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**Assessment of the Trend of Fashionable Masks in
the Fight Against Covid 19: Are They a Fad?**

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Assessment of the Trend of Fashionable Masks in the Fight Against Covid 19: Are They a Fad?

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Abstract

Purpose: The rise and spread of the coronavirus pandemic has led to global adaptations of the new way of life such as social distancing and wearing of masks. Wearing of masks of different types and designs has become a staple in our lives as we fight against the spread of the pandemic. The purpose of this paper is to find out whether the emergence of masks is a pandemic fad or a long term fashion statement.

Methodology: A desktop literature review was used for this purpose in identifying relevant seminal references and journal articles for the study using Google Scholar. The inclusion criteria entailed papers that have been done ever since the emergence of the virus in 2019.

Findings: The study found out that fashionable masks allow individuals to express their personal style and personality while adhering to safety guidelines. They can serve as a fashion accessory that complements one's outfit or reflects personal preferences. The study also noted that Wearing fashionable masks may increase the likelihood of mask-wearing compliance among individuals, especially among those who might be less inclined to wear conventional medical or plain

cloth masks. By incorporating style and aesthetics, fashionable masks can make the act of wearing a mask more appealing and enjoyable

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The Protection Motivation theory may be used to anchor future studies on the assessment of the trend of fashionable masks in the fight against COVID 19, whether they are a fad. The study also recommends that public health campaigns should be developed to educate individuals on the importance of wearing masks, regardless of fashion trends. Emphasize the need for masks to meet certain standards in terms of filtration efficiency, breathability, and proper fit. Further, the study recommends that the government should implement policies that require fashionable masks to meet specific standards in terms of filtration efficiency and safety. Collaborate with regulatory bodies and industry stakeholders to define and enforce these standards. The study also recommends that policy makers in the fashion industry and the Ministry of Health should collaborate in the production of sustainable and environmentally friendly masks that also consider consumer preferences in terms of appearance.

Keywords: *COVID-19, Fashion Trend, Face Masks*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The rise of coronavirus turned out unexpectedly to the biggest part of the world officially announced by China on December 31, 2019 (Qiuyan, 2020). Medicine, economies and other spheres did not know how to react to the unknown aggressive virus and what measures are best to be taken. The world needed to adapt to new realities by social distancing, wearing of mask, lockdown in attempt to overcome economic crisis and so on. Regardless, many small businesses had to be closed. Some of them tried to re-strategize their business model so as to avoid losses and be forced into bankruptcy. They saw the need to provide value proposition for their businesses to be able to meet changing needs of their customers and use the opportunity to attract new ones (Larchenko, 2020). Value proposition was to get digitalized, to offer the things connected with protection against COVID-19 as well as to understand the preferences of the customers. Fashion industry is the one that quite successfully managed to re-strategize. A mask serves both utilitarian and emotional functions, that is, new technological and fashionable part of the mask production/consumption. Facial coverings, commonly identified as face masks, are a prime tool in fighting airborne pathogens. Though surgical facemasks and N95 respirators are more effective in protecting against the spread and transmission of the virus, cloth face coverings do offer some level of protection (Brooks, 2020)

Facemasks are meant to help in fighting the spread of COVID-19 because when made of appropriate materials and worn properly, they reduce the spread of virus-containing droplets and aerosols expelled through exhalation. The facemask thus controls the spread while also protecting individuals from catching the virus. According to research, public mask wearing is the most effective action in fighting the spread of the virus when populations comply. When transmission is controlled and decreased, it could substantially reduce the number of deaths and economic impact while reducing the cost of intervention. Researchers have concluded that face masking only works if it is adopted by a significant portion of the population with the goal of 80% compliance or higher (Jeremy, 2021).

At the beginning of the corona crisis there was a severe shortage of face piece respirators (FPR) and other personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare professionals. Asking the general public to wear facemasks was simply not a viable option. But the type of facemask a person wears can also express how serious he or she is about the facemask issue. There are facemasks which fulfill the legal requirements but maybe not the medical requirements facemasks made out of nylon stockings for instance or other transparent facemasks. The argument for transparent masks is also to see people's facial expressions, a real problem with face masks. On the other extreme are those who wear military grade gasmasks. Another alternative are scarves and handkerchiefs. The material varies as well while healthcare agencies recommend cotton fabric which is to be washed frequently (Philip, 2021)

To avoid a lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline health professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens all over the world were urged to utilize cloth masks rather than buy medical grade N95 and disposable surgical masks. High degrees of innovation were needed to address this supply chain challenge. Small-scale entrepreneurial production could start swiftly due to the dominance of established manufacturers in the non-medical masks market and the inability to establish standards for what is, in this case, a fashion product. During that time, a number of clothing producers also started making a wide range of mask styles. Face masks can be

divided into four primary categories based on the design of the masks, such as the location of seams or pleats (s, 2022)

Assessment of the trend of fashionable masks in the fight against COVID-19 raises questions about whether they are merely a passing fad or a meaningful contribution to public health. The use of fashionable masks gained popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic as individuals sought to express their personal style while adhering to safety guidelines. In developed economies like the USA, Japan, and the UK, the trend of fashionable masks has been notable. According to a study published in the *Journal of Consumer Marketing* (Philip, 2021), the demand for fashionable masks in the USA increased by 150% in the first six months of the pandemic. This surge in demand indicates a significant trend, suggesting that fashionable masks have become more than just a fad.

In the UK, the adoption of fashionable masks has also been remarkable. A survey conducted by the British Fashion Council (2020) found that 87% of respondents in the UK considered the aesthetics of masks as an important factor in their purchase decision. This statistic demonstrates the growing importance of fashionable masks in the fight against COVID-19 and indicates that they have transcended being a mere fashion statement to serve a practical purpose in public health.

In countries such as India and Brazil, the use of fashionable masks has also gained momentum. According to a report by the *Economic Times* (2021), India witnessed a surge in demand for fashionable masks, with several local designers and brands introducing stylish options. The report highlights that consumers in India are increasingly looking for masks that not only offer protection but also align with their fashion preferences. Similarly, in Brazil, the fashion industry embraced the trend of fashionable masks. A study published in the *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology, and Education* (da Silva et al., 2020) analyzed the adoption of fashionable masks in Brazil during the pandemic. The findings revealed that 68% of respondents in Brazil believed that fashionable masks were an important accessory in their daily lives.

In South Africa, for instance, a study conducted by Ndlovu and Van Niekerk (2021) investigated the use of fashionable masks among young adults. The study found that 82% of participants considered fashionable masks as an essential part of their outfits, indicating the integration of style and safety in mask-wearing practices. Furthermore, in Nigeria, the fashion industry responded to the demand for fashionable masks. A news article by *This Day Live* (2021) reported that Nigerian designers had started producing stylish masks to cater to the growing market. This development signifies that fashionable masks have gained traction in sub-Saharan economies, emphasizing the importance of aesthetics in mask-wearing culture.

In Ghana, the use of fashionable masks has gained traction during the pandemic, indicating their significance beyond a fashion statement. According to a study published in the *Journal of African Cultural Studies* (Haque & Rahman, 2020), there has been a notable increase in the demand for fashionable masks in Ghana. The study reports that local artisans and designers have been creating stylish masks that incorporate traditional Ghanaian motifs and fabrics, appealing to individuals' desire for both safety and cultural expression. Furthermore, statistics from the Ghana Health Service (2022) indicate a growing trend in the adoption of fashionable masks. The data shows a significant increase in the number of people opting for stylish masks as an alternative to regular surgical masks. This surge in demand reflects the integration of fashion and functionality in mask-wearing practices among Ghanaians.

The fashion industry plays a significant role in the global economy, encompassing various sectors such as design, manufacturing, retail, and marketing (Jackson & Shaw, 2020). It contributes to employment, trade, and consumer spending, making it an essential driver of economic growth (Esterl, 2020). In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fashion industry has faced challenges due to lockdown measures, disrupted supply chains, and changes in consumer behavior (Haque & Rahman, 2020). The assessment of the trend of fashionable masks in the fight against COVID-19 relates to the fashion industry's ability to adapt to the crisis, address public health needs, and potentially provide economic opportunities.

Fashionable masks emerged as a response to the mandatory mask-wearing measures implemented to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These masks aim to combine functionality with style, catering to consumer preferences for personalized and aesthetically pleasing protective gear (Thompson, 2020). The adoption and acceptance of fashionable masks could have implications for the fashion industry's recovery and growth, as it opens up new market segments and revenue streams (Esterl, 2020). However, determining whether fashionable masks are a passing fad or a lasting trend requires careful evaluation of consumer demand, market dynamics, and public health considerations.

Assessing the trend of fashionable masks involves analyzing the economic viability of their production and consumption. It requires examining factors such as the costs of manufacturing fashionable masks, consumer willingness to pay for them, and the potential market size (Haque & Rahman, 2020). Additionally, understanding the role of supply chains, distribution networks, and retail channels in delivering fashionable masks to consumers is crucial (Haque & Rahman, 2020). Policymakers and industry stakeholders need to consider the sustainability and scalability of producing fashionable masks over the long term, particularly as the pandemic evolves.

While fashionable masks have gained popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic, their longevity depends on various factors. As public health guidance and regulations evolve, the demand for masks may change, affecting the fashion industry's focus on mask production (Thompson, 2020). Monitoring consumer preferences, behavior, and the effectiveness of fashionable masks in preventing the spread of COVID-19 is essential for a comprehensive assessment (Esterl, 2020). By considering the interplay between the fashion industry, economic factors, and public health concerns, policymakers and stakeholders can better understand whether fashionable masks are a temporary fad or a lasting contribution to the fight against COVID-19.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Countries across the globe were impacted with pressure of adopting and findings innovations to mitigate the spread of the dreadful pandemic, COVID 19. Measures put in place globally included: the use of face coverings or rather masks, maintaining a social distance in public places and the frequent washing of hands. The wearing of masks became part of our daily routines and fits for the day. The textile and clothing industry in developed and developing countries took advantage of this opportunity for value proposition to counteract the losses incurred by the pandemic. Tailors and seamstresses all over the world began to sow face masks or different designs, fabrics and colors due to the demands of the public in need of face masks they can accessorize with. Therefore, this study sought to assess the trend of fashionable masks in the fight against COVID 19, whether they are a fad.

Various studies have been conducted on the use of fashionable masks. A study in Belgium by Larchenko (2020), found that the fashion industry started offering value proposition by making fashionable masks for the public. Other several studies conducted in China by Yeong- Hyeon Choi and Kyu- Hye Lee (2020); Ming Hui Chua (2020) and Mingrui Liao (2021), demonstrated the factor of current demand of fashionable masks resulted in the popularization of eye appealing face masks without considering the established standards of appropriate masks against the fight of COVID- 19. In addition to that, these studies showed how rapidly these face masks became fashion products rather than a medical equipment to protect people from the dreadful pandemic.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Protection Motivation Theory

Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) was developed by Rogers in 1975, to explain why people feel driven to respond defensively when they perceive a health threat. A common framework for analyzing reactions to indicators that make people aware of a potential threat is protection motive theory. Anxiety indications that urge people to take precautions or stop from actions that could damage them or others are among these triggers. Threat and coping appraisals are the two cognitive appraisal processes that humans use to evaluate potentially dangerous situations (Kim, 2022)

Threat appraisals are a method of determining the likelihood of disruptive behavior by determining how destructive and deadly the dangers would be and how likely it is that a person would be exposed to them. Furthermore, coping appraisals describe the method of assessing adaptive behavior and reveal one's capacity to handle prospective risk. The effectiveness of the coping reaction in preventing the threat and one's capacity to use the coping response are two aspects of coping that are evaluated. When the coping reaction is successful and practicable, the protective incentive increases along with the threat's seriousness and likelihood, which prompts people to alter their behavior (Renn, 2020)

Several protective behaviors in the context of health have been explained by the Protection Motivation Theory. Floyd et al. (2000) conducted a meta-analysis and showed that individuals place relative importance on a certain PMT variable over others, depending on specific health problems. For instance, in the context of cancer prevention, threat variables have a higher impact on preventive behavior than coping variables, whereas coping variables have a stronger impact on smoking cessation (Youn, 2021)

People's fears of getting the flu and its serious consequences were greater for those exposed to severe than mild pandemic scenarios, which consequently led them to adopt preventive behavior, even though threat variables were less predictive of the preventive behavior of staying at home than were coping variables. In their study of the COVID-19 pandemic using PMT, Farooq (2020) discovered that perceived severity (threat appraisal) and self-efficacy (coping appraisal) increased self-isolation intentions, while vulnerability and response efficacy had no effect on these intentions. The threat variables, particularly perceived severity, also played a role in predicting prevention behaviors under harsh pandemic conditions like COVID-19, but the coping variables were better predictors of prevention behaviors than the threat variables.

2.2 Empirical Review

A study by Larchenko (2020) in Belgium on the use of fashionable masks suggested that fashion trends started offering value proposition during the coronavirus pandemic. The fashion industry has followed its pandemic sustainable business strategy to help medical staff with masks, gowns, and sanitizers for free, to donate to medical organizations, coronavirus research in Universities' laboratories that also increases their Economic Value Added (EVA). Masks made by technical firms, such as a self-cleaning mask, have benefited from innovation in a variety of inventive ways. The creation of trendy masks by fashion firms utilizing a dual sustainable business strategy is the result of collaborations between high-tech enterprises and industry professionals from the fashion sector. Pop culture companies producing masks with branded themes, fashion companies producing fabric masks made of the newest fashions, artists producing one-of-a-kind masks using traditional techniques, a technology and trendy mash up like face-recognition masks, and politicians setting mask trends. The fashion brand analysis demonstrates that the value proposition is centered on value growth in EVA during the coronavirus pandemic because they are aware of the importance of sustainable business strategy to establish longer-term customer loyalty.

A study by Yeong- Hyeon Choi and Kyu- Hye Lee (2020) in China on the changes in consumer perception of fashion products in a pandemic - Effects of COVID-19 spread. The results were as follows. The prevention of infection and prophylaxis were key issues in the early stage (Jan 1 to Jan 31, 2020) of study on the popular fashion-related subjects during COVID-19, and transitioned to online channels and online fashion platforms. Following that, keywords relating to COVID-19 surfaced along with numerous topics and fashion keywords. Prophylaxis, domestic life, digital and beauty products, internet platforms, and fashion consumption were all fashion-related topics. Face masks were the common theme when comparing fashion consumers' awareness of COVID-19 with that of SARS and MERS, but only during COVID-19 was the avoidance of infection a significant consumer concern in fashion-related topics. The number of searches for face masks, shoes, and everyday clothing grew along with the number of COVID-19 cases. Consumer awareness of face masks has evolved from preventing the inhalation of yellow and micro-dust to emphasizing their societal relevance and scarcity.

Another study by Ming Hui Chua (2020) in China covered the technical aspects of store-bought and homemade masks, as well as current developments in mask engineering, disinfection, and materials, are discussed, along with the public health implications of mask use and mask production in the future. Even the raw ingredients for face masks are in short supply due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, forcing people to make their own masks out of common household items. Simultaneously, research has advanced in the direction of enhancing the effectiveness and quality of face masks, for example, by incorporating attributes like super hydrophobicity and antibacterial activity. The increasing prevalence of infectious diseases in recent decades has posed a serious threat to public health. Routes of transmission differ, but the respiratory droplet or airborne route has the greatest potential to disrupt social intercourse, while being amenable to prevention by the humble face mask. Different types of masks give different levels of protection to the user.

A study by Sumit Kanti Ghosh (2022) in India on the topic of masks as a fashion product illustrated that the 'new normal' driven by coronavirus has stretched or broken down the pre-existing paradigms of cultural expression such as theatre, music, dance, concerts, shopping etc. This new normal also forces us to rely upon platforms such as social media where physical participation is

impossible due to social distancing. This shift has helped us to identify the ways in which the relationship between a new commodity and the human body evolves. Hence, at the beginning of the pandemic, masks were identified as life- saving commodities, but as time went on they started to transform into fashion products. The masks are beginning to shift from the medical perspective entering the cultural discourses. As from the 15th century Europe, we understand fashion as a tool for demarcation of social class and courtly privilege. Fashion was monopolized by the aristocracy to demarcate their political, social and economic power, while commoners would hardly dare to call themselves fashionable. But after the spread of mercantile economy and the decline of feudalism in Western Europe between the 15th and 18th centuries, the aristocracy- led fashion system began to come unfastened as markets and social behavioral spaces became increasingly democratic. Therefore, at the historical juncture of the 21st century, COVID-19 helps us to understand through a fresh perspective the cultural, social and mercantile expressions of a fashion product.

A research was done by Abena Dove Osseo (2022) in Ghana on how people were able to adapt to the use of nose masks during the COVID-19 outbreak. To prevent the transmission of the new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in 2020, Ghanaians wore face masks or nasal masks in public. Given the long-established cottage sewing industry, designers and tailors immediately rushed to produce nose masks by April. By the end of the year, disposable face masks were flooding the market, but at the beginning of the epidemic, cloth mask producers had a big impact on public health. In Ghana, the rapid adoption of a low-cost technology was symbolized by nose covers. Despite a long history dating back to the late eighteenth century, handcrafted masks were rarely utilized outside of East Asian nations to contain upper respiratory diseases. One could see nose covers as a continuation of low-cost remedies to West Africa's healthcare challenges. Since Ghanaians did not wear cloth face masks previous to 2020, they can simultaneously be a point of rupture and major transformation.

A survey done by Richa Gupta (2021) in India showed that a majority of Indians were concerned about the environmental effects of the masks and opted for reusable cloth masks. Hence, there was a demand for reusable masks, allowing investors and designers to look into these options and make a difference for the long run such as better designs, materials etc. Covid-19 pandemic has put a strain on the way of life this year, due to how fast this dangerous virus has been transmitted from person to person in so worldwide in a short period of time. People wear masks as a result of the requirement for protection against the Corona virus to avoid getting it and spreading it while the vaccine is still being developed. The focus was on sustainability and the creation of a better mask because wearing a mask is such a vast topic.

A further study by Made Aditya (2020) in Indonesia on the garment industry competitive advantage strategy during the coronavirus concluded that the clothing industry employs a competitive advantage strategy to control the market and preserve its position, enabling the business to make the anticipated profits. The outbreak of the coronavirus has resulted in losses and gaps in the economic sector. Many small and medium enterprises and business companies were eventually forced to temporarily close down. The economy is one of the most important factors in human life. Humans in daily life will always intersect with economic needs where their existence can meet human needs such as food and so on. The fashion industry is one of the industries that contribute the largest foreign exchange to the country after oil and gas. Thus the fashion industry has adopted the competitive advantage strategy in counteracting the impacts of the pandemic.

To determine its competitiveness, an organization adopts strategies such as differentiation, cost leadership, or focus.

A study by Mingrui Liao (2021) in China revealed that it is important to note that although the current demand has resulted in a large number of commercial masks from different suppliers and manufacturers, there are no established standards for their production and testing that would provide the general public with evidence-based recommendations on their safety. As a result, it was determined to be appropriate. It is vital to find out how well these face masks function to stop the spread of viruses. It is crucial to look at how condensation and moisture management can affect the lifespan and effectiveness of reusable masks.

A study by Johanna Gibson (2020) in the United Kingdom revealed that the impact of Covid-19 has been extensive and indiscriminate, having an impact on fashion's basic identity in addition to its practical and economic infrastructure. First, there was the extremely direct reaction of dedicating factories to the manufacture of protective gear and promoting the face mask as a fashion accessory. The virus's effects on production, such as the closing of factories, have increased attention on outsourcing and the uncertain welfare of employees in less developed nations who produce the majority of fast fashion. However, slow fashion trends like luxury rental may never fully recover. In addition, the fashion sector has undergone a profound change. Fashion battles social isolation and hoards trendy goods. Fashion has always been at the forefront of sustainability, but as a result of the virus, its commercial model is shifting even more away from the turnover of individual products and toward paradigm of reusability and longevity. The fashion industry has ultimately, and perhaps inescapably, had to accept a retail strategy that sells fewer things overall rather than more.

Fashion is becoming less exciting, and the 21st-century boulevardier's presence is more and more mediated and virtual rather than vivid. In this sense, rather than the actual goods, what is at stake and the subject of the transaction is the consumer's trust in the provenance of the fashion product (as well as the authenticity and assurance of labeling). Thus, the social life of fashion is becoming harder to identify but yet easier to find in many ways (Gibson, 2020).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a desk methodology. Desk study is also known as secondary data collection. It is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research. This current study relied on already published studies and reports. The secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

4.0 RESULTS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories, that is, contextual and geographical gaps.

4.1 Contextual and Geographical Gap

Studies conducted by Larchenko (2020); Yeong- Hyeon Choi and Kyu- Hye Lee (2020); Ming Hui Chua (2020); Sumit Kanti Ghosh (2022); Richa Gupta (2021); Made Aditya (2020); Mingrui Liao (2021) and Johanna Gibson (2021) presented a geographical gap as none of the studies was applicable in Ghana. These studies produced results based on the adaptation of the trend of fashionable masks against the fight of COVID- 19 in other countries, whereas the current study focuses mainly in Ghana.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The assessment of the trend of fashionable masks in the fight against COVID-19 reveals several noteworthy conclusions. Firstly, fashionable masks have experienced a significant surge in popularity, capturing the attention and interest of individuals seeking to combine safety with personal style. This trend has been widely embraced across different age groups and has played a role in shifting the perception of masks from purely utilitarian to fashionable accessories. Moreover, the incorporation of stylish designs and customization options has contributed to improved compliance with mask-wearing guidelines, as individuals are motivated to wear masks consistently. Fashionable masks have also created new economic opportunities within the fashion industry, with designers, manufacturers, and retailers actively engaging in the production and sale of stylish masks.

While fashionable masks have seen widespread adoption and demonstrated positive impacts, there are considerations regarding their long-term viability as a trend. The future of fashionable masks will depend on various factors, such as the ongoing pandemic situation and individual preferences. As vaccination rates increase and the pandemic situation improves, the demand for masks, including fashionable ones, may decline. It remains to be seen whether fashionable masks will maintain their appeal beyond the immediate need for COVID-19 protection, particularly as other respiratory illnesses come into focus. Additionally, sustainability concerns arise with the increased production and disposal of masks, emphasizing the need for environmentally friendly alternatives. Ultimately, while fashionable masks have made a notable impact in the fight against COVID-19, further monitoring and evaluation are necessary to determine their lasting significance and whether they will remain a lasting trend or fade away as a passing fad.

5.2 Recommendations

Assessment of the trend of fashionable masks in the fight against COVID-19 requires a comprehensive approach that considers contributions to theory, practice, and policy. Here are some recommendations based on these aspects:

5.2.1 Theory

Encourage research: Promote studies that investigate the effectiveness of fashionable masks in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Research should focus on factors such as mask materials, fit, and filtration efficiency. This will help establish a theoretical foundation for assessing their impact.

5.2.2 Practice

Education and awareness: Develop public health campaigns to educate individuals on the importance of wearing masks, regardless of fashion trends. Emphasize the need for masks to meet certain standards in terms of filtration efficiency, breathability, and proper fit. Collaboration with designers: Engage with fashion designers to create masks that combine style and functionality. Encourage the integration of effective filtration materials while maintaining aesthetic appeal. Quality control: Establish guidelines and standards for manufacturing fashionable masks, ensuring they meet safety requirements. This can involve certifications or labeling systems to help consumers make informed choices.

5.2.3 Policy

Regulation and compliance: Implement policies that require fashionable masks to meet specific standards in terms of filtration efficiency and safety. Collaborate with regulatory bodies and industry stakeholders to define and enforce these standards. Incentivize production: Offer support or incentives to manufacturers producing fashionable masks that meet the required standards. This can drive the production of high-quality masks while fostering compliance. Accessibility and affordability: Develop policies to ensure that fashionable masks are accessible and affordable to a wide range of individuals. This can involve subsidies, distribution programs, or collaborations with non-profit organizations.

Overall, the assessment of fashionable masks should consider both their aesthetic appeal and their effectiveness in preventing the spread of COVID-19. By integrating theory, practice, and policy, we can evaluate the longevity and impact of fashionable masks and determine whether they are a passing fad or a valuable contribution to public health efforts.

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