artigo] Érica Maria Calíope Sobreira
Clayton Robson Moreira da Silva | Áurio Lúcio Leocádio
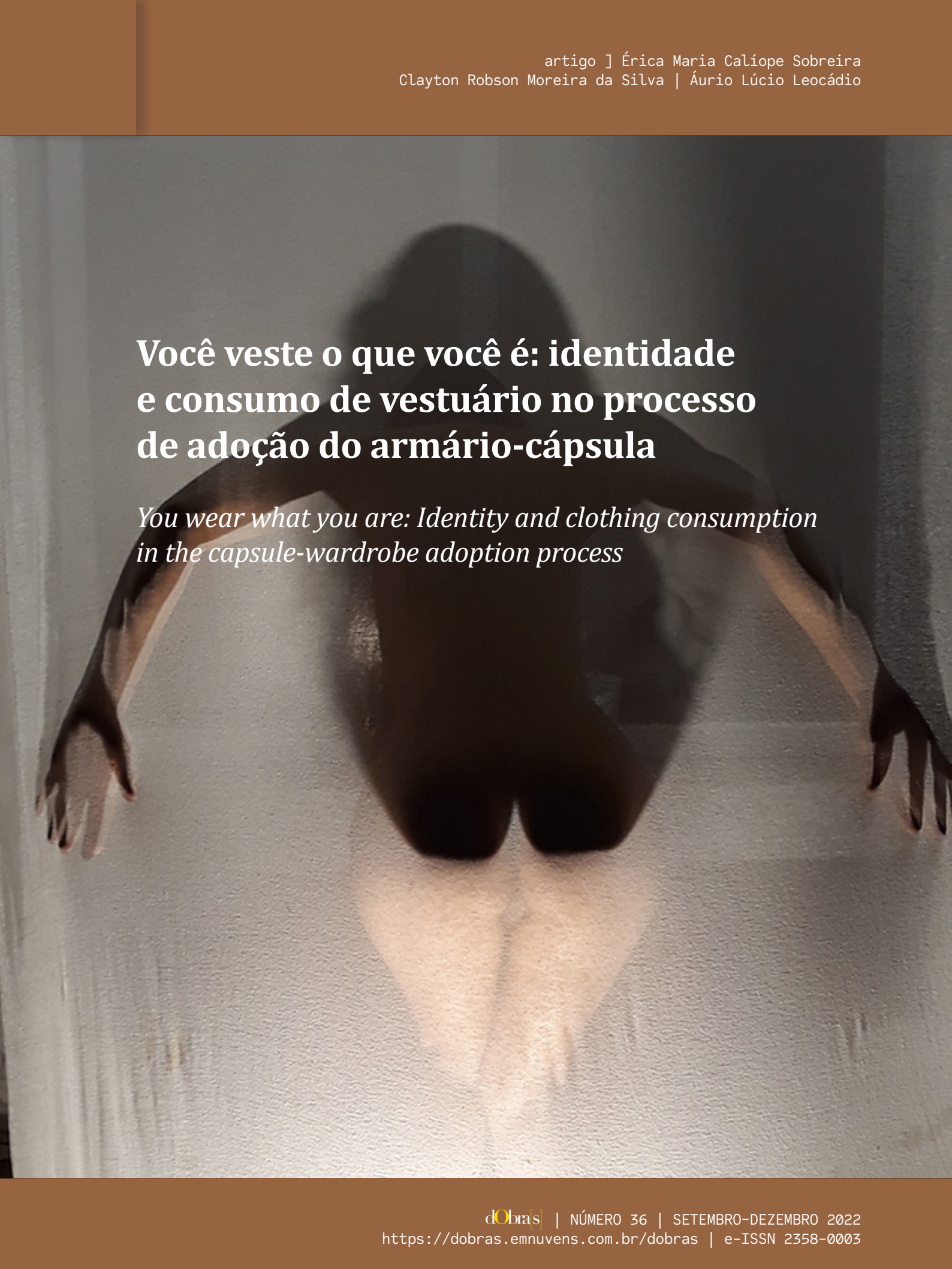
Você veste o que você é: identidade e consumo de vestuário no processo de adoção do armário-cápsula

You wear what you are: Identity and clothing consumption in the capsule-wardrobe adoption process

Érica Maria Calíope Sobreira[1]
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7162-4676

Clayton Robson Moreira da Silva[2]
ORCID: http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0717-2713

Áurio Lúcio Leocádio[3]
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3175-3382

[resumo] Esta pesquisa teve como objetivo compreender o papel da identidade e do consumo de roupas no processo de adoção do armário-cápsula. Foi desenvolvido um estudo qualitativo com treze mulheres que adotaram o armário-cápsula. Entrevistas semiestruturadas e análise de conteúdo foram aplicadas para coletar e explorar os dados. Com base nas descobertas, foi proposto um diagrama do processo de adoção do armário-cápsula. Os resultados indicam que o processo de adoção do armário-cápsula está intrinsecamente relacionado às mudanças na identidade e no consumo de roupas de seus adeptos. O papel da identidade nesse processo foi percebido por meio de uma transição do foco na identidade social para o foco na identidade pessoal. Portanto, com a adoção do armário-cápsula, "você veste o que você é". Como limitações da pesquisa, mencionamos as falhas de conexão que algumas vezes interromperam o fluxo das entrevistas. Como implicações gerenciais, sugerimos que varejistas e outras empresas poderiam adaptar ou desenvolver estratégias de marketing adequadas para esse novo segmento de consumidores: os adeptos do armário-cápsula. Por exemplo, produtos focados em durabilidade e alta qualidade (por exemplo, *slow fashion*) seriam uma alternativa para atingir esses consumidores. As marcas de *slow fashion* podem focar na conexão entre identidade pessoal e consumo de moda como uma representação visual do eu dos indivíduos (ou seja, a ideia de "você veste o que você é") em suas campanhas. Por fim, este estudo contribui para o campo acadêmico ao propor um diagrama sobre o processo de adoção do armário-cápsula. Contribui também para a literatura de estudos sobre projetos de identidade do consumidor na Teoria da Cultura do Consumidor a partir da associação da identidade com o consumo de vestuário.

[palavras-chave] **Identidade. Consumo de vestuário. Armário-cápsula.**

---

[1] Doutoranda em Administração pela Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR). E-mail: erica.mcs21@gmail.com. Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/5663270256838780.

[2] Doutor em Administração e Controladoria pela Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC). Professor do Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Piauí (IFPI). E-mail: claytonrmsilva@gmail.com. Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/0767035754629106.

[3] Doutor em Administração pela Universidade de São Paulo (USP). Professor da Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC). E-mail: aurioleocadio42@gmail.com. Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/3637686507446252.

artigo] Érica Maria Calíope Sobreira
Clayton Robson Moreira da Silva | Áurio Lúcio Leocádio

[abstract] This research aimed to understand the role of identity and clothing consumption in the capsule-wardrobe adoption process. A qualitative study has been developed with thirteen women who have adopted the capsule-wardrobe. Semistructured interviews and content analysis have been applied to collect and explore the data. Based on the findings, a diagram of the capsule-wardrobe adoption process has been proposed. The results indicate that capsule-wardrobe adoption process is intrinsically related to changes in the identity and clothing consumption of its adopters. The role of identity in this process was perceived through a transition from focusing on social identity to focusing on personal identity. Therefore, with the capsule-wardrobe adoption, "you wear what you are". As research limitations, we mention the connection failures that have sometimes interrupted the interview flow. As managerial implications, we suggest that retailers and other companies might adapt or develop appropriate marketing strategies for this new segment of consumers: capsule-wardrobe adopters. For instance, products focused on durability and high quality (e.g., slow fashion) would be an alternative to reach those consumers. Slow fashion brands might focus on the connection between personal identity and fashion consumption as a visual representation of the individuals' self (i.e., the "you wear what you are" idea) in their campaigns. Finally, this study contributes to the academic field as it proposes a diagram regarding the capsule-wardrobe adoption process. It also contributes to the literature of studies on consumer identity projects in Consumer Culture Theory from the association of identity with clothing consumption.

[keywords] **Identity. Clothing consumption. Capsule-wardrobe.**

Introduction

The last decades have been marked by the growing interest of researchers in investigating consumption in the sociocultural scope (ASKEGAARD; LINNET, 2011). In this sense, consumer society started to be understood as a symbolic society, in which consumption is seen by individuals and social groups as a mechanism capable of constructing, defining, and influencing notions of identity and lifestyle based on the acquisition or non-acquisition of goods (BARBOSA, 2006; DOUGLAS; ISHERWOOD, 2004).

Consumption is embedded in postmodern consumer culture, and people use it to situate themselves in society through products with symbolic attributes that function as their "outer skin" in the sense of expressing their "interior self", and as a way of differentiating them from other people and groups (DITTMAR, 2008; HOKKANEN, 2014; WATTANA-SUWAN, 2005). Thus, those attributes act on the construction of the individuals' identity and influence their social relations (BELK, 1988). In the context of clothing consumption, it is argued that clothes can create, maintain, or modify the image of an individual for themselves and others (SOLOMON; SCHOPLER, 1982; ROACH-HIGGINS; EICHER, 1992), forming identity due to their symbolic nature (MCNEILL, 2018; VAN DER LAAN; VELTHUIS, 2016).

Several studies have examined the individuals' identity formation from the consumption of a particular good or service (BONSU; BELK, 2003; ESCALAS, 2013; FERREIRA; SCARABOTO, 2016; TOWNSEND; SOOD, 2012; WHITE; ARGO; SENGUPTA, 2012). In this context, there is a search for the expansion and greater recognition of studies developed in the light of Consumer Culture Theory [CCT] in Brazil (CASOTTI; SUAREZ, 2016). This research field, which emerged in the 1980s, incorporates sociocultural perspectives into consumption studies, and it is considered an autonomous school of thought (GAIÃO; SOUZA; LEÃO, 2012). Therefore, this study emerges in the context of CCT, specifically in the area of consumer identity projects that concentrate studies on personal identity, social identity, extended self, etc. This research area seeks to explain how the consumer constructs a notion of identity through consumption practices (ARNOULD; THOMPSON, 2015).

Besides, this study focuses on clothing consumption, whose research developed in the Brazilian academic field is significant in terms of fashion and consumption (RAINHO; VOLPI, 2018), and the investigated phenomenon is the adoption of a concept of minimalist wardrobe that has been diffused and gained force in North American blogs: the capsule-wardrobe (HEGER, 2016). In the context of social media, the current fashion market has been associated with changes in the aesthetic and symbolic thinking of consumers (VEHMAS et al., 2018), such as those more focused on minimalist wardrobe trends. For this reason, the adopters of the concept mentioned above will be the focus of this research.

The capsule-wardrobe is a small collection of clothes grouped to make a compact wardrobe with high-quality pieces of clothing, with long durability, and in limited quantity (DOUGHER, 2015). The concept based on the idea of limiting the number of items in the wardrobe has been well received by more conscious consumers worldwide, something that

has also happened in Brazil (KUMAR; VACCARO, 2017; REES, 2017), making this study relevant in this context. Relying on the discussion above, this research aimed to understand the role of identity and clothing consumption in the capsule-wardrobe adoption process.

Theoretical Background

Identity and Consumption

In postmodernity, the identity sought by individuals is in a constant process of formation, and it is affected by purchase decisions and consumption acts (CAMPBELL, 2006; CASTELLS, 1997; HALL, 2005). For Jyrinki (2012, p. 114), "consumers use symbolic meanings of possessions to construct and communicate their identities", though not only possessions but also consumption reveals an individual's characteristics and influences their social relations (RICHINS; DAWSON, 1994), since consumers may also define themselves based on other people's perception (AHUVIA, 2005).

According to Schultz Kleine, Kleine III and Allen (1995), consumers seek to maintain personal identity by differentiating themselves from others and searching for affiliation through interpersonal connections. Therefore, the difficulty lies in reconciling the sense of personal and social identity, as well as the feeling of belonging (JYRINKI, 2012).

In this perspective, consumers may have multiple identities, including individual identity and various social identities, and consumption might create both harmony and conflict between them (REED et al., 2012; TAJFEL; TURNER, 1986). Thus, the notion of identity comprises two approaches: personal identity and social identity. While personal identity comes from the individual's sense of self, social identity is related to the involvement with groups to which the person belongs or is associated (WHITE; DAHL, 2007). Social identity may become more relevant than personal identity when consumer socialization agents (e.g., parents, family, friends, partners, and media) influence them through consumption, making them learn to shape themselves to certain behaviors considered appropriate in society (HOKKANEN, 2014).

Elgin (2012) argues that, when determined by consumption, identity ceases to be an authentic expression of the being. In this sense, the individual possessing the good comes to be possessed by it, and identity becomes a merely attractive material representation of himself for others (ELGIN, 2012). Therefore, consumerism might promote pressures that could hinder the construction of identity, making it confusing for the individual and not representing his true "self" (CHERRIER, 2009). However, some people seem to be more attracted to forms of representation of their authentic and more satisfactory "self" anchored in new consumption alternatives, from the moment they realize that material possessions do not compensate for a life of unhappiness and stress (ZAVESTOSKI, 2002). Thus, the perspective of well-being associated with consumption would produce positive effects on identity construction (AHUVIA, 2005).

Identity is expressed through a strong connection with the symbolism of the good possessed or its consumption (DITTMAR, 2008). On the other hand, processes of detachment (i.e., an emotional distancing) would function as a distancing from oneself (ALBISSON; PERERA, 2009; CHERRIER, 2009). In this context, the development of an individual's identity is intrinsically related to possessions and consumption, even when processes of sharing and detachment are involved (ALBINSSON; PEREIRA, 2009; BELK, 1988; BALLANTINE; CREERY, 2010; CHERRIER, 2009).

Phillips and Sego (2011) have highlighted the role of disposal as part of identity formation. The authors found that an individual's identity may change due to more conscious reflections and choices, influencing behavior. In turn, Trudel, Argo and Meng (2016) found a greater tendency to recycle products when they are positively linked to identity because they have a strong connection with the consumer. This suggests that consumers avoid destroying or simply throwing away items that are tied to their identity in a positive way (i.e., items that represent them).

Clothing symbolism suggests that its consumption is part of a process of self-presentation, a vehicle of social signaling, and a way of building identity (GUY; BANIM, 2000; HOK-KANEN, 2014; KUMAR; VACCARO, 2017). What an individual wears conveys a message that forms impressions that might be judged by others (BANISTER; HOGG, 2007; KAISER, 1990). In this sense, Barthes, in "Système de la Mode", brings to discussion the way how identities are played by fashion: "we see Fashion 'play' with the most serious theme of human consciousness (Who am I?)" (BARTHES, 1983, p. 257).

In this sense, consumers use their clothes in an identity negotiation process: who they are, who they want to be, and who they are not (GUY; BANIM, 2000). This includes their behavior of clothing consumption (KAISER, 1997), how they feel about their clothes (WOODWARD, 2005) and fashion, which satisfies both social identification and distinction: "It is a socially acceptable and safe way of distinguishing oneself of the others and, at the same time, satisfies the individual need for adaptation and social imitation" (GRONOW, 1997, p. 84).

Capsule-Wardrobe

Although popularized in 2015 by Caroline Rector, author of the un-fancy blog, the capsule-wardrobe concept is a term that has been originated in the 1970s by a fashion boutique owner in London. Dougher (2015) states that the concept is based on a small collection of seasonal clothing, composing a capsule with high-quality pieces of clothing, with long durability, and in limited quantity. The composition of the chosen pieces should value the versatility and reflect the personal style of each person (KARG, 2015), providing, besides the focus on pieces that evoke strong emotions, the opportunity to save and respond to the rampant consumerism stimulated by fast fashion (KUMAR; VACCARO, 2017).

Rees (2017) states that she used to have a distorted view of what it meant to dress well. For her, having style was synonymous with following the latest fashion trends. Besides,

she thought there was only one version of style, one way of dressing well, which she should follow and reproduce. After reflecting on fashion consumption patterns, Rees (2017) came to understand that dressing well goes beyond following trends, you can have a functional wardrobe and express yourself through it. This view resembles the typical view of capsule-wardrobe adopters, who begin to take into account the notion that less is more (HEGER, 2016). This concept is also related to sustainability since it encourages the consumer to increase the number of times clothes are worn (FLETCHER, 2014), functioning as a more viable solution to consumerism problems.

Rector (2015) outlines some guidelines for adopting the capsule-wardrobe: (i) separate your clothes into 37 pieces; (ii) use these 37 pieces for three months; (iii) do not buy anything new during these three months; (iv) plan and shop for the next capsule in the last two weeks of the three months; (v) the amount of purchases depends on the individual. Therefore, it is assumed for this study that the process of adopting the concept is intrinsically related to changes in the identity and clothing consumption of its adopters. The research design outlined for this study will be presented next.

Method

Our study has been developed through an exploratory and qualitative approach. Qualitative research aims to study "the things in their natural environment, trying to understand or interpret the phenomena in terms of the meanings that people give them" (DENZIN; LINCOLN, 2006, p. 17). In this perspective, an exploratory qualitative study was carried out to reach the objective of this study (MERRIAM, 2009) since the capsule-wardrobe is a relatively new concept to be researched.

Data were collected through thirteen in-depth semistructured interviews with thirteen female adopters of the concept. We decided to interview women since they are known, according to Heger (2016), as the main adopters of the capsule-wardrobe. The interview script was divided into questions related to the capsule-wardrobe adoption process, based on the motivations for its adoption and the post-adoption period, as well as questions about the interviewees' profile. The first contact with the interviewees and the invitation to participate in this research occurred in three Facebook groups that had the capsule-wardrobe as the main topic. Two women spontaneously expressed interest in participating in the study, and the others were invited to participate through private messages.

As for the profile, the interviewees were named with pseudonyms related to their personality or lifestyle. Those characteristics were observed by the researchers or mentioned by the interviewees during the interview (Table 1). For instance: one of them said many times that she liked to travel and provided narratives using a travel-related context. For that reason, her pseudonym was chosen as *Miss Traveler*.

TABLE 1 - INTERVIEWEES' PROFILE

| Pseudonym	Age	Occupation	Marital status	City
Miss Spontaneous	27	Journalist	Married	Salvador (BA)
Miss Planner	27	Advertising professional	Single	São Paulo (SP)
Miss Traveler	32	English teacher	Single	Salvador (BA)
Miss Self-reflective	18	Architecture student	Single	Presidente Prudente (SP)
Miss Pragmatic	30	Forestry engineer	Single	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)
Miss Politicized	21	Anthropology student	Single	Belo Horizonte (MG)
Miss Balanced	25	Art and Advertising Director	Married	Novo Hamburgo (RS)
Miss Mature	19	Psychology student	Single	Parnaíba (PI)
Miss Meticulous	28	Social media professional	Single	São Paulo (SP)
Miss Decided	21	Production engineering student	Stable union	Salvador (BA)
Miss Wordy	25	Doctor	Single	São Paulo (SP)
Miss Excited	23	Cook and Makeup Artist	Single	São Paulo (SP)
Miss Messy	27	Psychology student	Single	Salvador (BA)

SOURCE: Elaborated by the authors.

The interviewees were mostly single women, about 25 years old, and living in different regions of Brazil, except for Miss Spontaneous, who was living in France during the study. The interviews were performed via Skype or Facebook, and they were carried out until saturation was reached (FRANCIS; JOHNSTON; ROBERTSON, 2010; SPIGGLE, 1994). All narratives from the interviews were recorded and transcribed for later data analysis. They lasted twenty-one minutes on average, totaling four and a half hours of recording and eighty pages of testimonials. Among the difficulties in data collection, we emphasize that sometimes the dialogs were interrupted due to connection failures. We have used content and categorical analysis techniques to explore the data. Content analysis followed Bardin's (2011) approach. We opted for the categorial analysis technique, which works through the "division of text operations into units, into categories according to analog regroupings" (BARDIN, 2011, p. 120). The interview content was analyzed and categorized according to: (i) motivations for the capsule-wardrobe adoption, and (ii) capsule-wardrobe post-adoption. Based on our findings we propose a diagram of the capsule-wardrobe adoption process.

Discussion and Data Analysis

Capsule-Wardrobe Adoption Process

The results allowed us to propose a diagram of the capsule-wardrobe adoption process organized by themes or categories (Figure 1). The findings regarding the categories are discussed in the following section.

FIGURE 1 - CAPSULE-WARDROBE ADOPTION PROCESS.
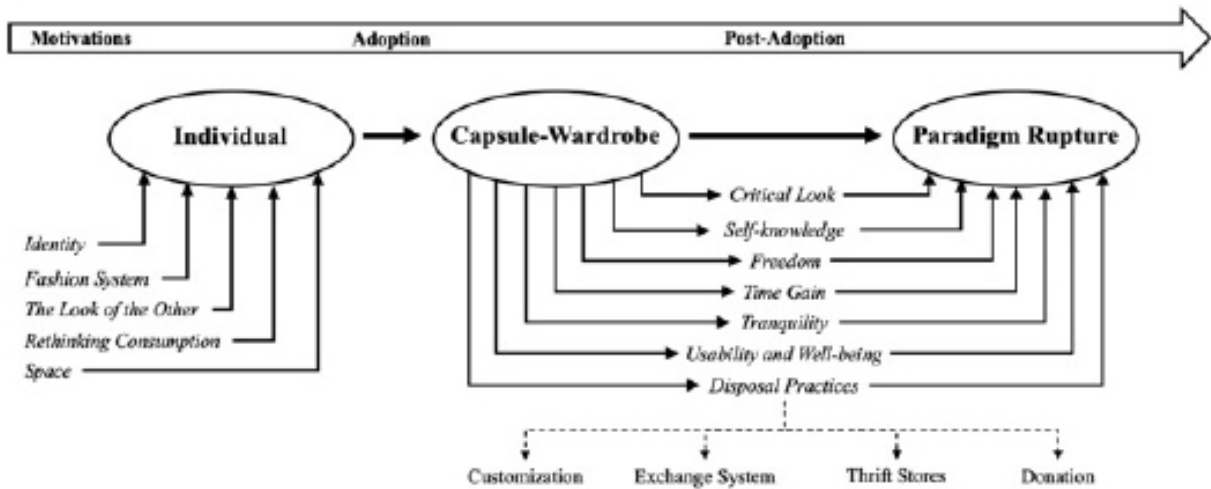
SOURCE: Elaborated by the authors.

Initially, we mapped the capsule-wardrobe adoption process guided by the narratives on the motivations for its adoption, which involved issues related to identity, the influence of others (e.g., third person) and fashion, a way of rethinking consumption, and lack of space. The post-adoption moment revealed new disposal practices and senses of self-knowledge, tranquility, freedom, and time. A critical look at purchasing, the increased usability of clothing, and the well-being associated with it were also themes observed in the narratives. Finally, we found a paradigm rupture due to the adoption of this concept.

Motivations for Adopting the Capsule-Wardrobe

Some reasons motivated the adoption of the concept. According to the category "*The look of the other*", the interviewees' testimonials suggest that they would like to be less pressured by colleagues and friends about their exposure for wearing clothes that have been used on other occasions. "*The influence of fashion*" category represents the pressure from the fashion industry. In this category, the interviewees stated that they used to buy and wear fashionable pieces, encouraged by the dominant fashion system, but after a short time, those pieces no longer served them. The following reports evidence those ideas:

"[...] I was one of those people that say 'oh, I'm not going to wear this outfit because they saw me wearing it last week'" (Miss Self-reflective).

"I was buying some fashionable clothes, and I would follow fashion and I would buy ripped jeans. I do not even see myself in ripped jeans" (Miss Spontaneous).

The results indicate that the individuals feel social pressures, which is reflected by the concern regarding people's judgment about their clothes (BANISTER; HOGG, 2007; KAISER, 1990). Moreover, they felt pressured to follow fashion trends. During the phase that motived the CW adoption, the identity of the adopters ceased to be considered as an authentic expression of themselves to become an attractive material representation to people, which might influence their social relations and behaviors (ELGIN, 2012; RICHINS; DAWSON, 1992).

Since the interviewees oriented their consumption and identity formation at that time based on concerns with other peoples' opinions, it was observed that social identity overlapped with personal identity, making it difficult to reconcile their multiple identities (AHUVIA, 2005; JYRINKI, 2012; REED et al., 2012). This was due to the involvement or association with individuals or groups (WHITE; DAHL, 2007) in the form of consumer socialization agents (HOKKANEN, 2014), identified in the figure of "others".

The "*Identity*" category revealed that the interviewees did not feel represented by the clothes they were buying because they did not identify themselves with their current pieces. Here are some testimonials:

> "*I did not feel like my clothes represented me, so that was what caught my attention the most*" (Miss Mature).

> "*[...] I started looking at things in my closet that did not mean anything to me, which I did not use, which I did not really like [...]*" (Miss Politicized).

The fact that the items that were in the interviewees' wardrobe did not have a positive meaning evidenced problems associated with what Guy and Banim (2000) point out as an identity negotiation process. That is, there was a difference in the notion of '*who I am, who I am not and who I want to be*' of the interviewees in terms of the clothes they wore and how they felt about them (WOODWARD, 2005). The non-incorporation of clothes as an expression of "self" made the definition of identity complicated for the investigation subjects, considering that they did not feel positively connected with their clothes (DITTMAR, 2008).

The "*Rethinking consumption*" category evidenced the interviewees' dissatisfaction with items available in the wardrobe which were seen as fruits of consumerism.

> "*At first, I've rethought a little. That was what made me want to have the capsule-wardrobe, to have a minimalist life, it is this consumerism issue*" (Miss Traveler).

> "*Lack of space. My wardrobe is small, it's two doors. And what happens: it's two doors for two people. So, it's hard, isn't it?*" (Miss Spontaneous).

This finding is in line with the one suggested by Cherrier (2009) about consumerism being able to promote pressures that would hinder the construction of identity, making it confusing for the individual, so that it does not represent the individual's true "self". Concerning the "*Space*" category, a practical issue was observed: the lack of space in the wardrobe.

Capsule-Wardrobe Post-Adoption

In general, some of the interviewees revealed to adopt the capsule wardrobe without realizing it, even before knowing the concept, others had adopted the concept less than a year ago, while others had adopted it at least two years ago. The following are some of the example excerpts:

> *"[...] I was already doing it without realizing it and, out of nowhere, I saw that I was already in it* [in the adoption of the concept]" (Miss Pragmatic).

> "*I think it's been less than a year, it was after last year's winter ended*" (Miss Planner).

> "*About two years ago*" (Miss Decided).

The post-adoption period brought significant changes for CW adopters in terms of consumption and disposal, self-knowledge, feelings of well-being, and sense of tranquility. In this sense, the "*Freedom*" category showed that the interviewees related freedom: (i) to social pressures, since they no longer follow standards considered imposed by others or self-imposed; and (ii) consumption, resulting in its reduction. Here are some of them:

> *"[...] you realize that you no longer have to follow a pattern: what everybody wears, what everybody has"* (Miss Decided).

> "*With each piece I took from the wardrobe, I felt freer"* (Miss Mature).

By revealing a greater sense of freedom, the adopters' identity approach began to emphasize personal rather than social identity, that is, distancing oneself from the pressures of others (SCHULTZ KLEINE; KLEINE III; ALLEN, 1995). The pressures initially experienced have been overcome in the direction of achieving greater autonomy in relation to certain behaviors encouraged by others (i.e., socialization agents) regarding clothing (WHITE; DAHL, 2007; HOKKANEN, 2014). Still, this consumption reduction allowed the construction of the identity of the interviewees even in the face of reduction processes, according to the literature (ALBINSSON; PEREIRA, 2009; BELK, 1988; CHERRIER, 2009; BALLANTINE; CREERY, 2010).

Another finding was the "*Disposal Practices*" category. The incorporation of new forms of clothing disposal by the interviewees was triggered by the capsule-wardrobe adoption, such as reuse and customization, shopping in thrift stores, and exchanges between friends:

> *"I always try to reuse. Like, when a pair of pants rips off, I make shorts or something like that"* (Miss Self-reflective).

> *"[...] I think it's ecologically correct, even because I buy a lot of things at thrift stores nowadays"* (Miss Politicized).

> *"Just making exchanges between friends already changes your whole wardrobe"* (Miss Spontaneous).

Besides, an expressively mentioned habit among the interviewees was the preference to donate pieces, mainly for street dwellers or charities, such as churches, namely:

> *"And I give a lot to homeless people, sometimes I carry a coat in my handbag, and I give to them"* (Miss Traveler).

> *"[...] I give to some entity or a clothing campaign, or I take to a church that there is here in the city center [...]"* (Miss Balanced).

Within this perspective, the role of the disposal linked to identity formation was identified. The reflections that motivated the interviewees to adopt the capsule-wardrobe led them to better choices regarding the disposal of clothes. This view resembles that of Phillips and Sego (2011) on changes in the identity of individuals according to more conscious choices that influence behavior. Discarding practices such as reuse and customization suggest that the interviewees started to present a stronger connection with their clothes, positively linking to their identities because they seek to keep the pieces and avoid throwing them away (TRUDEL; ARGO; MENG, 2016).

Categories such as "*Time Gain"* and "*Tranquility"* presented the feeling of tranquility and more time obtained by the interviewees when they decide to select what to wear because fewer options offer more possibilities of choice and time to try out different combinations of pieces. Also, it was identified the "*Self-knowledge*" category, which is related to themselves and style:

> *"I have time, I have plenty of time. I do really have plenty of time"* (Miss Spontaneous).

> *"I think after adoption [...] like, from the whole lifestyle, it was tranquility, you know?"* (Miss Balanced).

> *"[...] I feel more myself, I have learned to be who I am. And I found my style for sure"* (Miss Self-reflective).

The acquired self-knowledge reinforced the notion of the interviewees' personal identity, which was given through a new way of consuming clothing according to what preaches the capsule-wardrobe concept (i.e., opt for a number of items considered sufficient, reduced, of better quality, longer durability and that reflect your style) (KARG, 2015). This allowed the adopters to express their identities through clothes that represented them in a more authentic and satisfactory way, and from that, they felt more themselves (DITTMAR, 2008; GUY; BANIM, 2000; SCHULTZ KLEINE; KLEINE III; ALLEN, 1995; WHITE; DAHL, 2007; ZAVESTOSKI, 2002).

The "*Usability and Well-being*" category revealed that the interviewees started to really wear and enjoy their clothes. We noted that the experienced well-being after adopting the CW started to produce positive effects in the construction of the interviewees' identity (AHUVIA, 2005). On the other hand, the "*Critical Look*" category showed the most discerning view gained on the judgment of topics such as durability, price, and quality of pieces, mainly to make the investment worth it.

> *"[...] really, well, I've worn all my clothes"* (Miss Traveler).

> *"[...] If I have to invest much money in an outfit, I think it's worth you to pay dearly for one piece that you'll always have [...]"* (Miss Planner).

Finally, the "*Paradigm Rupture*" category represented a moment after the adoption, in which the logic of the capsule-wardrobe goes beyond its association with clothing consumption. The interviewees revealed that the CW worked as an opening concept to other areas of life and other concepts:

> *"There are so many concepts interconnected in the capsule-wardrobe that I have to speak about conscious consumption, minimalism, ecology, simple life. Because, to me, everything is related, but the capsule-wardrobe does not preach any of the other concepts, it is an opening for them"* (Miss Spontaneous).

Thus, in general, the results suggested that the capsule-wardrobe adoption process is intrinsically related to changes in the identity and clothing consumption of its adopters. The role of identity in this process was perceived through a transition of focusing on social identity and its pressures (e.g., the *other* and the *fashion* system) to focus on personal identity and changes in clothing purchasing, consumption and disposal practices. We understand that, after going through the capsule-wardrobe adoption process, individuals start wearing clothes that really represent them. Therefore, with the capsule-wardrobe adoption, "**you wear what you are**", not the other way around (i.e., you are what you wear), going against the capitalist logic of excessive consumption and the influence of trends dictated by the mainstream of fashion system for consumers. Ultimately, all changes brought by the adoption process led to a paradigm rupture, that is, a shift of the way of thinking and consuming that has been incorporated into other areas of the adopters' lives.

Final Remarks

This research aimed to understand the role of identity and clothing consumption in the capsule-wardrobe adoption process. We proposed a diagram of the capsule-wardrobe adoption process based on findings. The results confirmed the assumption that the capsule-wardrobe adoption process was intrinsically related to changes in the identity and clothing consumption of its adopters. In this sense, identity has been shifted from a focus on social identity (before the adoption) to focusing on personal identity (post-adoption). Besides, the way of purchasing, consuming and disposing clothes has also changed.

The adopters have acquired self-knowledge, a sense of tranquility, and gained time, reinforcing the notion of personal identity, which surpassed the social identity that prevailed before the adoption of the concept. Furthermore, the sense of freedom concerning social pressures was observed. Also, the process of reducing clothing consumption did not prevent the development of identity. On the contrary, they began to wear and enjoy their pieces, feeling satisfied and represented by them. Thus, we understand that the capsule-wardrobe adoption leads individuals to transfer their own self to their clothes, reinforcing the idea that "**you wear what you are**". In addition, a critical look at purchasing decisions, a greater consumption awareness, its reduction and new disposal practices were incorporated with the adoption of the concept. Besides, the capsule-wardrobe was an opening for new concepts and areas of life, functioning as a paradigm rupture for its adopters.

Managerial Implications

As managerial implications, companies might incorporate materials or design concepts that would result in products with greater durability and quality in their product development processes once CW adopters demonstrated to be more likely to purchase and keep those kinds of clothes. Also, retailers might promote slow fashion, a type of sustainable fashion consumption (MCNEILL; SNOWDON, 2019; SOBREIRA; SILVA; ROMERO, 2020), since consumers who adhere to the capsule-wardrobe are changing their consumption habits towards valuing attributes such as higher quality and durability. Besides, capsule-wardrobe supporters are also reducing their consumption of clothing, which makes them more likely to seek out items with these attributes. Therefore, in terms of marketing communication, slow fashion brands and companies might emphasize these product attributes in their campaigns, focusing on the connection between personal identity and fashion consumption as a visual representation of the individuals' self (i.e., the "you wear what you are" idea).

Sustainability is not always connected to the acquisition of new products, so companies cannot fail to consider other more accessible ways in which capsule wardrobe adopters can acquire pieces with these attributes, for example through services or other forms of access that facilitate collaborative fashion consumption (BECKER-LEIFHOLD; IRAN, 2018; IRAN; SCHRADER, 2017). In this sense, Sobreira, Silva and Romero (2021) argue that the acquisition of exchanged, rented, second-hand, vintage or recycled clothes can be an alternative for consumers who want to be part of more sustainable fashion

segments, since sustainability "needs durability, prolonging the use phase and using the existing maximum capacity of the existing product" (IRAN, 2018, p. 7).

Thus, incorporating new forms of clothing disposal (e.g., reuse and customization, shopping in thrift stores, exchanges between friends, and donations) that occurred during the adoption process leaves room for collaborative fashion consumption practices to be encouraged by retailers that want to adapt their marketing communications to a segment of consumers that are CW adopters. Moreover, it is an opportunity for new business models that focus on collaborative fashion consumption practices (e.g., fashion libraries and thrift stores) to expand their activities and reach new costumers. Finally, fashion brands might use the capsule wardrobe concept as a positioning tool that could be integrated to the brands' communication strategy.

Limitations, Contribution and Future Research

As research limitations, we mention the difficulties in data collection due to connection failures that have sometimes interrupted the interview flow. In addition, as it is not the focus of this work, other limitation involves the lack of an analysis from the socio-economic point of view of the interviewees, since it may influence issues of access and purchasing power of higher quality and durable garments, which tend to have higher prices. This is an interesting aspect to note when analyzing examples of alternative fashion consumption, such as the adoption of the capsule wardrobe, which may involve greater financial capacity to acquire this type of clothing. Therefore, we suggest that future studies can make an analysis considering the purchasing power in the lives of capsule wardrobe adopters and how this contributes to facilitate or hinder the adoption of this concept in terms of consumption.

As for academic contribution, we mention the construction of a diagram regarding the CW adoption process. It also contributes to the literature of studies on consumer identity projects in CCT from the association of identity with clothing consumption. Future research might develop a questionnaire and quantitatively verify the manifestation of the proposed categories by the diagram, among other adopters of the concept. We also encourage researchers to study the male audience as a target or expand to the general public. Finally, considering that the capsule wardrobe functions as a paradigm rupture towards other concepts, it is suggested that future studies may relate this concept to other themes such as conscious consumption, minimalism, sustainable fashion, slow fashion, collaborative fashion consumption, consumer empowerment, among others. Also, we encourage scholars to explore this concept overseas, mainly in different countries and continents, since people from different cultures might present different experiences and perspectives regarding the adoption of this minimalist wardrobe concept. Furthermore, future studies might analyze the existence of congruence between the brand's message around capsule wardrobes and the consumers' identity that comes from this wardrobe adoption.

Referências

AHUVIA, A. Beyond the extended self: Loved objects and consumers' identity narratives. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 32, n. 1, p. 171-184, 2005.

ALBINSSON, P.; PERERA, B. From trash to treasure and beyond: The meaning of voluntary disposition. **Journal of Consumer Behaviour**, v. 8, n. 6, p. 340-353, 2009.

ARNOULD, E. J.; THOMPSON, C. J. Introduction: Consumer Culture Theory: Ten years gone (and beyond). **Consumer Culture Theory**, v. 17, p. 1-21, 2015.

ASKEGAARD, S.; LINNET, J. Towards an epistemology of consumer culture theory. **Marketing Theory**, v. 11, n. 4, p. 381-404, 2011.

BALLANTINE, P. W.; CREERY, S. The consumption and disposition behaviour of voluntary simplifiers. **Journal of Consumer Behaviour**, v. 9, n. 1, p. 45-56, 2011.

BARDIN, L. **Análise de Conteúdo**. São Paulo: Almedina Brasil, 2011.

BARBOSA, L.; CAMPBELL, C. O Estudo do consumo nas ciências sociais contemporâneas. In: BARBOSA, L.; CAMPBELL, C. (Org.), **Cultura, Consumo e Identidade**. Rio de Janeiro: FGV, 2006.

BARTHES, R. **The fashion system**. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.

BANISTER, E. N.; HOGG, M. K. Consumers and their negative selves, and the implications for fashion marketing. In: HINES, T.; BRUCE M. (Eds.), **Fashion Marketing:** Contemporary Issues. Oxford: Elsevier Ltd, 2007.

BECKER-LEIFHOLD, C.; IRAN, S. Collaborative fashion consumption–drivers, barriers and future pathways. **Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management**, v. 22, n. 2, p. 189-208, 2018.

BELK, R. W. Possessions and the extended self. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 15, n. 2, p. 139-168, 1988.

CAMPBELL, C. Eu compro; logo, sei que existo: as bases metafísicas do consumo moderno. In: BARBOSA, L.; CAMPBELL, C. (Org.), **Cultura, Consumo e Identidade.** Rio De Janeiro: Editora FGV, 2006.

CASTELLS, M. **The power of identity**. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997.

CASOTTI, L. M.; SUAREZ, M. C. Dez anos de Consumer Culture Theory: delimitações e aberturas. **Revista de Administração de Empresas**, v. 56, n. 3, p. 353-359, 2016.

CHERRIER, H. Anti-consumption discourses and consumer-resistant identities. **Journal of Business Research**, v. 62, n. 2, p. 281-190, 2009.

DENZIN, N. K.; LINCOLN, Y. S. **O planejamento da pesquisa qualitativa:** teorias e abordagens. Porto Alegre: Bookman, 2006.

DITTMAR, H. **Consumer culture, identity and well-being:** The search for the 'good life' and the 'body perfect'. Hove: Psychology Press, 2008.

DOUGLAS, M.; ISHERWOOD, B. **O mundo dos bens:** para uma antropologia do consumo. Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, 2004.

DOUGHER, K. **You're doing the "capsule wardrobe" wrong**. 2015 Disponível em: <http://fashionmagazine.com/fashion/youre-doing-the-capsule-wardrobe-wrong/>. Acesso em: 20 abr. 2022.

ELGIN, D. **Simplicidade voluntária:** em busca de um estilo de vida exteriormente simples, mas interiormente rico. São Paulo: Cultrix, 2012.

ESCALAS, J. Self-identity and consumer behavior. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 39, n. 5, p. 15-18, 2013.

FERREIRA, M. C.; SCARABOTO, D. My plastic dreams: Towards an extended understanding of materiality and the shaping of consumer identities. **Journal of Business Research**, v. 69, n. 1, p. 191-207, 2016.

FLETCHER, K. **Sustainable fashion and textiles:** Design journeys. London: Earthscan, 2014.

FRANCIS, J.; JOHNSTON, M.; ROBERTSON C. What is an adequate sample size? Operationalizing data saturation for theory-based interview studies. **Psychology Health**, v. 25, n. 10, p. 1229-1245, 2010.

GAIÃO, B. F. S.; SOUZA, I. L.; LEÃO, A. M. S. Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) já é uma escola de pensamento em marketing?. **Revista de Administração de Empresas**, v. 52, n. 3, p. 330-344, 2012.

GRONOW, J. **The sociology of taste**. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

GUY, A.; BANIM, M. Personal collections: Women's clothing use and identity. **Journal of Gender Studies**, v. 9, n. 3, p. 313-327, 2000.

HALL, S. **A identidade cultural na pós-modernidade**. Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 2005.

HEGER, G. **The capsule closet phenomenon:** A phenomenological study of lived experiences with capsule closets. 2016. Thesis (Master in Textile Management) – The Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, 2016.

HOKKANEN, S. **Fashion brands and consumption in postmodern consumer culture:** The construction of self and social identities. 2014. Thesis (Master in Textile Management) – The Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, 2014.

IRAN, S. Sustainable Fashion: from production to alternative consumption. In: JASTRAM, S.; SCHNEIDER, AM. (Eds.) **Sustainable Fashion**. Cham: Springer, 2018, p. 139-159.

IRAN, S.; SCHRADER, U. Collaborative fashion consumption and its environmental effects. **Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management**: An International Journal, v. 21, n. 4, p. 468-482, 2017. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/jfmm-09-2016-0086.

JYRINKI, H. Pet-related consumption as a consumer identity constructor. **International Journal of Consumer Studies**, v. 36, n. 1, p. 114-120, 2012.

KAISER, S. B. **The social psychology of clothing:** Symbolic appearances in context. New York: Macmillan Publishers, 1990.

KAISER, S. B. **The social psychology of clothing**. New York: Fairchild Publications, 1997.

KARG, C. **New fashion minimalism in an affluent society:** A paradigm shift?. 2015. Thesis (Master in Textile Management) – The Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, 2015.

KUMAR, R.; VACCARO, K. An experimentation engine for data-driven fashion systems. In: AAAI 2017 SPRING SYMPOSIUM, 4., 2017, Illinois, **Anais...** Illinois: AAAI Publications, 2017, p. 389-394.

MCNEILL, L. S. Fashion and women's self-concept: A typology for self-fashioning using clothing. **Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management**, v. 22, n. 1, p. 82-98, 2018.

MCNEILL, L. S.; SNOWDON, J. Slow fashion–Balancing the conscious retail model within the fashion marketplace. **Australasian Marketing Journal**, v. 27, n. 4, p. 215-223, 2019.

MERRIAM, S. **Qualitative research:** A guide to design and implementation. New York: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

PHILLIPS, B. J.; SEGO, T. The role of identity in disposal: lessons from mothers' disposal of children's possessions. **Marketing Theory**, v. 11, n. 4, p. 435-454, 2011.

RAINHO, M. C. T.; VOLPI, M. C. Looking at Brazilian fashion studies: Fifty years of research and teaching. **International Journal of Fashion Studies**, v. 5, n. 1, p. 211-226, 2018.

RECTOR, C. **How to Create a Capsule Wardrobe**. 2015. Disponível em: <http://theeverygirl.com/how-to-create-a-capsule-wardrobe>. Acesso em: 20 abr. 2022.

REES, A. **Os segredos do guarda-roupa europeu:** um método simples para descobrir seu estilo e montar o armário dos seus sonhos. São Paulo: Paralela, 2017.

REED, A.; FOREHAND, M. R.; PUNTONI, S.; WARLOP, L. Identity-based consumer behavior. **International Journal of Research in Marketing**, v. 29, n. 4, p. 310-321, 2012.

RICHINS, M. L.; DAWSON, S. A consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: scale development and validation. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 19, n. 3, p. 303-316, 1992.

ROACH-HIGGINS, M. E.; EICHER, J. B. Dress and identity. **Clothing and Textiles Research Journal**, v. 10, n. 4, p. 2-9, 1992.

SCHULTZ KLEINE, S.; KLEINE III, R. E.; ALLEN, C. T. How is a possession 'me' or 'not me'? Characterizing types and an antecedent of material possession attachment. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 22, p. 327–343, 1995.

SOBREIRA, É. M. C.; SILVA, C. R. M.; ROMERO, C. B. A. Do empowerment and materialism influence slow fashion consumption? Evidence from Brazil. **Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management**, v. 24, n. 3, p. 415-435, 2020.

SOBREIRA, É. M. C.; SILVA, C. R. M.; ROMERO, C. B. A. Consumo Colaborativo de Moda e Slow fashion: percursos para uma moda sustentável. **Modapalavra e-periódico**, v. 14, n. 34, p. 35-60, 2021.

SOLOMON, M.; SCHOPLER, J. Self-consciousness & clothing. **Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin**, v. 8, n. 3, p. 508-514, 1982.

SPIGGLE, S. Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data in consumer research. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 21, n. 3, p. 491-503, 1994.

TAJFEL, H.; TURNER, C. J. **The social identity theory of intergroup behavior**. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1986.

TOWNSEND, C.; SOOD, S. Self-affirmation through the choice of highly aesthetic products. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 39, n. 2, p. 415-428, 2012.

TRUDEL, R.; ARGO, J. J.; MENG, M. D. The recycled self: consumers' disposal decisions of identity-linked products. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 43, n. 2, p. 246–264, 2016.

VAN DER LAAN, E.; VELTHUIS, O. Inconspicuous dressing: a critique of the construction-through-consumption paradigm in the sociology of clothing. **Journal of Consumer Culture**, v. 16, n. 1, p. 22–42, 2016.

VEHMAS, K.; RAUDASKOSKI, A.; HEIKKILÄ, P.; HARLIN, A.; MENSONEN, A. Consumer attitudes and communication in circular fashion. **Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management**, v. 22, n. 3, p. 286-300, 2018.

WATTANASUWAN, K. The self and symbolic consumption. **Journal of American Academy of Business**, v. 6, n. 1, p. 179-184, 2005.

WHITE, K.; DAHL, D. W. Are all out-groups created equal? Consumer identity and dissociative influence. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 34, n. 4, p. 525-536, 2007.

WHITE, K., ARGO, J. J.; SENGUPTA, J. Dissociative versus associative responses to social identity threat: the role of consumer self-construal. **Journal of Consumer Research**, v. 39, n. 4, p. 704-719, 2012.

WOODWARD, S. Looking good: Feeling right – Aesthetics of the self. In: KÜCHLER, S.; MILLER, D. (Eds.). **Clothing as Material Culture**. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2005. p. 21-40.

ZAVESTOSKI, S. The social-psychological bases of anticonsumption attitudes. **Psychology and Marketing**, v. 19, n. 2, p. 149-165, 2002.