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The Impact of Globalization on Strategic Decision-Making in the Multinational Fashion Industry

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Abstract: *This research paper investigates the transformative influence of globalization on the strategic decision-making (SDM) frameworks of multinational fashion corporations (MNCs). The fashion industry, characterized by rapidly shifting consumer preferences, complex global value chains, and geopolitical volatility, offers a uniquely rich context for examining how globalization reshapes corporate strategy at the highest levels. The study employs a mixed-method approach: a qualitative analysis of three leading MNCs — Inditex (Zara), LVMH, and Shein — supplemented by primary quantitative data collected from 100 respondents across multiple countries through a structured 15-item Likert-scale questionnaire. Data analysis employs descriptive statistics (frequencies, mean, standard deviation), bar chart visualization of all survey items, and formal hypothesis testing using the One-Sample t-Test and Chi-Square Test of Independence. Both research hypotheses are statistically confirmed at the 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$). The findings demonstrate that globalization has fundamentally decentralized strategic decision-making in fashion MNCs, elevated digital transformation as a core competitive resource (VRIN), intensified sustainability imperatives through institutional isomorphism, and catalyzed the rise of algorithmic, data-driven business models. The study is anchored in three theoretical frameworks: Bartlett and Ghoshal's (1989) Integration-Responsiveness (I-R) Matrix, Barney's (1991) Resource-Based View (RBV), and DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) Institutional Theory. Practical implications are drawn for MNC executives, supply chain strategists, and brand managers navigating the complex global-local strategic paradox.*

Keywords: *multinational fashion corporations*

I. INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry stands as one of the most vivid and consequential theatres of globalization. A single garment sold in Mumbai may be designed in Paris, manufactured in Bangladesh using Egyptian cotton, shipped through Singapore, and marketed globally via an algorithm running on servers in Guangzhou. This intricate geographic choreography — once heralded as the pinnacle of economic efficiency — now reveals its deep fragility in an era of escalating trade conflicts, pandemic-induced supply disruptions, and an increasingly vocal global citizenry demanding ethical and sustainable production.

Strategic decision-making (SDM) in the fashion industry context refers to the process by which top-level executives allocate scarce organizational resources — financial capital, manufacturing capacity, human talent, and brand equity — to achieve sustainable competitive advantage across multiple, culturally diverse markets. Globalization has not merely expanded the geographic canvas on which these decisions are painted; it has fundamentally altered the brush, the palette, and indeed the entire logic of the painting itself. Where traditional fashion strategy was top-down, season-driven, and headquarters-centric, contemporary globalized strategy is increasingly real-time, data-driven, and decentralized..

1.1 Background of the Study

The acceleration of fashion globalization in the late 20th century was driven by three interconnected forces: the liberalization of trade through agreements such as NAFTA, GATT, and later the WTO; the rise of information and communication technologies enabling real-time coordination across geographic boundaries; and the explosive growth of emerging market consumer classes, particularly in Asia, that offered fashion MNCs previously inaccessible demand pools. These forces combined to enable what became known as the "Fast Fashion" revolution — pioneered by Zara

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(Inditex) in the 1990s and subsequently imitated by H&M, Primark, and others — in which the traditional twice-yearly seasonal collection was replaced by a continuous flow of micro-collections refreshed weekly or even daily.

The 2020s, however, have introduced a new and more turbulent phase of globalization in fashion. The COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2021) exposed the extreme vulnerability of globally extended supply chains, causing brands with 10,000-mile supply chains to face empty shelves while their factories were shut down in Bangladesh or Cambodia. The Russia-Ukraine conflict triggered energy price surges that raised production costs across Europe. The US-China trade war has forced brands to rethink their China-centric manufacturing bases. And a new generation of consumers — particularly Millennials and Generation Z — has introduced radical new demands around sustainability, labour rights, and supply chain transparency that challenge the foundational economics of fast fashion

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the extensive practitioner and academic discourse on globalization in fashion, there remains a notable empirical gap in the quantitative measurement of how globalization-specific factors — decentralization of decision-making, digital transformation, sustainability pressures, supply chain agility — are actually perceived by professionals and informed consumers engaged with the multinational fashion industry. Existing literature is predominantly qualitative and case-study-based, drawing on annual reports and executive interviews. While this literature is rich in theoretical insight, it lacks primary survey-based evidence that can validate, quantify, and rank the specific dimensions of globalization's impact on SDM.

Furthermore, the literature tends to treat fashion MNCs as a monolithic category, when in reality the strategic responses to globalization differ dramatically across segments: luxury heritage brands like LVMH pursue a strategy of selective globalism that deliberately resists supply-side globalization while maximizing demand-side global reach; fast fashion brands like Inditex pursue transnational agility through proximity manufacturing and real-time data-driven replenishment; and digital disruptors like Shein pursue a form of algorithmic disintermediation that eliminates traditional MNC structures altogether. A comparative, evidence-based understanding of these divergent strategic postures is the central problem this study addresses.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study makes several contributions to both academic knowledge and practitioner understanding. First, it provides primary empirical data on globalization's impact on fashion MNC SDM — a domain that has been extensively theorized but rarely measured through direct survey-based evidence. Second, it operationalizes three major theoretical frameworks (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989; Barney, 1991; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) through measurable survey constructs, enabling theory testing in the specific context of the global fashion industry. Third, it offers a comparative lens across three distinct MNC archetypes — transnational agile (Inditex), heritage centralized (LVMH), and algorithmically decentralized (Shein) — providing a typology that can be applied by both researchers and practitioners.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To evaluate how globalization has shifted the locus of strategic decision-making from centralized headquarters to regional and algorithmic decentralized models in fashion MNCs.
2. To assess the impact of digital transformation and data analytics on the competitive advantage (VRIN resources) of fashion MNCs in the globalized marketplace.
3. To investigate how sustainability imperatives, driven by global institutional pressures (coercive, mimetic, and normative isomorphism), are reshaping the strategic priorities of fashion MNCs.
4. To statistically test whether globalization has a significant positive influence on fashion MNC strategic agility and digital competitive advantage, using primary survey data from 100 respondents.

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1.5 Research Hypotheses

H_2 (Alternative): Digital transformation and data analytics have a significant positive impact on the competitive advantage of multinational fashion corporations in the globalized market. ($\mu > 3.0$)

1.6 Scope and Limitations

Scope

- This study focuses on Fast Fashion and Luxury MNCs with operations spanning at least three continents.
- The time horizon covered is 2020–2025, capturing the post-pandemic strategic recalibration period.
- Primary data is drawn from 100 respondents including fashion industry professionals, marketing managers, supply chain executives, academics, and informed fashion consumers.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This investigation employs three complementary theoretical lenses, each addressing a distinct dimension of globalization's impact on fashion MNC SDM:

1.7.1 The Bartlett & Ghoshal Integration-Responsiveness (I-R) Matrix

Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) proposed that MNCs face two simultaneous strategic pressures: the need for global integration (standardization for economies of scale) and the need for local responsiveness (adaptation for market relevance). Their 2×2 matrix generates four strategic archetypes: Global Strategy (high integration, low responsiveness — e.g., Uniqlo's HeatTech standardization); Multidomestic Strategy (low integration, high responsiveness — e.g., luxury brands adapting collections for Middle Eastern vs. European markets); Transnational Strategy (high on both dimensions simultaneously — the most demanding and most rewarding archetype, exemplified by Inditex); and International Strategy (low on both). This paper argues that globalization has pushed the most successful fashion MNCs toward the Transnational quadrant, where centralized data capabilities are combined with localized manufacturing and marketing decisions.

1.7.2 Resource-Based View (RBV) of the Firm

Barney (1991) posited that sustained competitive advantage derives from firm-specific resources that are Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-substitutable (VRIN). In the pre-globalization fashion economy, the VRIN resource was the physical production facility — the textile mill, the garment factory. In the globalized, post-digital fashion economy, physical production has been commoditized through global outsourcing. The new VRIN frontier is intangible: brand equity (LVMH's heritage and artisanal identity), data analytics capabilities (Shein's proprietary AI algorithm), and proximity supply chain architecture (Inditex's nearshoring to Spain, Portugal, Morocco, and Turkey). This framework is central to understanding why different MNCs respond differently to the same globalization pressures — their distinct VRIN resource configurations determine their strategic options.

1.7.3 Institutional Theory and Isomorphism

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) explained organizational convergence through three isomorphic mechanisms. Coercive isomorphism — regulatory compliance — forces fashion MNCs to adopt sustainability practices (e.g., EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles; SEC climate disclosure rules). Mimetic isomorphism — imitation of successful peers — explains why virtually every mid-market fashion brand has attempted to replicate Zara's fast-fashion model since the early 2000s. Normative isomorphism — professional standards — explains why global fashion executives increasingly share common SDM frameworks, vocabulary (ESG, GVC governance, digital-first strategy), and ethical commitments regardless of national origin. This framework is particularly powerful in explaining the sustainability convergence observed across otherwise very different fashion MNCs.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Evolution of Global Value Chain (GVC) Governance in Fashion

The foundational theoretical framework for understanding globalization in fashion is the Global Value Chain (GVC) model, pioneered by Gereffi (1994, 2018). Gereffi characterized the fashion industry as a prototypical 'buyer-driven' global commodity chain, in which strategic decision-making power is concentrated among lead firms — multinational fashion brands — that orchestrate geographically dispersed networks of suppliers in developing economies. In the buyer-driven model, the brand's core competencies are not production (which is outsourced) but design, marketing, and logistics coordination.

Gereffi's (2024) recent conceptual update introduces the notion of 'synergistic governance,' reflecting the growing complexity of GVC coordination in the post-pandemic era, where private sector brands, civil society organizations, and government regulators must jointly manage the social and environmental upgrading of global production networks

2.2 Strategic Agility vs. Lean Efficiency in Volatile Markets

Christopher, Lowson, and Peck (2004) established the foundational argument that fashion markets constitute 'complex open systems' characterized by inherent demand volatility and structural unpredictability that render conventional forecast-driven supply chains strategically inadequate. Their prescriptive response — the embedded agile supply chain, capable of rapid scale-up and scale-down — anticipated by two decades the strategic architecture that Inditex would refine and that Shein would push to its logical algorithmic extreme.

The 2025 evolution of this discourse has crystallized around the phenomenon of Ultra-Fast Fashion (UFF), most comprehensively analyzed by Fong, Wan, and Huang (2022) in their Harvard Business School case study of Shein. Their analysis reveals that Shein's competitive advantage resides not in any single process innovation but in the systemic integration of three capabilities: real-time trend sensing via social media API monitoring, granular on-demand production through a network of 5,400 partner manufacturers concentrated in Guangzhou's garment district, and direct-to-consumer global logistics bypassing traditional retail infrastructure. This configuration achieves a sell-through rate of 98% — compared to an industry average of 60–70% — with dramatically lower unsold inventory risk. The strategic implications for traditional MNCs are profound: the cost of strategic inertia has never been higher.

2.3 Geopolitical Volatility and Subsidiary Investment Strategy

Sabel (2024) offers a rigorous empirical examination of how geopolitical tension between MNC home countries and host countries influences subsidiary investment decisions in the apparel industry. Using panel data from 2010–2022, Sabel demonstrates that a one-standard-deviation increase in bilateral political tension reduces the probability of new subsidiary establishment by 18% and is associated with a 12% reduction in local sales for existing subsidiaries. This finding has direct strategic implications for fashion MNCs with significant China-based manufacturing exposure in the context of US-China trade tensions.

McKinsey and Company's State of Fashion report (2024) documents what it terms 'the Great Recalibration' — a broad strategic reassessment among fashion MNCs of their geographic supply base, driven simultaneously by geopolitical risk, rising labour costs in traditional low-cost manufacturing hubs (particularly Bangladesh and Vietnam), and increasing consumer demand for supply chain transparency. The report identifies the 'China + 1' strategy — diversifying production to a secondary manufacturing hub in South or Southeast Asia — as the dominant strategic response, adopted by a majority of fashion MNCs surveyed.

2.4 Sustainability as a Strategic Imperative: The Circular Economy Convergence

The most substantial body of recent fashion strategy literature — spanning 2020 to 2026 — addresses the transition from linear 'take-make-dispose' production models to Circular Economy (CE) frameworks. Gazzola, Pavione, Pezzetti, and Grechi (2020) document significant generational differentiation in sustainability attitudes, with younger consumers (Millennials and Generation Z) demonstrating significantly higher stated sustainability preferences but persistent

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attitude-behaviour gaps — i.e., expressing strong sustainability values while continuing to purchase from environmentally problematic fast fashion brands. This gap represents both a strategic challenge and a commercial opportunity for fashion MNCs.

2.5 Digital Transformation as VRIN Resource in Fashion MNCs

Cai and Choi (2020) conduct a systematic review of IT adoption in fashion retail supply chains, identifying four categories of technology impact: demand forecasting accuracy (reducing forecast errors by 20–40%), inventory optimization (reducing holding costs by 15–25%), supplier coordination (reducing lead times by 30–50%), and customer experience personalization (increasing conversion rates by 10–35%). Their analysis underscores that digital capability is not merely an operational efficiency tool but a strategic differentiator that meets the VRIN criteria: Valuable (drives revenue and cost reduction simultaneously), Rare (not all brands possess equivalent data infrastructure), Inimitable (algorithms and proprietary datasets are brand-specific and legally protected), and Non-substitutable (no analog alternative achieves comparable results).

Prahalad and Doz (1987), while predating the digital era, established the foundational argument that MNC competitive advantage derives from the capacity to simultaneously leverage global efficiencies and respond to local market heterogeneity. Applied to the digital transformation context, this framework suggests that the fashion MNCs that will achieve sustained competitive advantage are those that can deploy centralized data analytics capabilities (global efficiency) while using the resulting insights to drive locally differentiated product, marketing, and pricing decisions (local responsiveness) — precisely the transnational architecture that Inditex has operationalized and that Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) theoretically prescribed.

2.6 Research Gap

The existing literature, while theoretically rich, exhibits three systematic gaps that this study is designed to address. First, existing research is overwhelmingly qualitative, drawing on case studies, annual reports, and executive interviews. While this qualitative foundation is essential, it lacks primary quantitative evidence directly measuring how fashion industry professionals and consumers perceive globalization's impact on SDM — a gap this study's survey addresses. Second, existing research treats the globalization-SDM relationship as essentially unidirectional: globalization drives strategic change. This study examines the bidirectional relationship, recognizing that the strategic choices of leading MNCs (Inditex's nearshoring, Shein's algorithmic model) are themselves reshaping the globalization landscape

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-method research design, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to achieve both theoretical depth and empirical rigor. The qualitative component employs an exploratory, multi-case study approach (Yin, 2018) examining Inditex, LVMH, and Shein as purposively selected theoretical cases representing the three dominant strategic archetypes in the globalized fashion industry. The quantitative component employs a descriptive, cross-sectional survey design (Creswell, 2014), collecting primary data from 100 respondents via a structured 15-item Likert-scale questionnaire.

3.2 Case Selection (Purposive Sampling — Qualitative Component)

Case	Strategic Archetype	Origin / Headquarters	Rationale for Selection
Inditex (Zara)	Agile / Proximity / Transnational	Arteixo, Spain (Global)	Industry leader in nearshoring; 57% proximity manufacturing; real-time data-driven SDM; $36B revenue (2023)

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LVMH	Heritage / Luxury / Centralized	Paris, France (Global)	World's largest luxury MNC; brand equity as primary VRIN; 5,000+ global retail locations; $86B revenue (2023)
Shein	Algorithmic / Ultra-Fast / DTC	Guangzhou, China (Global)	Third-wave globalization disruptor; AI-driven SDM; 98% sell-through rate; 150M+ global customers; $32B estimated revenue (2023)

Table 1: Case Selection Matrix for Qualitative Analysis

3.3 Quantitative Survey — Sampling and Data Collection

The quantitative component employs convenience sampling — a non-probability sampling method appropriate for exploratory research of this nature (Creswell, 2014). The survey was administered online via Google Forms and distributed through professional networks (LinkedIn), academic channels (university email lists), and fashion industry communities. Respondents were screened to ensure familiarity with the multinational fashion industry through professional or academic engagement.

A total of 100 valid responses were collected over a period of three weeks. The sample comprises fashion industry professionals (28%), marketing and brand managers (22%), supply chain managers (18%), academic researchers (14%), fashion consumers/enthusiasts (12%), and others (6%)

3.4 Survey Instrument The primary data collection instrument is a structured questionnaire comprising 15 substantive items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree) and 4 demographic items. The 15 substantive items are organized around five thematic domains:

1. Global Integration and Decentralization (Q1, Q2, Q9, Q10) — measuring perceptions of globalization's effect on SDM structure
2. Digital Transformation and Competitive Advantage (Q4, Q13, Q15) — measuring perceptions of technology's VRIN role
3. Cultural Adaptation and Brand Strategy (Q3, Q7, Q14) — measuring the global-local strategic tension

3.5 Statistical Methods

• Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution, percentage, mean ($\bar{x}$), and standard deviation (SD) for all 15 survey items

• Bar Chart Visualization: Horizontal bar chart representation of Likert response distributions for each item

• One-Sample t-Test (H_1): Tests whether the mean response on the Decentralization-SDM construct (Q2 + Q9 + Q10) significantly exceeds the neutral midpoint ($\mu_0 = 3.0$)

• One-Sample t-Test (H_2): Tests whether the mean response on the Digital Transformation construct (Q4 + Q13 + Q15) significantly exceeds the neutral midpoint ($\mu_0 = 3.0$)

• Chi-Square Test of Independence: Tests the association between perceived globalization impact and firm-type preference (Fast Fashion vs. Luxury) in strategic adaptation

• All tests conducted at significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ (95% confidence level), two-tailed

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3.6 Sample Profile

Category	Sub-Group	n	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	48	48.0%
	Female	49	49.0%
	Non-binary / Other	3	3.0%
Age Group	18–24 years	34	34.0%
	25–34 years	41	41.0%
	35–44 years	18	18.0%
	45 years and above	7	7.0%
Professional Role	Fashion Industry Professional	28	28.0%
	Marketing / Brand Manager	22	22.0%
	Supply Chain Manager	18	18.0%
	Academic / Researcher	14	14.0%
	Fashion Consumer / Enthusiast	12	12.0%
	Other	6	6.0%
Country / Region	India	31	31.0%
	USA	22	22.0%
	Europe (UK / France / Germany)	24	24.0%
	Southeast Asia	12	12.0%
	Others	11	11.0%
Total		**100**	**100.0%**

Table 2: Sample Profile (n = 100)

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND CASE FINDINGS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics — All Survey Items

Q	Survey Item	n	SA+A %	Mean (x̄)	SD	
Q1	Globalization has significantly increased the availability of international fashion brands in my region.	100	0%	**4.12**	0.94	

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Q2	Fashion MNCs have decentralized their strategic decision-making to local/regional hubs due to globalization.	100	0%	**3.95**	0.90	
Q3	International fashion brands successfully adapt their products to suit local cultural preferences.	100	0%	**3.79**	0.97	
Q4	Digital transformation (AI, data analytics) has significantly improved the strategic competitiveness of fashion MNCs.	100	0%	**4.19**	0.93	
Q5	Globalization has made fashion supply chains more vulnerable to disruptions (e.g., COVID-19, geopolitical tensions).	100	0%	**4.26**	0.90	
Q6	Sustainability and ethical sourcing have become critical strategic priorities for fashion MNCs due to global consumer pressure.	100	0%	**4.17**	0.91	
Q7	Globalization has widened the strategic gap between fast fashion (e.g., Shein, Zara) and luxury brands (e.g., LVMH).	100	0%	**4.07**	0.92	
Q8	Global competition has driven fashion brands to reduce prices, affecting their profitability and strategic decisions.	100	0%	**3.89**	0.95	
Q9	Nearshoring and proximity manufacturing strategies (as adopted by Inditex) have become essential for MNC competitiveness.	100	0%	**3.98**	0.93	
Q10	Globalization has fundamentally changed how fashion MNCs make strategic business decisions.	100	0%	**4.19**	0.92	
Q11	Consumer behaviour shaped by global trends significantly influences fashion MNC product and marketing decisions.	100	0%	**4.08**	0.94	
Q12	International regulatory compliance (e.g., EU sustainability laws, trade tariffs) directly impacts fashion MNC strategies.	100	0%	**4.10**	0.89	
Q13	Global competition from new-age digital brands (e.g., Shein) has forced traditional fashion MNCs to innovate faster.	100	0%	**4.22**	0.94	
Q14	Maintaining brand equity and cultural identity globally is the biggest challenge for fashion MNCs in a globalized world.	100	0%	**4.05**	0.90	
Q15	Fashion MNCs that embrace data-driven, decentralized decision-making models will	100	0%	**4.06**	0.92	

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	outperform centralized competitors in the next decade.					

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree | SA+A% = % Strongly Agree + Agree combined

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics — All 15 Survey Items (n=100)

The descriptive statistics reveal a consistently positive pattern: all 15 survey items record mean values above 3.79 (well above the neutral midpoint of 3.0), and 13 of 15 items record combined Strongly Agree + Agree responses above 70%.

4.2 Question-by-Question Analysis with Graphical Representation

Q1 — International Brand Availability (Global Integration Dimension)

Globalization has significantly increased the availability of international fashion brands in my region.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	42	42.0%	
Agree	38	38.0%	
Neutral	12	12.0%	
Disagree	6	6.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.12	**SD: 0.94**		

Figure 1: Response Distribution — Q1 (n=100)

Interpretation: An overwhelming 80% of respondents (42% Strongly Agree + 38% Agree) confirm that globalization has dramatically expanded international fashion brand availability in their regions. This reflects the GVC framework's buyer-driven chain logic: global brands orchestrate manufacturing globally and distribute globally, making them accessible far beyond their countries of origin. The mean of 4.12 (well above the neutral midpoint of 3.0) reflects near-universal recognition of globalization's market-opening effect. Only 8% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed — likely from regions with trade barriers or respondents from markets that were already fashion-saturated. The 12% neutral response may reflect respondents in markets where international brand penetration remains incomplete. This finding directly validates the study's premise that globalization has fundamentally altered the competitive landscape of the fashion retail market by exponentially expanding consumer choice and competitive pressure.

Q2 — Decentralization of Strategic Decision-Making

Fashion MNCs have decentralized their strategic decision-making to local/regional hubs due to globalization.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	31	31.0%	
Agree	44	44.0%	
Neutral	16	16.0%	
Disagree	7	7.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 3.95	**SD: 0.90**		

Figure 2: Response Distribution — Q2 (n=100)

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Interpretation: 75% of respondents agree that fashion MNCs have decentralized strategic decision-making to regional or local hubs in response to globalization pressures (mean = 3.95). This finding is theoretically significant: it provides empirical support for the Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) prediction that global competitive pressure would drive MNCs toward transnational organizational structures in which global strategy is formulated centrally but execution is decentralized to local entities capable of rapid response. The qualitative evidence from Inditex's 'regionalized globalization' strategy — maintaining strategic direction in Arteixo while decentralizing manufacturing decisions to proximity market hubs — is quantitatively validated here. The 9% neutral and 9% disagreement responses may reflect respondents from luxury segments, where centralization of production decisions remains a deliberate strategic choice (consistent with LVMH's 'Maisons' model).

Q3 — Digital Transformation and Strategic Competitiveness

Digital transformation (AI, data analytics) has significantly improved the strategic competitiveness of fashion MNCs.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	47	47.0%	
Agree	35	35.0%	
Neutral	10	10.0%	
Disagree	6	6.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.19	**SD: 0.93**		

Figure 4: Response Distribution — Q4 (n=100)

Interpretation: Digital transformation emerges as one of the most strongly endorsed factors in the survey, with 82% agreement and a mean of 4.19 — the joint-highest among all 15 items alongside Q13. This reflects the growing practitioner consensus that AI, machine learning, and data analytics have become existential competitive requirements rather than optional enhancements in the globalized fashion market. Shein's 98% sell-through rate, achieved through real-time algorithmic demand sensing, provides a benchmark that traditional MNCs cannot ignore. The finding also aligns with Barney's (1991) VRIN framework: digital capabilities in fashion meet all four criteria of sustained competitive advantage — they are Valuable (drive revenue and reduce waste), Rare (not equally distributed across brands), Inimitable (algorithms and proprietary datasets are brand-specific), and Non-substitutable (no analog alternative achieves comparable outcomes).

Q4— Supply Chain Vulnerability from Globalization

Globalization has made fashion supply chains more vulnerable to disruptions (e.g., COVID-19, geopolitical tensions).

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	51	51.0%	
Agree	33	33.0%	
Neutral	9	9.0%	
Disagree	5	5.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.26	**SD: 0.90**		

Figure 5: Response Distribution — Q5 (n=100)

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Interpretation: The supply chain vulnerability question elicits the highest level of agreement in the survey (84% agree/strongly agree; mean = 4.26). This reflects the shared experience of COVID-19 disruption, which exposed the catastrophic fragility of globally extended 'just-in-time' supply chains with 10,000-mile connections to manufacturing hubs in Asia. Fashion MNCs that had optimized their supply chains for cost efficiency at the expense of resilience faced empty shelves, cancelled orders to manufacturers, and cash flow crises simultaneously in 2020. The extreme consensus here (only 7% neutral or disagreeing) suggests this is the most universally recognized consequence of globalization among the respondent group — a finding that directly validates the strategic logic of nearshoring and supply chain localization initiatives like Inditex's proximity manufacturing model.

Q5 — Strategic Divergence: Fast Fashion vs. Luxury

Globalization has widened the strategic gap between fast fashion (e.g., Shein, Zara) and luxury brands (e.g., LVMH).

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	38	38.0%	
Agree	41	41.0%	
Neutral	13	13.0%	
Disagree	6	6.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.07	**SD: 0.92**		

Figure 7: Response Distribution — Q7 (n=100)

Interpretation: 79% of respondents agree that globalization has widened the strategic gap between fast fashion and luxury brands (mean = 4.07). This finding validates a central thesis of this paper: globalization does not create a single universal fashion strategy but rather amplifies and accentuates the strategic differentiation between segments. Fast fashion brands compete on speed, price, and algorithmic trend responsiveness; luxury brands compete on heritage, artisanal craftsmanship, and controlled scarcity. As globalization intensifies both sets of competitive pressures — forcing fast fashion to be faster and luxury to be more aspirational — the strategic middle ground (mid-market fashion) is the most strategically vulnerable position, as McKinsey (2024) documents in its analysis of the 'hollowing out' of the fashion market's middle tier.

Q6— Global Price Competition and Profitability

Global competition has driven fashion brands to reduce prices, affecting their profitability and strategic decisions.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	29	29.0%	
Agree	43	43.0%	
Neutral	18	18.0%	
Disagree	8	8.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 3.89	**SD: 0.95**		

Figure 8: Response Distribution — Q8 (n=100)

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Interpretation: 72% of respondents agree that global competition has driven price reductions that affect profitability and strategic decisions (mean = 3.89). However, this is the item with the highest neutral response rate (18%), suggesting that the relationship between globalization and price competition is perceived as more nuanced than other dimensions. The neutral responses may reflect the luxury segment perspective: for LVMH and other luxury MNCs, globalization has enabled premium price increases by expanding the aspirational consumer base in emerging markets, particularly China and Southeast Asia, where demand for European luxury brands has grown substantially. This segment-specific heterogeneity in the price-competition relationship is an important nuance that underscores the need for differentiated strategic approaches.

Q7 — Consumer Behaviour as Driver of MNC Strategic Decisions

Consumer behaviour shaped by global trends significantly influences fashion MNC product and marketing decisions.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	40	40.0%	
Agree	39	39.0%	
Neutral	12	12.0%	
Disagree	7	7.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.08	**SD: 0.94**		

Figure 11: Response Distribution — Q11 (n=100)

Interpretation: 79% of respondents agree that globally shaped consumer behaviour significantly influences fashion MNC product and marketing decisions (mean = 4.08). This finding validates a fundamental premise of the GVC framework: in buyer-driven commodity chains, consumer demand signals at the point of retail cascade upstream through the value chain, ultimately shaping production, sourcing, and even design decisions at the global brand level. Shein's model represents the extreme embodiment of this logic: its AI algorithm monitors consumer micro-trends in real time and translates them into production decisions within 72 hours. Traditional MNCs like Inditex use a combination of store managers, digital analytics, and regional design teams to achieve a slower but structurally similar feedback loop.

Q8— International Regulatory Compliance and Strategy

International regulatory compliance (e.g., EU sustainability laws, trade tariffs) directly impacts fashion MNC strategies.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	38	38.0%	
Agree	43	43.0%	
Neutral	12	12.0%	
Disagree	5	5.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.10	**SD: 0.89**		

Figure 12: Response Distribution — Q12 (n=100)

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Interpretation: 81% of respondents affirm that international regulatory compliance directly shapes fashion MNC strategies (mean = 4.10). This finding strongly validates DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) coercive isomorphism mechanism: regulatory requirements from the EU, the US SEC, and major importing country governments increasingly mandate specific strategic choices — extended producer responsibility schemes, carbon disclosure, forced labour due diligence, and chemical safety standards — that are not optional enhancements but legal obligations. The strategic implication is profound: regulatory compliance has shifted from a back-office legal function to a front-office strategic consideration that influences product design, sourcing decisions, supplier selection, and investor communications.

Q9 — Digital Brand Competition Driving Innovation

Global competition from new-age digital brands (e.g., Shein) has forced traditional fashion MNCs to innovate faster.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	50	50.0%	
Agree	32	32.0%	
Neutral	10	10.0%	
Disagree	6	6.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.22	**SD: 0.94**		

Figure 13: Response Distribution — Q13 (n=100)

Interpretation: Q13 records the highest agreement rate in the entire survey — 82% (50% Strongly Agree + 32% Agree) and a mean of 4.22 — reflecting near-universal recognition that digital disruptors like Shein have fundamentally accelerated the pace of strategic innovation in the broader fashion industry. This finding has profound implications: the competitive benchmark for strategic decision-making speed, supply chain responsiveness, and trend-to-market timelines has been reset by an AI-native company to levels that traditional organizational structures cannot achieve through incremental improvement alone. The strategic response of traditional MNCs has included accelerated investment in AI-driven demand forecasting, digital supply chain management platforms, and direct-to-consumer e-commerce capabilities — all driven by the competitive pressure from Shein and other digital-native brands.

Q10 — Brand Equity and Cultural Identity as Global Challenge

Maintaining brand equity and cultural identity globally is the biggest challenge for fashion MNCs in a globalized world.

Response Option	n	%	Visual Distribution
Strongly Agree	35	35.0%	
Agree	44	44.0%	
Neutral	14	14.0%	
Disagree	5	5.0%	
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0%	
Mean: 4.05	**SD: 0.90**		

Figure 14: Response Distribution — Q14 (n=100)

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Interpretation: 79% of respondents identify maintaining brand equity and cultural identity globally as the biggest challenge for fashion MNCs in a globalized world (mean = 4.05). This finding directly validates the Resource-Based View's identification of brand equity as the primary VRIN resource for fashion MNCs — and simultaneously confirms that protecting this resource is the most complex strategic challenge in a globalized environment where cultural misreading can cause instantaneous and catastrophic brand damage (as experienced by Dolce & Gabbana in China). LVMH's strategic choice to maintain 80% of its luxury manufacturing in European 'Maisons' — at a significant cost premium — is the concrete operational embodiment of brand equity protection as VRIN resource management. Any cost reduction from offshoring would be more than offset by the loss of the 'Made in France' and 'Made in Italy' brand premium.

V. QUALITATIVE CASE ANALYSIS

5.1 The Agile/Proximity Pivot: Inditex (Zara) — Transnational Strategy in Action

Inditex represents the most comprehensively documented example of a fashion MNC that has successfully operationalized the transnational strategy prescribed by Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989). Its SDM architecture combines centralized data intelligence (global consumer trend analytics processed at Arteixo headquarters) with decentralized manufacturing execution (proximity hubs in Spain, Portugal, Morocco, and Turkey that can respond to trend signals within days rather than weeks).

The most significant recent strategic development disclosed in Inditex's 2023 annual report is the completion of a multi-year nearshoring transition: 57% of manufacturing is now concentrated in 'proximity markets' within a 48-hour logistics radius of its headquarters. This represents a deliberate strategic response to two simultaneous pressures: the COVID-19 supply chain disruption (which demonstrated the vulnerability of extended Asian supply chains) and the competitive need to maintain the industry-leading trend-to-market speed that constitutes Inditex's core VRIN advantage.

5.2 The Heritage Preservation Model: LVMH — Strategic Centralization as VRIN Defense

LVMH represents the most powerful case study in the strategic use of centralization as a competitive weapon rather than as an organizational legacy. While Inditex and Shein compete on speed and decentralization, LVMH competes on permanence and centralization — deliberately resisting supply-side globalization to protect the 'Inimitable' dimension of its VRIN resource: the European heritage and artisanal craftsmanship that commands luxury price premiums globally.

The paradox of LVMH's globalization strategy is instructive: the company uses globalization aggressively on the demand side (expanding retail presence to 5,000+ stores globally, targeting the Chinese high-net-worth consumer base, building digital accessibility for global luxury consumers) while simultaneously using extreme centralization on the supply side (80% of core leather goods manufacturing concentrated in European 'Maisons,' strict geographic origin requirements for all luxury products). This asymmetric approach to globalization — globalizing demand while localizing supply — represents a sophisticated strategic response to the luxury paradox: the brand's value depends on its exclusivity and provenance, both of which would be destroyed by globalizing production.

5.3 The Algorithmic Disruption: Shein — Third-Wave Globalization

Shein represents a qualitatively new paradigm of globalization that has no historical precedent in the fashion industry. Where Inditex and LVMH are recognizable as variants of traditional MNC models — with headquarters, subsidiaries, regional offices, and supply chain governance structures — Shein bypasses all of these traditional structures. Its 'organization' is, at its core, a proprietary AI algorithm and a network of 5,400+ small and medium manufacturers concentrated in Guangzhou's garment manufacturing ecosystem.

5.4 Comparative Strategic Analysis: Three Archetypes

Strategic Dimension	Inditex (Zara)	LVMH	Shein
SDM Archetype	Transnational	Centralized Heritage	Algorithmic Decentralized

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Decision Maker	Regional hubs + Central data	Centralized HQ / Maisons	AI Algorithm
Primary VRIN	Proximity SC + Data	Heritage Brand Equity	Proprietary AI + Data
Supply Strategy	57% Nearshoring	80% European Maisons	Guangzhou hub, DTC
Globalization Mode	Regional Integration	Cultural Centralization	Algorithmic Disintermediation
Institutional Risk	Moderate	Low (normative)	High (coercive)
Sustainability Priority	High (strategic)	High (normative)	Reactive (compliance)
Sell-Through Rate	~85%	~90%+ (controlled scarcity)	~98%
Theoretical Lens	I-R Matrix (Transnational)	RBV (VRIN Defense)	Institutional (Coercive)

Table 4: Comparative Strategic Analysis — Three MNC Archetypes

6. Hypothesis Testing — Detailed Statistical Analysis

This section presents the complete statistical hypothesis testing procedure for both research hypotheses, including full formula derivation, step-by-step calculations, tabular computation tables, and contextual interpretation. All tests are conducted at $\alpha = 0.05$ (95% confidence level), two-tailed, on primary survey data from $n = 100$ respondents.

Parameter	Value / Details	Justification
Sample Size (n)	100 respondents	Survey of fashion professionals and consumers
Measurement Scale	5-point Likert (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree)	Standard attitudinal measurement in social science
Neutral Midpoint (μ_0)	3.0 — used as null hypothesis benchmark	Tests whether responses are significantly above 'neutral'
Significance Level (α)	0.05, two-tailed for all tests	Standard in social science hypothesis testing
Instrument Reliability	Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.86$	Exceeds 0.70 threshold (Nunnally, 1978)

Table 5: Statistical Testing Framework

6.1 Hypothesis H_1 — Globalization and Decentralization of SDM

One-Sample t-Test

H_1 is operationalized through the Decentralization-SDM Construct comprising three survey items most directly measuring the decentralization proposition: Q2 (Decentralization of SDM to regional hubs), Q9 (Nearshoring strategy), and Q10 (Fundamental change in SDM). The composite score for each respondent is the mean of their responses to these three items.

H_1: Globalization has a significant positive effect on the decentralization of strategic decision-making in multinational fashion corporations. ($\mu > 3.0$)

H_{01}: Globalization has no significant effect on the decentralization of SDM in fashion MNCs. ($\mu = 3.0$)

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Construct Statistics — H_1 (Composite: Q2 + Q9 + Q10)

Parameter	Symbol	Value	df	Basis / Source
Sample Size	n	100	—	All respondents completing Q2, Q9, Q10
Composite Mean (Q2+Q9+Q10 / 3)	$\bar{x}$	**4.04**	—	(3.95 + 3.98 + 4.19) ÷ 3 = 4.04
Sample Standard Deviation	s	0.83	—	Pooled SD from construct items
Hypothesized Mean (Neutral)	μ_0	3.0	—	Neutral midpoint of 5-point Likert scale
Degrees of Freedom	df	99	99	df = n − 1 = 100 − 1
Critical Value (α=0.05, two-tailed)	t_crit	±1.984	99	From t-distribution table, df = 99

Table 6: H_1 — Composite Construct Statistics

H_1 — Step-by-Step Calculation

Step 1: Calculate the Standard Error of the Mean (SE)

SE = s ÷ √n = 0.83 ÷ √100 = 0.83 ÷ 10 = 0.083

Step 2: Calculate the t-statistic

t = (x^- − μ_0) ÷ SE = (4.04 − 3.0) ÷ 0.083

t = 1.04 ÷ 0.083 = 12.53

Step 3: Degrees of Freedom

df = n − 1 = 100 − 1 = 99

CI = 4.04 ± 0.165 = [3.875 , 4.205]

Step 6: Calculate Effect Size (Cohen's d)

d = (x^- − μ_0) ÷ s = (4.04 − 3.0) ÷ 0.83 = 1.04 ÷ 0.83 = 1.25 (Very Large Effect: d > 0.80)

H_1 — Chi-Square Calculation Table (Supplementary Validation)

Response Category	Observed (O)	Expected (E)	(O−E)	$(O-E)^2$	$(O-E)^2/E$
Strongly Agree (Q2+Q9+Q10 avg)	36	20.0	+16	256	12.80
Agree	43	20.0	+23	529	26.45
Neutral	12	20.0	−8	64	3.20
Disagree	6	20.0	−14	196	9.80

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Strongly Disagree	3	20.0	−17	289	14.45
χ^2 Total				**66.70**	df = 4

Table 7: H_1 — Chi-Square Calculation Table (n=100, Expected=equal distribution)

$$\chi^2 = 12.80 + 26.45 + 3.20 + 9.80 + 14.45 = 66.70$$

Critical value at df = 4, α = 0.05: $\chi^2 = 9.488$

66.70 > 9.488 → REJECT H_{01} (Chi-Square confirms t-Test result)

H_1 — Results Summary

n	$\bar{x}$	s	t-calculated	p-value
100	**4.04**	0.83	**12.53**	**< 0.001**
t-critical (df=99, a=0.05)		**95% Confidence Interval**		**Decision**
± 1.984		**[3.875 , 4.205]**		**REJECT H_{01}**
Cohen's d (Effect Size)		**1.25 (Very Large — d > 0.80)**		

Table 8: H_1 — One-Sample t-Test Results Summary

CONCLUSION: REJECT H_{01} | t(99) = 12.53 > 1.984 | p < 0.001 | d = 1.25 (Very Large) | H_1 IS STRONGLY SUPPORTED

6.3 Consolidated Hypothesis Testing Results

H	Hypothesis (Brief)	Test	Statistic	p-value	Effect Size	χ^2 (Suppl.)	Result
H_1	Globalization → SDM Decentralization	1-Sample t	**t=12.53**	<0.001	d=1.25 ★★	66.70	**Supported**
H_2	Digital Transform. → VRIN Advantage	1-Sample t	**t=14.50**	<0.001	d=1.45 ★★	17.35	**Supported**
Both hypotheses confirmed at α=0.05 with Very Large effect sizes. Both supplementary Chi-Square tests exceed critical values.							

Table 13: Consolidated Hypothesis Testing Results | ★★ = Very Large Effect (Cohen's d > 0.80)

VII. KEY FINDINGS

Based on the primary survey data (n = 100) and qualitative case analysis, the following are the study's key empirical and theoretical findings:

Finding 1: Globalization Has Fundamentally Decentralized Fashion MNC SDM — Statistically Confirmed

The qualitative evidence from Inditex's regionalized manufacturing strategy and Shein's fully algorithmic SDM architecture directly corroborates this quantitative finding. The two extremes of the decentralization spectrum — Inditex's regional-hub model and Shein's AI-driven model — both represent responses to the same fundamental pressure: the need to bring strategic decision-making geographically and temporally closer to the market signals that drive competitive advantage.

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Finding 2: Digital Transformation Is the Highest-Endorsed Competitive Factor

This finding has profound strategic implications: fashion industry professionals are converging on a consensus that digital capability is now an existential competitive requirement rather than a differentiating advantage. Shein's 98% sell-through rate represents a benchmark that traditional MNCs cannot match through incremental operational improvement — it requires fundamental architectural change in how strategic decisions are made, from boardroom deliberations to algorithmic computation.

Finding 3: Supply Chain Vulnerability Is the Most Universally Recognized Consequence of Globalization

This near-universal recognition of supply chain fragility reflects the shared COVID-19 experience of the respondent group — virtually every fashion professional has direct experience of the consequences of over-extended global supply chains. This finding validates the strategic rationale for the nearshoring movement documented in the qualitative analysis.

Finding 4: Three Distinct Globalization Paths — Not One Universal Strategy

Inditex (Globalization through Regional Integration): Uses global data intelligence to inform proximity-based, agile manufacturing decisions. Transnational archetype. LVMH (Globalization through Cultural Centralization): Uses globalization to expand demand while deliberately resisting supply-side globalization to protect the inimitable heritage brand equity that constitutes its VRIN advantage. Shein (Globalization through Algorithmic Disintermediation): Bypasses traditional MNC structures entirely, using AI to make thousands of micro-strategic decisions daily. The highest operational efficiency in the industry is simultaneously accompanied by the highest regulatory and reputational risk.

Finding 5: Sustainability Has Become a Non-Optional Strategic Imperative

.The Ethical Liability Paradox — where Shein's most operationally efficient model also generates the most severe sustainability and regulatory exposure — represents the most complex strategic challenge facing the industry. Fashion MNCs must now simultaneously optimize for efficiency, responsiveness, sustainability, and regulatory compliance — four objectives that are frequently in tension with each other.

Q	Survey Item (Short)	Agree+ %	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	SD	Rank by Mean	Theoretical Link	Finding
Q5	SC Vulnerability	84%	**4.26**	0.90	#1	GVC Resilience	Supply risk
Q13	Digital Competition	82%	**4.22**	0.94	#2	RBV / VRIN	Disruptors
Q4	Digital Transform.	82%	**4.19**	0.93	#3	RBV / VRIN	Tech VRIN
Q10	SDM Changed	82%	**4.19**	0.92	#4	I-R Matrix	H_1 item
Q6	Sustainability	82%	**4.17**	0.91	#5	Inst. Theory	Isomorphism
Q1	Brand Availability	80%	**4.12**	0.94	#6	GVC / Market	Market open

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the empirical findings of this study and the qualitative analysis of Inditex, LVMH, and Shein, the following strategic recommendations are addressed to MNC executives, supply chain strategists, brand managers, and policymakers engaged with the globalized fashion industry:

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8.1 Invest in Transnational Organizational Architecture

Fashion MNCs that remain in the Global (standardization-only) or Multidomestic (local adaptation without global integration) quadrants of the Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) matrix are at growing competitive risk. The empirical finding (H_1, d = 1.25) confirms that globalization is driving a broad industry shift toward transnational structures. MNCs should invest in the organizational capabilities that enable simultaneous global integration and local responsiveness: integrated global data platforms, regional decision-making hubs with genuine strategic authority, and agile supply chain architectures that can respond to regional demand signals without waiting for central headquarters approval.

8.2 Treat Digital Transformation as a Strategic Priority — Not a Technology Project The study's strongest finding (H_2, t = 14.50, d = 1.45) establishes that digital transformation is the most significant driver of competitive advantage in the globalized fashion market. This means AI-driven demand forecasting, real-time supply chain visibility, data-driven assortment planning, and algorithmic customer personalization must be treated as CEO-level strategic priorities rather than IT department projects. MNCs should establish dedicated digital transformation offices with direct board reporting relationships, set measurable targets for digital capability maturity, and allocate proportional investment to digital infrastructure — recognizing that the competitive gap created by digital leaders like Shein will only widen over time.

8.3 Restructure Supply Chains Around Resilience — Not Just Cost The near-universal recognition of supply chain vulnerability (84% agreement on Q5) signals that the era of pure cost-optimization supply chain strategy is over. MNCs should adopt a dual-criterion evaluation framework for all sourcing decisions: Total Cost of Sourcing (including transport, lead time, and inventory holding) AND Resilience Score (measuring supplier concentration risk, geopolitical exposure, and alternative sourcing optionality). Inditex's 57% nearshoring commitment provides a concrete benchmark. MNCs in the mid-market segment should develop 'China + 1' strategies that diversify at least 30% of production to secondary markets by 2027.

8.4 Manage the Brand Equity-Globalization Paradox with Differentiated Segmentation

The finding that 79% of respondents identify brand equity and cultural identity maintenance as the biggest challenge for fashion MNCs (Q14, mean = 4.05) confirms that globalization creates a fundamental tension between the economic logic of standardization and the cultural logic of brand meaning. MNCs should adopt differentiated segmentation strategies: global core brand standards (logo, quality thresholds, brand values) maintained across all markets; regional product adaptation (colourways, silhouettes, sizing, occasion-specificity) delegated to local teams with genuine decision-making authority; and cultural intelligence training embedded in the career development of all regional market managers.

IX. CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate how globalization has transformed strategic decision-making in multinational fashion corporations, using a mixed-method approach that combined qualitative case analysis of Inditex, LVMH, and Shein with primary quantitative data from 100 respondents. The convergence of these two methodological streams produces a coherent, multi-layered answer:.

The five key conclusions of this study are as follows. First, globalization has driven a statistically significant and substantively large shift toward decentralized SDM in fashion MNCs (H_1: t = 12.53, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.25). The traditional top-down, headquarters-centric strategy model is empirically obsolescent in the face of global market volatility. Second, digital transformation has emerged as the single most powerful competitive resource in the globalized fashion market (H_2: t = 14.50, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.45), meeting the VRIN criteria that Barney (1991) identified as the foundation of sustained competitive advantage. Third, supply chain resilience — not cost optimization — has become the dominant supply chain strategic criterion, as confirmed by the highest agreement rate of any survey item (Q5: 84%, mean = 4.26), reflecting the universal industry experience of COVID-19 disruption. Fourth, sustainability imperatives — driven by regulatory coercion, consumer pressure, and normative professional standards — have moved from the periphery to the core of fashion MNC strategy, with over 81% agreement across both sustainability-related

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survey items. Fifth, globalization has fractured into three distinct strategic paths — Inditex's Regional Integration, LVMH's Cultural Centralization, and Shein's Algorithmic Disintermediation — each representing a coherent and internally consistent strategic response to globalization pressures, mediated by distinct VRIN resource configurations.

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