashion. Agreeably, competition is increasingly becoming rife as established global fashion brands (such as Chanel, Marc Jacobs, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Giorgio Armani, Ralph Lauren, Pierre Cardin, Vivienne Westwood, Prada etcetera) must compete with one another and also compete with fast emerging private fashion brands (such as Tiffany Amber, Duro, Odua, Jewel by Lisa, Soares Anthony, Ziki, Mia Atafo, Dakora, Nikki Africa) in the SSA. Also, the emerging private fashion brands/labels seem to be at the 'mercy' of the established global brands to survive in their own home market. This has largely occasioned the aforementioned high failure rate of fashion private brands in SSA. The survival of fashion-SMEs and their brands somewhat depends on their understanding and responses to the changing fashion consumer market on one hand [8, 9], and the capability to explore, identify, and tap into growth opportunities in fast expanding markets (FEM) in their locality and within the SSAs [10], on the other hand. The key focus of this study is on fashion clothing, that is, all apparels that cover any part of the human body [3] and how emerging local fashion labels in FEM in typical SSA developing context can compete effectively through deeper understanding of fashion involvement and hedonic fashion consumption of the fashion consumer by unravelling the antecedents of hedonic fashion consumption. This is somewhat a departure from earlier studies [11] that have increasingly focused on the utilitarian fashion consumption antecedents. It has been argued that focusing more on utilitarian fashion consumption is the ideal for an already mature fashion industry context; however, studies focusing on hedonic fashion consumption should dominate and emerge from somewhat embryonic or less mature fashion industry context [12, 13; 14].The essence is to grasp basic understanding of the psychographic motivations of fashion consumer market in an emerging context, which hedonic consumption research offers. Knowledge insufficiency in hedonic fashion consumption seems to prevail in the SSA context, which,

arguably, may largely be responsible for the growing failure of private fashion brands.

Therefore, on the strength of the foregoing, a number of factors tend to provide the motivation for this study. First is the observed intense competitive fashion market which has increasingly become major concern in the fashion industry. Local fashion private brands must compete with established global brands while tapping into the opportunities of a FEM in the SSA context. In a study by [15], brand survival remains the major concern of private label owners in developing country context while control of profit margin and cost management remain critical in the survival triangle of private labels [16].The competitiveness and survival of local fashion brands is a precursor for their internationalization. This study is about how local fashion labels in fast expanding sub-Saharan African market context can survive, become competitive, and eventually become an international fashion brand. This is, perhaps, because the "fashion industry can indeed make a positive contribution to Africa's development" [17, 18]. Conversely, international fashion brands will find this study insightful especially in the drive to tap into FEM that offer high market growth opportunities in the SSA context. Key significance of this study is that it provides research-based evidence for crafting fashion brand marketing strategies that support the survival of local fashion brands operating in FEM, which could reduce the bourgeoning failure rate of private fashion brands.

Second, knowledge in fashion involvement seems fragmented and skewed only towards utilitarian dimension with somewhat little understanding of the hedonic dimension of fashion from the SSA context. This study seeks to bridge this gap by deepening knowledge in the hedonic dimension of private fashion involvement in a fashion industry with a high failure rate. Fashion (brand) involvement which is synonymous with customer involvement deals with the level of engagement and the active processing which is being undertaken by the consumer in fashion consumption. Consumers can engage in consumption in two ways: by seeking utilitarian value and/or by seeking hedonic value. Hence, typologically, the fashion brand involvement can be divided into two: utilitarian fashion involvement and hedonic fashion involvement [19; 14]. Arguably, fashion (which is for pleasure) is a hedonic need, clothing (which is a basic need basically to cover the body) is a utilitarian need; hence, this perhaps explains why a number of studies [3, 4, 5] have focused increasingly on the

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utilitarian dimension. Modern consumers (especially women and generation Y) increasingly make consumption decision on emotional bases [3]; since fashion is a hedonic factor and so much emotion is attached to fashion consumption given the consumption involvement level for fashion [20, 21, 9]. The common battle all consumers face, which is between hedonic consumption versus utilitarian consumption, is that consumers try to justify whether they need a product or not. Earlier studies [11] explored more of utilitarian antecedents (i.e. tangible attributes of product category, particularly variables such as age, financial capacity, materials, clothing, and fabrics) with little attention on the consumer emotionality of fashion consumption being the hedonic focus – that is, the intangible attribute of product category. Thus, several earlier studies view fashion products as objective entities rather than subjective symbols. The hedonic focus, which this study provides, is an extension of the utilitarian focus and makes an incremental contribution to the understanding of fashion involvement and fashion brand marketing using data from a typical SSA context, thus expanding consumer research with respect to fashion consumption. This is consistent with the argument that people buy products not only for what they do (utilitarian motivations), but also for what they mean (hedonic motivations) [22].

Third, this study is a response to a call by previous consumer researchers [4, 3] to explore the hedonic dimension of fashion consumption of specific brands within product categories. A number of earlier studies in the fashion involvement research have been on product category, and this appears to have led to the call for future research to focus on specific fashion brands within the clothe/fabric product category. For instance O'Cass [4] sustained that "it is very critical to explore the interaction (of involvement) at the product class level before examining if consumers transfer involvement from the product to specific brands within a product class". Hourigan and Bougoure [3] also call for the use of real fashion brands to derive response. Arnould and Thompson [23] calls for the need "… to develop a unique body of knowledge about fashion consumers and fashion consumptions for private fashion brands" within each product category as a direction of future consumer research. Furthermore, research endeavours directed at hedonic fashion consumption are highly encouraged for a young fashion industry that demonstrate high private brand failure rate [12, 13]. The private fashion brands are emergent in the SSA and the fashion industry have high failure rate,

which offers opportunity to respond to the call to engage in private brand hedonic fashion consumption research.

Sequel to the foregoing, this research paper seeks to address the following question: what hedonic factors drive fashion brand involvement of fast-expanding market (i.e. youths and women) in a typical developing sub-Saharan African country context? Accordingly, this paper seeks to achieve the following objectives: to unravel hedonic antecedents of fashion involvement and consumption in a fast-expanding market; and to posit a framework to guide private brand fashion consumer research in fast-expanding markets of developing country context. The structure of this paper is such that after this introduction, the rest of the paper discusses the following themes: review of related literature, research method, analysis and result, discussion, theoretical implications, managerial implications, conclusions, and limitations and direction for further research.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

2.1 Theoretical Background
This study uses the Consumer Involvement Theory (CIT) to explain the concept of hedonic consumption and how it relates to fashion consumption involvement. The Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) is used to explain fashion consumption culture in the FEM context. The Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Theory is used to explain why local fashion brand, in the changing marketplace of FEM, needs to build strong brand equity to remain competitive in the face of strong global brands.

The CIT is one way to understand the psychology and behaviour of fashion consumers in FEMs. Involvement refers to the emotion or feeling characterized by enthusiasm, interest and excitement that consumers feel for some product categories [23]. Consumer participation is an elevated state of awareness that drives people to look for, pay attention to, and think deeply about product information before making a purchase [24, 25].The idea behind CIT is the *time* and *energy* consumers dedicate to making the decision are the two main factors that drive most purchase or consumption decisions [26]. A number factors, such as personal, product, and situational factors influence consumer involvement, which are two typology – situational and enduring involvement. The CIT sustains that consumer involvement in a product could be high or low, captured in a

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quadrant of how the consumer could respond, that is: high involvement/ rational; high involvement/ emotional; low involvement/ rational; and Low involvement/ emotional. Fashion brands fall within the quadrant of high involvement/emotional (or high involvement/high feeling). It is also situational involvement typology since it is temporary (different fashion are used for different occasion) and refers to feelings of a consumer as well as experiences in a given situation when he/she thinks of a specific fashion product. As indicated by [25], the more involvement of consumers in fashion, the more their purchase is likely to increase. As fashion consumption belief (orientation) seems to shift from utilitarian to hedonic (for pleasure) domain, this study, drawing insight from CIT, we deduce that fashion situations will result in high fashion involvement thereby leading to high emotions in the consumer towards a fashion brand all in the quest to satisfy one's pleasure (i.e. the fashion situation). This has serious managerial implication as fashion SMEs can leverage on emotions and pleasure for a differential marketing advantage.

According to Arnould and Thompson [23], the CCT is based on the connections between customers' individual and collective identities; the cultures developed and embodied in consumers' daily lives; underlying events, actions, and structures; the nature and dynamics of the sociological categories through and across which consumer culture dynamics are enacted and inflected. Traditionally, the CCT has focused on "consumer consuming and possession practices, notably their hedonic, aesthetic, and ceremonial components" [27], adding that the CCT focuses on how consumers form a concept of a varied and frequently fragmented sense of self while using resources created by marketers, as the market increasingly becomes a location to create identity narratives. CCT conceives consumers as identity seekers and makers. The fashion consumers are increasingly using the fashion brands to create narratives and foster some level of identity. This study seems to confirm the CCT resourcefulness as it explains hedonic fashion consumption culture in the FEM context. The CCT supports largely why the hedonic constructs of consumer fantasy and consumer emotional arousal are explored in this study. Indeed, fashion has increasingly become a culture where the fashion consumer uses the brand offers (materials) to forge a sense of self and make a personal narrative of identity through fashion.

Brand survival in the FEMs is a function of building strong brand-equity base. "The fundamental tenet of CBBE is that the power of the brand (i.e., the brand equity) lies in what customers have learned, felt, seen, and heard about the brand based on their experience over a period of time," says Keller [28]. The underlying thrust of CBBE is that the power of the brand lies in what resides in the minds of customers about a given brand. Brands with higher equity yield higher financial rewards to the firm [29], consequently, it is necessary to develop strong brand equity using six brand building blocks (brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, brand judgements, brand feelings, and brand resonance) [30, 31]. It can be inferred that building strong private fashion brand equity is a sine-qua-non for private local brands in FEMs, especially as they seek local market dominance or seek internationalization. To boost the private fashion brand equity and become competitive, the fashion-entrepreneur need to increasingly understand the impact of hedonic consumption dimensions (such as multisensory, fantasy, and emotional arousal)on brand equity since these variables strongly fosters what has already been learned, felt, seen, and heard by the consumer about the private fashion brand.

2.2 Conceptual Foundations

2.2.1 Fast Expanding Market (FEM) for Private Fashion

Modern marketing managers should have eagle eyes to spot somewhat negligible but vital market opportunities, which are prevalent in FEM. Identifying and tapping into the fast expanding market (FEM) in the SSA offers private fashion brands opportunity to compete with global fashion brands. Originally coined by [10], FEM refer to any "rapidly developing opportunity, with the market as a focal point, regardless of that market's existence on a supranational, national, regional, industry, cluster, or business level". A FEM is not based on boundaries of geographies or industries, but rather views markets from new perspectives of finding new ways of attaining economic growth. The FEM thinking offers firms new sources to find wealth and prosperity by focusing strongly on trends in markets as markets demonstrate strong promise of "pocket of growth" – that is, somewhat negligible but constitute vital market opportunities.

Consistent with Tse, Esposito, and Soufani [10] that identification of business opportunities in FEM is key way to lifting sales in tough competitive times; therefore a number of international fashion labels are finding inroads into the sub-Saharan African region which has 'pockets of growth' that are less tapped and seldom detected. These

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international fashion labels are evident in Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa, which are typical developing SSA countries. A number of factors seem to offer growth opportunities in Nigeria, and perhaps, in similar SSA developing economy for international fashion labels to explore such business space and/or for local fashion-SMEs to be competitive. Such growth opportunities or 'pockets of growth' have also somewhat stimulated the emergence of local fashion label entrepreneurs, who seems not to be fully taping into such opportunities using local market knowledge. Perhaps, this partly explains the high failure rate of private fashion brands while global fashion brands continue to flourish.

To survive and compete effectively, fashion private brands must begin to identify, understand, and take advantage of 'pocket of growths' or new target markets and market trends. The first factor or 'pocket of growth' is the population of youth and women, who are largely the target for fashion labels. The population of women and youth offer an attractive fashion market in Nigeria and in similar SSA developing country. For instance, it has been posited that Nigeria represents over 50% of the West African population and about 20% of the population in SSA [32, 33, 34, 35]. Similarly, it has been sustained that Women constitute about 49% of the Nigerian population and nearly one out of four women in sub-Saharan Africa is a Nigerian [33, 35]. The youth constitute over half of the SSA population. Taken together, population of women and youth, who are largely emotional towards fashion, clearly signals SSA as a FEM.

A number of studies [4, 3] continued to reinforce gender and age (particularly women and youth) as key driver of fashion clothing involvement, perhaps because the purchase decision by women and youths are highly based on emotions and they seem to have high passion for fashion [36, 32, 33]. Second 'pocket of growth' to tap into by private fashion brands is the rising middle class. According to the African Development Bank (AfDB) [37] there is a rise of the middle class in Africa, which is an indication of poverty reduction [37]. AfDB projected that by 2030 much of Africa will somewhat attain lower and middle-class majorities, and that Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa are expected to provide the largest number of new middle class. Weaved together, the foregoing evidence of growing middle class in the SSA, though more of 'floating-middle-class' typology [38], is suggestive of promise of fast growing fashion middle class in the SSA region [17].

2.2.2 Fashion Brand Involvement (FBI):

Earlier studies [3, 39, 21] have focused on fashion clothing involvement (FCI), which is underpinned by utilitarian characteristics. The FCI is a conceptualization from the consumer involvement theory (CIT). Although, the terms can be used interchangeably, nevertheless, the current discourse is on fashion brand involvement (FBI), which is underpinned by hedonic characteristics, is a derivative of FCI. The emphasis is on 'brand' and not on the 'clothe'. The brand is already suggestive of the clothe quality [30, 40, 39]. Therefore, we conceptualize the FBI because the fashion consumer are largely drawn to fashion brands or labels with tacit confidence in the clothe since clothe quality is embedded in the brand. Both FBI and FCI are rooted in the consumer involvement theorization.

Introduced over 50 years ago by Krugman [41], consumer involvement has metamorphosed into a critical area of research targeted at explaining and forging deeper understanding of different aspects of consumer decision making [42, 43, 44, 45, 46]. It has received wide application, cutting across consumer research in all sector including aviation, telecom, agriculture, fashion etc. Relationship between a person and an object is called involvement [4]. The level of involvement is determined by how much the consumer views the focal activity as being important in their lives [21]. It is the degree of interrelation between a person (consumer) and the product [44], which could be high or low. In fashion marketing, involvement has received relevance in understanding the fashion consumer through the thread of research [21, 4, 47, 48] in fashion clothing involvement (FCI). The underlying presumption of FCI is that fashion consumers find purchased fashion clothing they buy and wear to be involving, which could be in varying degree or follows a continuum.

FCI is therefore "a continuum spanning from total connection (or absorption) in fashion apparel and related activities (very high involvement) to the end of the continuum of complete detachment or automaticity (very low involvement)," according to O' Cass [4]. In this respect, Hourigan and Bougoure [3] claimed that the degree to which a consumer's life includes fashion clothes plays a significant role in the FCI experience. FCI is thus described in this study as "the degree to which a customer perceives the connected fashion (clothing) activities as a central component of their life" [3].

Observably, the fashion consumption pattern of modern fashion consumers is shifting emphasis away from the clothe to the brand or label [5, 49, 48, 50]. This has led to the concept of FBI, which

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we defined as the engagement of the fashion consumer in an emotional or personal relationship with a fashion brand by making or viewing the brand as a key part of his/her life. Therefore, the more involvement of consumers in fashion brands, the more their purchase is likely to increase [5].

A number of factors can motivate the consumer to be involved in fashion brands. The major drivers of fashion involvement are gender, age and materialism [3, 21, 4, 20], which are socio-demographic drivers. With respect to gender, women (particularly, young women) are the major force behind fashion brand involvement [50, 48]; and youth of all gender also drive fashion involvement [51]. Finally, the materialists also drive fashion involvement. The drive for materialism is usually represented in fashion possession and expression, which cuts across all age and gender [20]. The import of this is that data on FBI is expected to be collected from youths, women, and materially driven individuals (age or gender notwithstanding). Earlier empirical studies [21, 4, 51, 3] have all collected data from these groups. The collection of data for this study is from women and youths because it is not easy to identify a materialist. Further, the concept of materialism can cut across gender and age. However, the present study will rather focus on psychographics of these groups, which is an extension of earlier studies [21, 4, 20, 51] that have largely focused on the socio-demographics.

2.3 Empirical Review and Hypotheses Development

Fashion always guides and points out the view of consumers clothing purchase. However, fashion reliable and dependable methods are being used in fashion outlets to effect consumers' experiences and purchase. Past studies have shown that consumers could be easily influenced by marketing strategies and stimuli of organizations to cause a purchase of fashion products and this increases the consumption tendency of consumers. It is also espoused that hedonic consumption tendency signifies an extension and continuation of consumer research and it is theoretically joined to work in behavioral sciences such as psychology, linguistics, sociology etcetera. Also, past research works depicted that research on fashion involvement or engagement and tendency to hedonic consumption will lead to various facets and dimensions of consumer buying behavior consumption experience.

Thangasamy and Patikar [52] stated that marketers try to continually depend on research studies to keep being aware of changes in the buying behavior of consumers. Jones, Reynolds and Arnold [53], implied that the hedonic consumption tendency of consumers is linked to certain behaviors consumers portray in the market place

such as repeat purchase intention or purpose. Haq and Abbasi [54] investigated environmental factors and dynamics on consumers' involvement and engagement in fashion on impulse purchases made by consumers. Their studies showed that the various consumer engagement in fashion directly and also indirectly through positive or optimistic emotions which impacts the impulse purchasing on consumers and their hedonic consumption tendency indirectly on the impulse purchasing or buying of the consumers. These discoveries show that less attempt has been made on researching consumer behaviors as a variable of hedonic consumption tendency. No specific literature focused on how the involvement and engagement of consumers in fashion can influence or have an effect on their buying or purchasing behavior. This is because organizations do not try to observe these customers and also try to test their interests in fashion and most times, these organizations try to measure the consumption tendency which consumers have on their behaviors and how there can be high fashion involving consumers in the fashion industry.

Fashion consciousness/Involvement, Consumer Perception and Fashion belief

According to Anning-Dorson [46], involvement is apt and appropriate for the description of the behaviors of consumers and the consuming classification of the market. Fashion involvement is an influential driver when consumers engage in fashion adoption process, some portion of fashion involvement involves getting new information about new patterns or trends, as fashion describes the consistently changing style of clothes worn by people and the involvement of consumers in fashion also defines the basic method in which people express themselves. The degree of consciousness drives the level of involvement. In the fashion research, fashion consciousness has been used interchangeably with fashion involvement [55, 47].

Fashion consciousness is very crucial when identifying and examining the concept of self (self-concept) in which fashion consumers are involved in [55]. As indicated by Buss [56], the focal idea of the reluctance or self-consciousness theory is the degree to which one focuses on the inward or external self. According to Fenigstein et al [57] as indicated by Gould and Stern [58], self-consciousness concept is the base for concept of fashion consciousness. According to Gould and Stern [58], the fashion consciousness of a consumer is the level of enthusiasm and interest which a consumer has in wearing fashionable products and engaging in the latest or up-to-date fashion brands. Fashion consciousness relies on the buying behaviour of the consumer, and also on social and cultural factor. The foregoing has informed the need to hypothesize that:

H_1: Fashion involvement/consciousness has significant effect on consumer perception

H_8: Fashion involvement/consciousness has significant influence on consumer fashion belief

Multisensory, customer attitude and fashion consciousness

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Hudson and Murray [59] indicated that hedonic consumption tendency articulates and expresses the joy and thrill aspect of consumption, such as sensory images as sounds, tastes, sensory impressions and visual images which have motivational qualities for the consumption of products. The tendency of hedonic consumption could be seen as somewhat more dependent and reliant on senses.

Multisensory derives from sensory branding model [60]. Studies have shown that consumers combine more than one senses and that senses influences consumers perception of brand, memory, attitude, consciousness and buying behaviour [61, 60]. The unusual and distinctive experience offered by sensory branding heightens the customer's emotions and engages them personally. This innovative method of communication may increase the brand's worth. The sensory branding concept, according to Hultén [60], "offers a firm the potential to define and convey a brand through sensorial strategies, based on cognitive, emotional or value-based human sensory elements that powerfully link to the human mind and human senses". Empirical findings from Alexander and Heyd [62] and Alexander and Feindt's [63] exploratory studies revealed that sensory branding has positive effects on consumer based brand equity. Therefore, this research explores further the effect of a multi-sensory strategy in interrogating this study. Multisensory is based on the idea that people learn more effectively if they are exposed to information through a variety of senses, such as visual, aural, kinaesthetic, and tactile (VART), which include seeing, hearing, doing, touching, taste, balance, and scent. In this study, it is possible that consumers' senses can influence their attitude towards a brand. Also, their number of senses can be engaged to determine their level of consciousness or involvement in fashion brand. Hence we hypothesize that:

H_2: Multisensory has significant effect on customer attitude

H_7: Multisensory has significant influence on fashion involvement/consciousness

Fantasy and Emotional Arousal

According to Winter and Young [64] fantasy is a pleasant situation or event that you think about and that you want to happen. There is a connection between fashion and fantasy. Fashion increases fantasy and fantasy increases fashion desire. Fantasizing is an unconscious process that is embedded in the desire for fashion [64]. An unconscious image about a fashion style and ways to make social statement is common among women and young people, which is a form of fantasy [64]. Consequently, we wish to know if the consumer's quest and desire for fantasy trigger his/her attitude towards fashion brand. Accordingly, we hypothesize that:

H_3: Fantasy has significant influence on consumer attitude

Emotional arousal is a state of heightened physiological activity [65, 7]. This includes having positive emotions such as love or negative emotions such as anger and fear

[66]. Emotional arousal state is usually in response to an individual's daily experiences. A number of studies [67, 68, 66, 65] have linked emotional arousal to fabrics, clothe, or fashion brands. A consumer's emotion can be aroused when they come in contact with a compelling fashion style or brand. Positive emotion can be aroused, such as feeling happy, joy, satisfied, love [66] for a fashion brand, if, perhaps, an individual sees a unique fashion brand or style and then wish to own it. Positive emotions can trigger impulse buying of fashion brand [66]. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H_4: Emotional arousal has significant influence on consumer attitude

Store Attributes

The fashion involvement of consumers can also be connected with store attributes for its enhancement power of hedonic factors. The quality of the goods, the value for the money, the store services, the selection of brand-name goods, the assortment of goods, the sales information, and the convenience of the store's location are just a few examples of store attributes that, despite being a utilitarian factor, can influence the level of consumer involvement. Thus, a consumer's attitude towards a fashion brand maybe influenced by the physical store attributes of the brand owner. Similarly, the nature of the store attributes can influence the degree of consumers fashion consciousness or involvement for a brand. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H_5: Store attributes has significant influence on consumer attitude

H_6: Store attributes has significant influence on fashion involvement/consciousness

Consumer Perception, Attitude and fashion belief:

People select, organize, and interpret sensations through the process of perception, which is the immediate reaction of sense receptors (i.e. eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and fingers) to such fundamental stimuli as light, color, scent, texture, and sound. According to Kotler et al [69], perception is the process by which a person receives, chooses, organizes, and interprets information. Although there are several definitions in the literature that describe perception from the standpoint of consumer behavior, Walters et al [70] definition offers specific clarity on the subject which is: "the complete process through which a person becomes conscious of their surroundings and interprets them to fit into their own frame of reference". Among the several factors that influence consumer perceptions of a brand include quality, price, which is taken into account when making the choice of fashion brand. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H_9: Consumer perception has significant influence on consumer attitude

Fashion belief and customer brand patronage:

Belief generally drives customers' preference for a product. Consumers prefer products which are suitable for their image, reflects their identity, and general belief system. It is crucial for the buying behavior and decisions of consumers to be understood from their

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belief lenses. Consumer purchasing behavior, according to Thangasamy and Patikar [52], is "the study of how groups, people, and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of items, ideas or experiences, and services to fill (satisfy) their needs and wants". The term consumer buying behavior refers to the buying decisions and choices and therefore ranges all the way from "how do we know what we want" to "what do we want to do with something we no longer want" [71]. Buying behavior is generally proxied by consumer patronage or actual purchase. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H_{10}: Consumer fashion belief has significant influence on consumer attitude

H_{11}: Consumer fashion belief has significant influence on consumer patronage

The foregoing hypotheses informed the development of the conceptual model of Figure 1 below. Basically, the schema is a graphic snapshot of this study. The schema has three broad dimensions. The first dimension is the Fashion Consumption Drivers, which primarily constitute the independent variables. The fashion drivers is divided into two parts – Fashion involvement/consciousness or the hedonic consumption tendencies (i.e. multi-sensory, fantasy, and emotional arousal) and store attributes. The second dimension of the schema is the consumer buying behaviour moderators, which includes fashion belief, consumer perception, and consumer attitude. The last dimension of our schema is the Fashion Consumer Buying Behaviour, which is proxied by customer patronage of fashion brand.
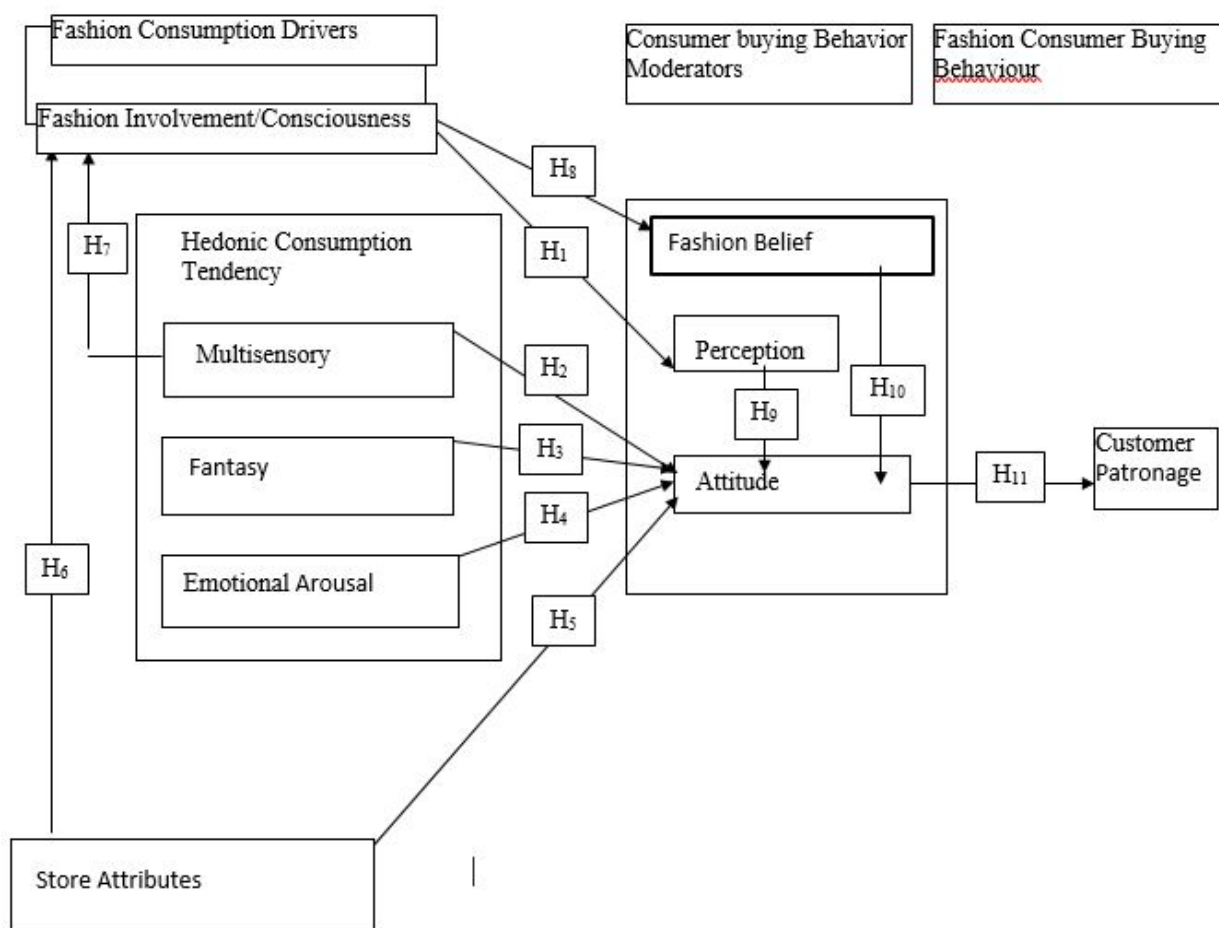
Conceptual Model/Research Schema

Fig. 1: Research Schema
Source: Authors' own conceptualization

3 Methodology

The study employed the use of survey method which involves the administration of questionnaire. The population of the study covers customers who patronize Mai Atafo fashion brand. Mai Atafo is located in Lagos state, Nigeria. To determine the sample size, the manager of the Mai Atafo brand reported the company has a known customer range of 150 to 320 in its marketing information system. A census sampling was deployed; therefore, 325 copies of questionnaire were distributed to its customers that visited the company. Thus mall-intercept method was used to distribute the questionnaire through the support of staff at Mai Atafo. The copies of the questionnaire were administered from August 2019 to October 2019. A

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total of 128 copies were returned but 100 copies were found useful for further analysis. The items of structured questionnaire were measured on a five point Likert-scale descriptor ranging from "disagree" to "strongly agree". The instrument was subjected to reliability and validity test based on pilot-study using 32 fashion customers. This resulted in a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.936, indicating that the set of items shows acceptable internal consistency. The hypothesized relationships were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) [72] with the aid of SmartPLS 2.0 version. Accordingly, the researchers adopted structural equation modeling (SEM) for testing relationships in the research model. Specifically, the study adopted the partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach since it has been widely recommended for exploratory studies, as is the case in most marketing studies following the weaknesses of covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) [73]. The choice of PLS-SEM is hinged on the fact that the present study is a basic or pure research, which makes it exploratory in nature. The SmartPLS 2.0, more flexible PLS-SEM software, was used to explore the hypothesized relationships. As it is with the present study, SmartPLS is proposed for modeling formative constructs, particularly in marketing and organizational research [74]. Following the suggestion of Wetzels, Odekerken-Schroder, and Van Oppen [73], an initial assessment of PLS-SEM model, some basic elements should be covered in the research report. If a reflective measurement model (or reflective measurement scale) is used, as in the case of the present study, the following statistics are reported based on SmartPLS-SEM output: Explanation of target endogenous variable variance; Inner model path coefficient sizes and significance; Outer model loadings and significance; Indicator reliability; Internal consistency reliability; Convergent validity; Discriminant validity; and Checking Structural Path Significance in Bootstrapping

4 Findings and Results
Respondents Statistics:

Though 325 fashion customers were surveyed, 100 copies of questionnaire were used for analysis. Regarding gender, 68 (68%) are females and 32 (32%) are males. With respect to respondents age, 29 (29.0%) fall within 22-26yrs age range, whereas 40 (40.0%) are within the 27-31yrs age bracket and those 32 and above are 31(31.0%). The marital status of respondents shows that 60% (60) of the respondents are single; 35% are married and only 5% are divorced. In terms educational qualification, 9 (9%) has SSCE, 5(5%) has National Diploma (ND) while 60 (60%) has Higher National Diploma (HND) while 26% has BSc and none has MSc/PhD. As regard the religion of the respondents, 78 (78%) are Christians; 22(22%) are of Islamic religion; however none of the respondents are adherents of African Traditional Religion or others. Regarding how long the respondents has known the Mai Atafo fashion brand, 32 noted that they have known the Mai Atafo brand between 1-6months; 15 respondents have known it 7-12months; and 35 of the respondents have known it for 1-4years. As regards if the respondents patronize Mai Atafo regardless of their knowledge, 77 (77%) affirmed that they have been patronizing the fashion brand; however, 23(23%) even where they are aware of the brand, they have not been using the brand. When it comes to satisfactory of level of service offered by Mai Atafo fashion brand, 91% (91) respondents noted that the services of the brand are satisfactory while 9 (9%) noted that it is not satisfactory to them.

As per how often the respondents patronize the services of Mai Atafo, 15(15%) noted that they frequently patronize the fashion brand; 23 (23%) noted they rarely patronize the fashion brand; 34 (34%) indicated the very often patronize the Mai Atafo brand; and 28(28%) noted that they less often patronize the private fashion brand/label. Regarding whether the respondents will continue to patronize the Mai Atafo private fashion label, 35(35%) strongly agreed that they will continue to patronize the brand; over half being 51(51%) agreed that the will continue to patronize the brand; 14 (14%) are not sure if they will continue to patronize the brand; however, none neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed to continue their patronage of the private fashion brand.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the sample

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	32	32.0%

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Female	68	68.0%

Age:

22-26yrs	29	29.0%
27-31yrs	40	40.0%
32 and above	31	31.0%

Educational Qualification:

SSCE	9	9.0%
OND	5	5.0%
HND	60	60.0%
B.Sc.	26	26.0%
M.Sc.	0	0.0%
Ph.D.	0	0.0%
Others	0	0.0%

Marital status:

Single	60	60.0%
Married	35	35.5%
Divorced	5	5.0%
Others	0	0.0%

Religion:

Christianity	78	78.0%
Islam	22	22.0%
African Traditional Religion	0	0%
Others	0	0%

Knowing Mai Atafo:

1-6 months	32	32.0%
7-12 months	15	15.0%
1-4 years	35	35.0%
5 years and above	0	0.0%

Patronizing Mai Atafo:

Yes	77	77.0%
No	23	23.0%

Satisfaction of services:

Yes	91	91.0%
No	9	9.0%

Often Patronizing:

Frequently	15	15.0%
Rarely	23	23.0%
Very often	34	34.0%
Less often	28	28.0%

Continue Patronizing:

Strongly agree	35	35.0%
Agree	51	51.0%
Not sure	14	14.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Disagree	0	0.0%

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Discriminant Analysis

Table 2 shows the inter-construct cross-loadings for the purpose of discriminant validity. According to Hair [72] the presence of high cross-loadings indicates a discriminant validity problem and, by extension, the SEM CFA fit would not be good. Using the cross loading threshold of 0.7

recommended by Hair [72], any cross loading above 0.7 threshold is considered to be high and there is no distinctiveness between the two constructs. In the present study, as indicated in Table 2 above, the cross-loadings are low as many are below the threshold of 0.70, thus confirming discriminant validity.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

	CA	CFB	CP	CPtn	EA	FIC	FTsy	MS	SA
CA	0.649								
CFB	0.596	0.822							
CP	0.671	0.296	0.715						
CPtn	0.493	0.275	0.280	0.741					
EA	0.741	0.741	0.741	0.741	0.741				
FIC	0.338	0.025	0.258	0.435	0.217	0.792			
FTsy	0.686	0.494	0.433	0.415	0.626	0.343	0.626		
MS	0.316	0.158	0.289	0.551	0.421	0.485	0.418	0.799	
SA	0.660	0.218	0.501	0.301	0.488	0.483	0.455	0.248	0.756

Model Fit

Wong [75] sustained that the Goodness-of-fit (GoF) index in SmartPLS is an index measuring the predictive performance of the measurement model. Specifically, it can be understood as the geometric mean of the average communality and the

average R2 (i.e. the coefficient of determination) of the endogenous latent variables. Accordingly, the parsimony global goodness-of-fit (GoF) statistics is calculated using the given equation below [76, 77]:

$$GoF = \sqrt{AVE * R^2}$$

Table 3. *GoF Acceptance and Rejection Criterion*

Accept model as good fit:	If calculated GoF is more than 0.36 but not more than 0.5
Reject and improve on model:	If the calculated GoF is less than 0.36

Source: Wetzels, M., Odekerken-Schroder, G., & Oppen, C. (2009).

The above equation is used to determine the calculated GoF index using PLS-SEM. Notable in this formula is the coefficient of determination, R^2, which again supports the use of parsimony GoF measures as Hair et al [72] sustained that "parsimony fit indices are conceptually similar to the notion of an adjusted R2 in the sense that they relate model fit to model complexity. More complex models are expected to fit the data better, so fit measures must be relative to model complexity before comparisons between models can be made."

Although the standard procedure in SEM literature generally, with regards to decision rule, is to compare between the calculated GoF with a

threshold recommended by scholars; however, a common rule is to examine the smallness of the GoF, usually less than 0.5 [72]. In the case of the present study, the researcher adopts the threshold of GoF>0.36 suggested by Wetzels, Odekerken-Schröder and van Oppen [73] as most appropriate for exploratory marketing studies.

The research schema (see figure 1) guided the conceptualization of the path model. The path model is the model specification, which is the graphical format of SEM tested using the SmartPLS program to determine the model fit. The calculated global goodness of fit (GoF) is 0.450 (see table1 below), which exceed the minimum threshold of GoF> 0.36 suggested by Wetzels,

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Odekerken- Schröder, and van Oppen [73]. Thus, it can be deduced that the research model has a good overall fit, thus providing support that the proposed theory fits reality. Hence the decision rule is shown on table 2.

Note (keys): CP= Consumer Patronage; FC= Fashion Consciousness/Involvement; MS= Multisensory; CPtn= Consumer Perception; FTsy= Fantasy; CA= Consumer Attitude; SA= Store Attitude; and EA= Emotional Arousal; and CFB= Consumer Fashion Belief
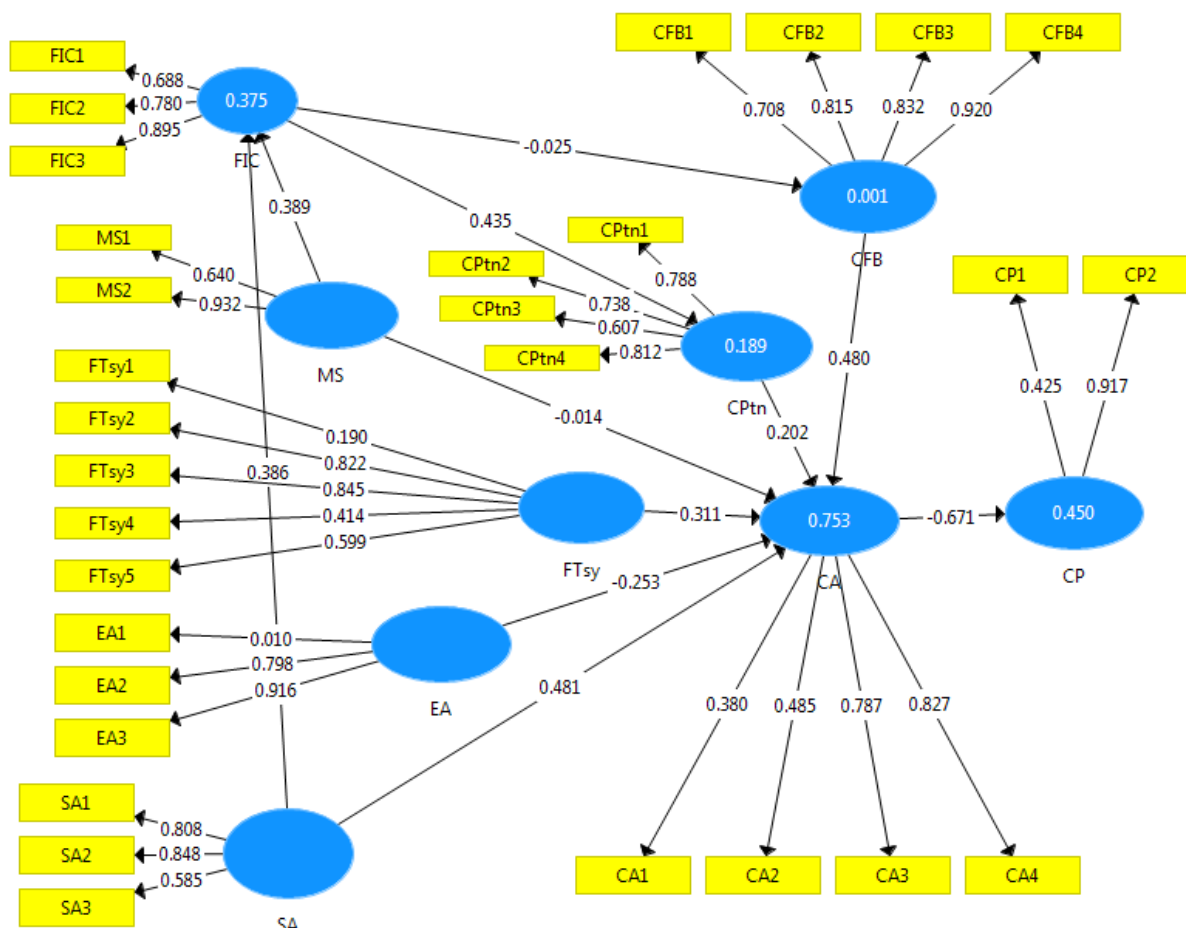
Fig. 2: SEM Output before bootstrapping

As evidenced in figure 2 above, the coefficient of determination, R^2, is 0.450 for the CP endogenous latent variable. This means that the CA latent variables explain 45% (and meeting the minimum benchmark of 0% suggested by Hair, Hult, Ringel, and Sarstedt, [74] of the variance in CP. Hence, other factors not included in the model explains 65% (i.e., 100% – 45%) of the variance in CP. Note that it is only a single latent variable, CA, that explains the 45% variance in CP.

At an R^2 of 0.753, the variance in CA endogenous variable is explained by five exogenous variables (CFB, CPtn, MS, FTsy, EA, and SA). This suggests CFB, CPtn, MS, FTsy, EA, and SA are key construct that explain CA. Similarly, as an endogenous variable with an R^2 of 0.001, the variance 0.1% in CFA is explained by only FIC,

which also meets the 0% benchmark. The variance in the FIC endogenous with an R^2 of 0.375 is explained by MS and SA. The R^2 of FIC which is 37.5% also meets the 0% benchmark. The variance in CPtn endogenous variable of an R^2 of 0.189 is explain by only FIC and its R^2 of 18.9% also meets the 0% benchmark.

Taken together, the overall R^2 for CP (0.450) in Figure 3, indicates that the research model explains about 45% of the variance in the overall endogenous variable and since this is more than 0% benchmark it means all the latent exogenous variable (i.e. CA) explains/predicts the endogenous (or dependent) variable CP. Similarly, all the endogenous variables also meet the 0% benchmark, suggesting all exogenous variables are appropriate constructs for the model. Further, the variate values

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(or eigen values) of each indicator for all the variables are above the 0.70 benchmark suggested by Hair et al [74]. This suggests that the item

statements are appropriate measures for the respective constructs.

Table 4. Summary Model Fit and Adequacy Statistics

Variable	CA	CR	AVE	R2	R2 Adjusted	GoF (ᴦAVE*R2)
Fantasy (FTsy)	0.602	0.730	0.391			
Emotional Arousal (EA)	0.509	0.661	0.492			
Store Attitude (SA)	0.645	0.796	0.752			
Consumer Perception (CPtn)	0.721	0.828	0.549	0.189	0.181	0.322
Fashion Involvement/Conc. (FIC)	0.711	0.833	0.628	0.375	0.362	0.485
Consumer Fashion Belief (CFB)	0.842	0.892	0.676	0.001	-0.010	0.026
Consumer Attitude (CA)	0.529	0.726	0.421	0.753	0.737	0.563
Consumer Patronage (CP)	0.055	0.648	0.511	0.450	0.444	0.480

Note: CA = Cronbach alpha; CR= Composite Reliability; AVE= Average Variance Extracted; GoF= Goodness of Fit

Table 4 above depicts the adequacy statistics of data. Using the benchmark of 0.7, most of the variables meet or exceeded the benchmark for composite reliability. Hence, the composite reliability is met, which denotes that the constructs are appropriate for the study. Except for FTsy, convergent validity is also met since the AVE values for most of the variables exceeded the 0.4 benchmark. The import is that the items that are indicators for each construct apparently converge or share a high proportion of variance in common [74]. Accordingly, since the key data adequacy statistics are met, we proceed to test the

hypothesized relationships by bootstrapping. The output of the bootstrapping is shown in figure 4 below.

Using the benchmark of 1.96 based on a 5% significance level, the decision rule is that if the T-statistic of each independent variable is above 1.96 it is said that the hypothesized relationship is significant. Hence, from the above SEM output after bootstrapping, it is seen that the thicker lines of hypothesized relationship depict the strength of relationship or strength of significance or support. As shown in table 5 below, only two of the hypothesized relationships are not significant or do not find support. However, the remaining nine are significant or supported.
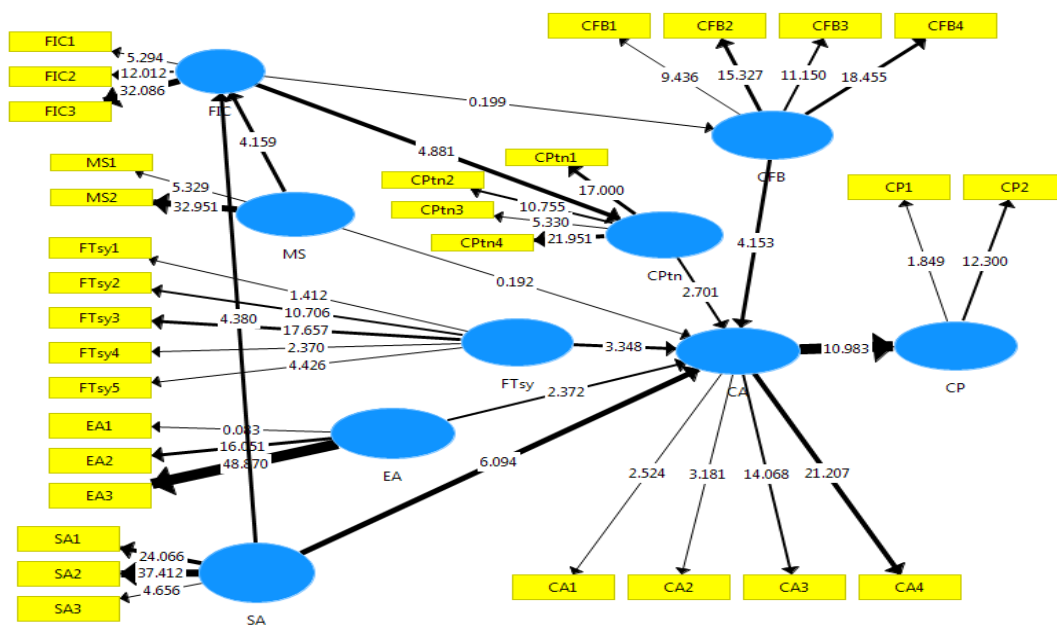

Fig. 3: SEM Output after bootstrapping

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Table 5. Summary Result of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothe sis.	Relationship	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Sample Mean	T-Stat.	P-Value	Result
H1	FIC--->CPtn	0.435	0.446	0.089	4.881	0.000	Accept
H2	MS ---> CA	-0.014	-0.011	0.073	0.192	0.847	Reject
H3	FTsy---> CA	0.311	0.308	0.093	3.348	0.001	Accept
H4	EA ---> CA	-0.253	-0.246	0.107	2.372	0.018	Accept
H5	SA ---> CA	0.481	0.478	0.079	6.094	0.000	Accept
H6	SA ---> FIC	0.386	0.389	0.088	4.380	0.000	Accept
H7	MS ---> FIC	0.389	0.397	0.093	4.159	0.000	Accept
H8	FIC---> CFB	-0.025	0.001	0.127	0.199	0.842	Reject
H9	CPtn---> CA	0.202	0.192	0.075	2.701	0.007	Accept
H10	CFB ---> CA	0.480	0.474	0.116	4.153	0.000	Accept
H11	CA ---> CP	-0.671	-0.677	0.061	10.983	0.000	Accept

Note (keys): CP= Consumer Patronage; FC= Fashion Consciousness/Involvement; MS= Multisensory; CPtn= Consumer Perception; FTsy= Fantasy; CA= Consumer Attitude; SA= Store Attitude; and EA= Emotional Arousal; and CFB= Consumer Fashion Belief

5 Discussion

In the main, this study is primarily set out to unravel the psychographic fashion consumption drivers or hedonic antecedents of fashion involvement that foster private brand patronage in a fast expanding market. The study is a departure from previous studies [3, 4, 5], that explored utilitarian antecedents of fashion consumption in a mature market context. Although in this study, one utilitarian factor, that is Store Attribute, was included in the research schema, three hedonic factors (i.e. multisensory, fantasy, and emotional arousal). The finding shows that the three hedonic factors (i.e. multisensory, fantasy, and emotional arousal) found support as key predictors of consumer attitude for private fashion brand. The import being that hedonic factors are very important variables that shape consumer attitudes towards private fashion labels. At an R^2 of 0.753, the variance in Consumer Attitude (CA) is significantly explained by hedonic factors. Though not previously examined in a fast-expanding market context, our finding corroborates some earlier studies, such as the study of Hulten [60], which found that multisensory factor strongly influences consumer patronage. Similarly, the finding of this study confirms the findings of an earlier study by Alexander and Heyd [62] and Alexander and Feindt [63]. In the same vein, the study by Rahadhini, Wibowo, and Lukiyanto [66] corroborates our finding that fantasy is predictor of consumer attitude for private fashion. However, the work of Wu [65] contradicts our finding for a positive relationship between fashion fantasy and consumer attitude. Emotional arousal predictor of consumer attitude is not somewhat supported by the previous works of Özlü, and Sevinir [67].

6 Conclusion and Recommendation

This research study has shown that the topic regarding fashion involvement and hedonic consumption tendency is important as it will help fashion organizations and outlets to develop continuously and survive in the fashion industry. The study's conclusion, drawn from the findings, is that consumers' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by fashion engagement and hedonic consuming inclination. However, fashion organizations and outlets should ensure that they understand their consumers and try to make certain that their consumers are satisfied which would help them engage consumers in patronage to them.

Further research studies can be done on multisensory and consumer attitude as it was seen that there was no significant influence or relationship between the two. Also, other researchers should note that consumer buying behavior is unpredictable and trying to satisfy consumers' needs and wants could be tasking because consumers feelings and emotions control their actions. However, the perception of consumers towards fashionable products controls and effects their attitude and beliefs in direction to fashion products or merchandises. Lastly, for fashion organizations and fashion outlets to succeed in a highly competitive fashion industry, they should be able to keep records of their consumers or clients, try to understand them and also provide satisfaction to them. They should also improve on every aspect and area of their business

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to have competitive advantage over other fashion outlets and organizations in the fashion industry.

7 Implications and Contribution

The contributions of this study are gleaned from its theoretical and managerial implications. From the theoretical standpoint, this study develops a conceptual framework (see figure 1) for undertaking private fashion brand research. The growing emergence of the private fashion brand especially in developing economies presupposes the need for state-of-the-art research that informs competitive strategies. Such research is to leverage on an empirically tested framework for guidance. In addition, this study reinforces the criticality of the Consumer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Theory in attempt to build strong brand equity. Put differently, building strong private fashion brand equity by a fashion-entrepreneur is dependent of leveraging on the fundamental tenets of CBBE. The import being that private fashion brand equity is built and improved upon if fashion antecedents are reinforced in the mind of the fashion consumer. Perception building is the cornerstone of brand equity. From the managerial standpoint, this study makes pertinent contribution necessary for crafting and building competitive advantage for private fashion brands in a competitively fierce market. Essentially, the results inform the managerial implications. Since support was found for multisensory, fantasy, and emotional arousal; therefore, PFBs are to develop their unique selling proposition (USP) for their brands along these three elements. Thus differential competitive advantage is to emphasize these key psychological factors. An integrative approach that combines the three during the design stage of the fashion is critical. At the promotion level, a strategic promotion campaign that emphasizes the USP of the fashion brand along the three elements will woo the desired private fashion target market.

Limitations and Directions for Further Studies

Some limitations were encountered during the study, and which offer opportunity for further research. First, access to the consumers of Mai Atafo proved difficult since they are not random fashion consumers and since they are the respondents. Also, the nature of the research is limited to only one fashion outlet; hence, it will effect on the capacity to simplify or generalize findings. Future researchers can expand and consider using more than one fashion outlet as case

studies. They can also do a comparison between or among various fashion outlets to compare results.

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