



# Exploring Market Challenges and Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Plus-Size Women's Fashion in Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges faced by plus-size women in Malaysia's ready-to-wear fashion industry, with a focus on issues of fit, accessibility, affordability and representation. Using a qualitative approach, insights were gathered from 34 Malaysian women aged 18 to 50 through open-ended survey responses. The findings highlight structural market gaps, including inconsistent sizing and poor fit, limited retail availability, design and aesthetic shortcomings, premium pricing, negative consumer experiences, and a lack of inclusive marketing strategies. These barriers reveal untapped opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs to address underserved consumer needs through innovation, customer-centred product development, and inclusive marketing approaches. Beyond contributing to social inclusion, such strategies hold significant potential to enhance competitiveness and stimulate growth in Malaysia's fashion sector, with broader implications for emerging markets seeking to strengthen consumer engagement and expand into niche yet high-potential segments.

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## 1. Introduction

The global fashion industry has largely overlooked the fact that stylish clothing options are often unavailable in larger sizes, despite the reality that most American women wear sizes 16 to 18. Reid (2022) states that the emergence of the plus-size segment represents a significant shift, as plus-size individuals generally wear sizes 14 and above or fall within the 1XL to 4XL range. However, the industry continues to prioritize missy sizes, inadequately addressing the needs of plus-size bodies. This is evident in the limited availability of fashionable options, the underrepresentation of plus-size models in advertising, and the scarcity of companies that specialize in plus-size apparel. Traditional sizing methods are typically developed for the average individual, but the term "plus-size" is increasingly being replaced by "curvy", which refers to expanded sizing beyond the standard range (Johnson, 2023).

The global plus-size fashion market is experiencing significant growth, driven by an increasingly positive mindset among plus-size women (Kamolnawin et al., 2024). However, this expanding customer base has led to a range of challenges within the plus-size fashion sector, which can be categorized into three

interconnected areas. Research indicates that plus-size women often express dissatisfaction with contemporary ready-to-wear clothing, primarily due to a lack of self-identification options. Key issues include the limited availability of larger sizes, the difficulty in finding properly fitting garments, and coverage for certain areas (Seram & Kumarasiri, 2020). The study by Singh et al (2025) globally in 2020, 67% of plus-size customers chose brands that promote body diversity and acceptance. However, they face obstacles like an uncertain sizing system, inadequate product selection, and body-shaming prejudice. According to Ling et al (2021) female consumers are more sensitive, warm, and apprehensive than men, with a stronger internal focus and intuition. These traits highlight the significant influence women have on purchasing behaviour regarding goods and services.

The study by Wang (2023) states that the internet has influenced the fashion industry, leading to a shift towards diversity in aesthetic concepts for young female consumers. This has created new business opportunities and challenges for plus-size brands. In China, Chinese plus-size brands are expanding due to the Pearl River Delta's prosperous women's clothing e-commerce and foreign trade industries. Distribution centres in Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Dongguan are becoming the largest. Chinese brands focus on differentiation, healthy body image, and localized marketing (Wang, 2023).

The Malaysian clothing sector does not prioritize conventional size based on anthropometric data, resulting in poor fit and unpleasant apparel (Wang & Zakaria, 2024). This problem has a substantial influence on the quality of practical clothes, such as work uniforms, which require an ideal fit (Tajuddin et al., 2023). Furthermore, the lack of a regulated garment size system in Malaysia has left a significant information vacuum in apparel research, emphasizing the necessity for more precise anthropometric data (Wang & Zakaria, 2024). The consuming experience, particularly for women, has frequently been described as unsatisfying or unpleasant (Bickle et al., n.d.). This is ascribed to the restricted availability and diversity of things, difficulty in identifying appropriate designs, the influence of non-standardized measures on fit, and the segregation of plus-size apparel.

In the field of clothing design, prioritizing comfort is essential, as it necessitates careful consideration of both body size and the specific design of the garment. Ensuring adequate space for movement is crucial for fostering self-expression and upholding a positive self-image; thus, it represents a significant aspect of garment design (Wang et al., 2020). According to Tajuddin et al. (2024), it is crucial for sizing in ready-to-wear functional clothing on a wide array of sizes, as groups of individuals with similar body shapes should determine the fit. To provide a comprehensive context for the issues at hand, this literature review critically examines prior research focused on plus-size body measurements, garment fit, and the inherent challenges associated with designing inclusive ready-to-wear clothing.

This study explores the challenges faced by plus-size consumers in shopping for apparel, focusing on their experiences and preferences. It is relevant for retailers, designers, and sellers, as it helps promote local and fashion brands for plus-size ready-to-wear clothing. The findings aim to benefit the Malaysian apparel industry by proposing a sizing system that enhances customer satisfaction, fosters sustainability, and improves brand consistency. The study will focus on plus-sized anthropometric body measurements from various Malaysian ready-to-wear fashion brands.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Sizing System and Fit Challenges*

Customized clothes can better satisfy wearers' size and fit demands (Siming Guo & Cynthia Istook, 2025). The sizing system for Mass Customization garments should be user-friendly and appropriate for different body types. Improving the system involves reducing sizes, standardizing expressions, and considering variations across age groups and ethnicities (Huang & Sahari, 2025). In addition, fit satisfaction

is crucial in clothing manufacturing, influenced by factors such as precise measurements, body shapes, patterns, and material properties. To improve fit satisfaction, clothing manufacturers should consider factors such as body shape, lifestyle, age, culture, previous purchases, returns, and customer psychological aspects. This can help reduce return rates and environmental textile waste. To enhance fit satisfaction, clothing manufacturers should focus on both fit aesthetics and technology application (Huang & Sahari, 2025). According to the study by Smith (2025), the trend of size inclusivity in women's apparel is growing, but there's a lack of focus on standardizing sizing at retail, while increased consumer dissatisfaction with apparel sizing and fit indicates limited progress in traditional sizing standards.

In Asian countries, measurement issues among Asian women in the ready-to-wear fashion industry led to fit problems, resulting in inaccuracies from traditional manual methods and modern 3D body scanning. This lack of standardized guidelines intensifies sizing inconsistencies, causing customer dissatisfaction, higher return and alteration rates, and negative effects on self-image and confidence (Oishe & Liu, 2024). Other studies suggest integrating digital technologies and statistical analysis to improve garment design accuracy, offering more inclusive and scientifically sound methods for Asian female consumers and enhancing sustainability in the apparel industry (Mnyaiza, 2024). In Malaysia, the study reveals that plus-size women face unique challenges with sizing and fit. The prototype was designed using an American plus-size standard, but this may not be suitable for Asian respondents due to their smaller body types. The study suggests that more plus-size undergarment designs should be produced and evaluated on a larger sample size (Osman et al., 2025).

## 2.2 The Plus-Size Consumer Experience

The study by Singh et al. (2025) is guided by the concept of the body positivity movement, which highlights the influence of body positivity marketing campaigns, social media influencer content, and variability in sizing across various brands on plus-size consumer decision-making. This framework is particularly relevant for understanding the challenges encountered by plus-size women in their purchasing decisions. Purchase choices are significantly influenced by brand perception, trust, and the perceived fit and comfort of products, as consumers are more likely to buy from trusted brands that offer a comfortable fit. These factors are interrelated and collectively shape purchasing behaviour within the plus-size market, where sizing inconsistencies and limited fashion options often contribute to dissatisfaction and exclusion. By applying this framework, the study interprets survey responses and brand sizing charts not merely as practical barriers but as manifestations of broader structural issues in the fashion industry. Thus, the theoretical framework connects individual experiences of plus-size women with systemic fashion practices, offering a grounded basis for the study's analysis and discussion.

## 2.3 Marketing and Representation of Plus-size Consumers

A study by Suradkar & Chanana, (2024) states that globally, E-commerce has transformed the fashion sector by providing comfort, customization, and worldwide market access, enabling fashion businesses to succeed in this changing marketplace through customer behaviour analytics and effective marketing. According to Wojciechowski (2023) online store returns account for one-third of purchases, often exceeding 50%, with over 64% of returns due to mismatches and 19% of customers buying multiple versions to find the right size; these returns can lead to significant business losses of up to 10%, impact product prices, increase overall e-commerce costs, and have a more substantial negative effect on the environment.

Online shopping has emerged as a dominant trend in the global retail landscape, offering consumers a high level of convenience, cost efficiency, and time savings (Ntumba et al., 2023). In Malaysia, the increasing popularity of e-commerce platforms such as Lazada, Shopee, Mudah, Zalora, and Carousell has significantly transformed consumer shopping behaviour (Shazwan et al., 2022). Consumers prefer e-

commerce for its convenience, allowing them to purchase from home and compare prices and items from other stores (Ntumba et al., 2023).

This study reveals a notable increase in the acceptance of internet-based shopping, driven by the influence of digital technologies on consumer habits and the integration of e-commerce with social media platforms like TikTok, which serve as both social engagement tools and effective digital marketplaces (Koswara, 2025). For instance, TikTok Shop Malaysia now features over one million sellers, underscoring the rising consumer demand and the platform's influence as a marketplace for fashion and beauty products (Shazwan et al., 2022). This social commerce model enables seamless integration of product marketing and direct sales, creating an immersive and interactive shopping experience. Online buying behaviour refers to the process of purchasing goods or services through digital platforms using electronic transactions. This process involves browsing virtual stores, selecting products, adding items to digital shopping carts, and completing transactions through electronic payment systems. Additionally, e-commerce offers consumers a wide range of product options, convenient access, and efficient transaction processes, ease of access, and transactional efficiency (Nadia Bakly et al., 2024).

A study on women's preferences for fashion and beauty products in Selangor found that product availability, convenience of purchase, and website quality significantly influenced online purchasing behaviour, with 28% of respondents buying tops and shirts online and 32.1% preferring skincare products, while Shopee was the most popular platform, followed by Lazada and Zalora (Arif et al., 2023). According to Hossain, Md Anower (2024) that marketers should prioritize the development of user-friendly, reliable e-commerce websites and ensure consistent product availability to build consumer trust, particularly among female shoppers.

Shelton et al., 2023) argues that many fashion retailers continue to marginalize plus-size women, categorizing them as a separate or “other” consumer group. This is often evident in limited in-store options and segregated online product categories, which contribute to feelings of exclusion and dissatisfaction among plus-size shoppers. Research shows that featuring diverse body types in marketing materials enhances consumer connection and positively influences purchasing intentions (Etrata et al., 2025). Female consumers, in particular, are drawn to clothing when it is modelled by individuals who possess relatable body types, regardless of their size. This highlights that inclusive representation is not only socially beneficial but also commercially advantageous, as consumers tend to support brands that challenge traditional narrow beauty standards (Yim, Mark Yi, 2024). As consumer attitudes continue to evolve, brands must recognize the importance of representation and strive to foster inclusive, empowering shopping experiences for all body types, particularly in the plus-size segment, which remains underserved and underrepresented in both marketing and retail strategies (Suradkar & Chanana, 2024).

### **3. Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore, analyse, and interpret the experiences and perceptions of plus-size women in Malaysia concerning clothing fit and shopping challenges within the ready-to-wear (RTW) fashion market. The qualitative approach was selected to gain in-depth insights into consumer behaviour, particularly involving sensitive and body-related topics that are difficult to quantify.

Data were collected through an open-ended online survey developed using Google Forms. This method allowed for the collection of narrative responses from a broader sample of respondent compared to in-person interviews, while still preserving the depth and descriptive data suitable for thematic analysis. The survey questions were constructed based on a preliminary review of the literature and were designed to explore the specific difficulties faced by plus-size consumers when shopping for plus-size clothing.

A total of 34 Malaysian women aged between 18 and 50 who self-identified as plus-size participated in the study. All respondent had prior experience purchasing plus-size ready-to-wear apparel. The online survey was distributed through digital platforms and collected between February and March 2025. Before answering, the respondents were informed of the study's objectives, the voluntary nature of their participation, and confidentiality measures. The survey included open-ended questions in Sections A and B. Section A collected demographic information such as respondents' weight, height, clothing size, and which three plus-size fashion brands they prefer and have purchased. In this section, respondents were identified as plus-size consumers through a screening process in Section A of the survey. Respondents were asked to report their height and weight, which were then cross-checked against the Body Mass Index (BMI) range generally considered overweight or obese, and thus aligned with plus-size categories in fashion contexts. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate whether they purchase from plus-size fashion brands. Only those who confirmed purchasing from plus-size brands and who provided body measurements consistent with plus-size ranges were included in the final sample. Section B focused on identifying the shopping challenges faced by plus-size women in Malaysia. Written consent was obtained digitally before recording responses.

The responses were analysed using thematic analysis, following the six-phase method proposed by Braun & Clarke (2013). This involved familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final analysis report. The ATLAS 12 software was used to organize and manage the coding process, thereby enhancing the consistency, traceability, and structure of the analysis. Thematic analysis was chosen for its suitability in exploring subjective narratives and identifying patterns of meaning across Respondent' accounts.

The online survey is divided into two sections, each focusing on a specific research objective. The first section provides demographic information about the Respondents, confirming their identity as plus-size consumers. The study collected essential data on age, body size, height, weight, and preferred fashion brands. The second section presents a thematic analysis of findings from online surveys on plus-size women consumers, highlighting the shopping challenges faced by plus-size consumers. Thematic analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework, with themes identified through systematic coding and interpretation using ATLAS software.

#### **4. Finding and Analysis**

The research focuses on the challenges faced by plus-size women in Malaysia when shopping for ready-to-wear apparel. Data was collected through an online survey and analysed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework. The findings reveal difficulties related to garment fit, accessibility, affordability, and representation within the fashion industry. These themes provide a comprehensive view of the structural and emotional barriers faced by these consumers, highlighting critical gaps in Malaysia's ready-to-wear fashion market. Figure 1 illustrates the findings of thematic analysis of shopping challenges faced by plus-size women in Malaysia, derived from the qualitative findings of this study. A total of six main themes were identified, each represented by a specific colour segment in the diagram, with corresponding sub-themes positioned around the central topic. The first theme, represented in orange, is inconsistent sizing and fit, which highlights concerns related to garment sizing inconsistencies and poor fit that often cause dissatisfaction among plus-size consumers. This includes issues such as a mismatch between the labelled size and the actual fit, as well as general inconsistencies in sizing across different clothing brands. The second theme, illustrated in yellow, is Limited Access in Retail, which reflects the accessibility challenges experienced by plus-size women when purchasing clothing in physical stores. This theme encompasses the lack of body contouring in plus-size fashion and the limited availability of sizes and styles suitable for curvier body types. The third theme, shown in light green, is Aesthetic and Product Appeal Matters. This theme reflects the importance of appealing designs, material quality, and product construction in influencing plus-size women's clothing choices. The sub-themes identified include

concerns related to fabric quality, overall product quality, and garment design appeal. The fourth theme, presented in brown-orange, is High Prices, which captures concerns regarding affordability and the perception of poor value for money within the plus-size apparel market. Sub-themes under this category include price considerations and the general affordability of plus-size clothing. The fifth theme, illustrated in brown, is Negative Impact, which reflects the emotional and psychological consequences faced by plus-size women due to the lack of inclusive fashion options. This theme includes emotional distress and frustration that arise from negative shopping experiences. Finally, the sixth theme, shown in dark green, is Plus-Size Marketing and Representation, which addresses issues of visibility, inclusivity, and representation of plus-size women within marketing, advertisements, and promotional campaigns. The presence of plus-size models and inclusive marketing strategies was frequently highlighted as important factors in shaping positive consumer experiences. Collectively, these themes illustrate the complex and multi-dimensional challenges encountered by plus-size women in Malaysia's ready-to-wear fashion market, with interrelated issues concerning fit, accessibility, aesthetic appeal, affordability, emotional impact, and representation.



Figure 1. Data Analysis Map of Shopping Challenges faced by curve women in Malaysia

#### 4.1 Inconsistent Sizing and Poor Fit

Respondents consistently reported dissatisfaction with inconsistent sizing across brands. They expressed difficulty in finding garments that fit well across various parts of their body, particularly the bust and waist areas.

**-Respondent 14:** "Plus-size should be plus-size measurement. Not 2XL but the measurements like L."

**-Respondent 25:** "The clothes that look nice end up not having the size I need, or it's labelled as 2XL but fit for L."

The study conducted by Shin & Saeidi (2022) highlights that overweight and obese women face body changes and issues with clothing fit due to increased fat deposits, coupled with a lack of emphasis on plus-size fashion. Similarly, Singh et al. (2025) argue that inconsistent sizing considerably diminishes purchase intentions, resulting in frequent returns and dissatisfaction among shoppers. Over 30% of Respondent have abandoned online purchases because of confusing size information. The absence of standardized sizing

within the fashion industry poses a significant barrier to the growth of online shopping for plus-size consumers. To address this issue, brands need to prioritize the creation of standardized size charts and the implementation of virtual fitting rooms to alleviate these challenges. Additionally, clothing manufacturers should take into account various factors that influence fit satisfaction, including body shape, lifestyle, age, culture, and previous purchase behaviours and returns, along with psychological considerations of customers. This approach can help reduce return rates and minimize textile waste in the environment. To further enhance fit satisfaction, manufacturers should focus on both the aesthetics of fit and the application of technology (Huang & Sahari, 2025).

#### 4.2 Limited Access in Retail

Respondents voiced frustration over the limited range of plus-size garments in both physical retail stores and online platforms. Some mentioned that certain local brands do not even carry sizes above XL in-store, pushing them to online options with uncertain sizing.

**-Respondent 10:** “It's still hard to find variety choices when it comes to physical stores.”

**-Respondent 17:** “Most of the plus-size clothes don't have physical stores, so I need to buy online.”

A study by Shelton et al. (2023) highlights that, despite advancements in online shopping for plus-size women, brands and stores still struggle to provide adequate options both in-store and online. This often results in the exclusion of plus-size consumers and limited choices, isolating them from straight-size women. Research indicates that plus-size shoppers often have unsatisfactory in-store shopping experiences, suggesting that retailers should cater to women in an online environment, as scholars recognize online spaces as a significant opportunity for brands. One emerging strategy for engaging potential customers is Online Apparel Mass Customization (OAMC), which allows for the collection of personal preferences and relevant product information. However, OAMC also presents challenges, including the complexity of options, increased risk regarding product satisfaction, and a complicated user experience. These challenges can negatively impact consumer perceptions and attitudes toward the process, which ultimately affects their willingness to use it (Mathew et al., 2024). Plus-size consumers favour online shopping due to privacy, convenience, and limited in-store options. Brands employ strategies that positively influence self-esteem and promote body positivity, creating a seamless shopping experience (Suradkar & Chanana, 2024).

#### 4.3 Aesthetic and Design Appeal Matters

Findings from the interviews revealed that many plus-size consumers in Malaysia are dissatisfied with the lack of stylish and visually appealing apparel choices available in the market. Respondent frequently mentioned that the clothing options often appear outdated, overly conservative, or do not reflect current fashion trends. This lack of fashionable designs contributes to a sense of exclusion, as curvy consumers feel that their preferences and identities are not represented in mainstream fashion offerings.

**-Respondent 3:** “I would like it more the clothing design to complement our body shape more.”

**-Respondent 6:** “Please offer trendy and stylish options for plus-size individuals.”

Engage with leading fabric suppliers, manufacturers, and factories to ensure that product design and production adhere to industry standards while promptly addressing market demands (Wang, 2023). Consumer attitudes toward apparel mass customization are shaped by the diversity of available options, the costs involved in exploring those choices, and the overall shopping experience. Research conducted across two shopping channels indicates that a greater variety of options significantly influences consumer attitudes toward online apparel mass customization. In contrast, a limited range of customization options can result in consumer dissatisfaction (Mathew et al., 2024).

#### 4.4 High Prices

Respondents expressed concerns about the high prices of plus-size clothing, noting that the quality often doesn't match the cost and feels unfair for those needing larger sizes.

**-Respondent 8:** “The price is too high; I will not buy it either.”

**-Respondent 13:** “The price is pricier.”

This perception aligns with Shelton et al. (2023) study reported issues with clothing options, pricing differences, and maltreatment from retail employees. They felt retailers displayed negativity towards plus-size customers, resulting in unfair restrictions and feelings of chastisement for their weight. The lack of options and pricing differences was seen as a form of maltreatment.

#### 4.5 Emotional and Psychological Impact

The shopping experience was described by many respondents as stressful, embarrassing, or disheartening. Several shared that they avoided shopping altogether to avoid disappointment.

**-Respondent 9:** “I rarely buy pants because it is difficult to find them, and I have no jeans in my wardrobe.”

**-Respondent 5:** “It's frustrating when I need to attend for big event.”

This emotional burden reflects findings from McCann (2022), who argued that women become frustrated when trying on dresses from different retailers, highlighting the effectiveness of vanity sizing in increasing sales and fostering loyalty among consumers, who prefer brands that implement it.

#### 4.6 Representation Gap in Fashion Marketing

Respondent also noted that most fashion advertisements and e-commerce visuals excluded women who looked like them. They wanted to see plus-size bodies represented authentically and confidently.

**-Respondent 19:** “The ads or campaign is tailored for visual appeal, not real-world experience.”

**-Respondent 7:** “Although they are plus-size, the clothes still look odd in real life, fitting.”

The lack of representation in Malaysian advertising parallels international research by Shelton et al. (2023), who found that plus-size models are often displayed alone in advertisements, wearing more skin-covering clothing, and deflecting their gaze, while straight-sized models are often grouped, clad less, and stare directly into the camera. Some studies show that plus-size models are perceived as less attractive and professional, while others find that exposure to plus-size models does not improve anxiety. Additionally, female consumers tend to assimilate to average-size models in advertising, and the size of a model does not affect their body satisfaction (Yim et al., 2024).

### 5. Discussion

The findings reveal that plus-size women in Malaysia face numerous challenges in the ready-to-wear fashion sector, including inconsistent sizing and limited access to stylish clothing, alongside psychological impacts from exclusion and underrepresentation. This study confirms that the Malaysian plus-size market is structurally and culturally underserved. Fashion brands can tap into this loyal yet overlooked consumer segment by implementing inclusive design strategies, standardizing sizing, adopting fair pricing, and ensuring diverse representation. These findings are consistent with previous research in Western contexts, where plus-size consumers similarly report frustration with inconsistent sizing and the lack of fashionable options (Suradkar & Chanana, 2024; Singh, 2025). However, unlike in the US and UK, where dedicated



plus-size brands have emerged, the Malaysian market remains largely underserved, reflecting both structural and cultural neglect of curvy consumers. Theoretically, this study contributes to extending the discourse on sustainability in fashion beyond environmental concerns to encompass social sustainability through inclusivity in sizing standards. By situating the lived experiences of Malaysian plus-size women within the broader body of consumer research, the study highlights how sizing systems are not only technical frameworks but also social structures that reproduce exclusion. This insight advances understanding of consumer marginalization in underrepresented markets and suggests that inclusive sizing is integral to achieving equity in fashion consumption.

## **6. Conclusion and Implications**

This study examined the challenges faced by plus-size women in Malaysia's ready-to-wear fashion industry, with a focus on issues of fit, sizing, availability, aesthetics, pricing and representation. A thematic analysis of responses from 34 women aged 18 to 50 revealed persistent dissatisfaction stemming from limited accessibility, inconsistent sizing systems, the lack of inclusive design, and minimal representation in mainstream fashion marketing. These findings provide valuable, context-specific insights into Malaysia's fashion landscape, which remains underexplored in global conversations on plus-size fashion. By amplifying the voices of real consumers, the study highlights how industry practices continue to overlook a significant demographic with unmet needs and untapped purchasing power.

The research contributes to broader discussions on consumer experience and social sustainability, demonstrating that size inclusivity is not only a technical matter of garment design but also an issue of equity and representation. Practically, the findings present opportunities for fashion brands and entrepreneurs to engage this underserved market through standardized sizing systems, inclusive design strategies, fair pricing, and more diverse representation. These measures not only address social concerns but also create pathways for business innovation, competitive differentiation, and long-term brand loyalty.

Although the study is limited by its reliance on an online survey, a modest sample size, and its focus on selected brands, it lays important groundwork for future research. Broader studies that combine qualitative and quantitative methods, engage larger and more diverse samples, and include the perspectives of designers, retailers, and manufacturers would deepen understanding of the operational and strategic challenges of inclusive fashion.

Ultimately, this study underscores that inclusivity in fashion is both a social imperative and a market opportunity. For Malaysian fashion brands, reassessing sizing practices, expanding retail accessibility and adopting inclusive marketing strategies can unlock the growth potential of an underserved yet loyal consumer base. For entrepreneurs and brand strategists, these findings highlight a promising market niche where inclusivity and profitability can converge, positioning Malaysian fashion more competitively in the global marketplace.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest in conducting or publishing this research.

## Author's Contribution

Nur Syaiqah conducted the research design, data collection, and analysis. Hasma Ahmad provided supervision, methodological guidance, and a critical review of the manuscript. Both authors contributed to the writing and approved the final version of the paper.

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