

The SHIFT of Consumer Behavior from Fast Fashion to Slow Fashion: A Review and Research Agenda

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Abstract : As fashion cycles become more rapid, some segments of the fashion industry have adopted increasingly unsustainable production processes to keep up with demand and enhance profit margins. The growing threat to environmental and social wellbeing posed by unethical fast fashion practices and the need to integrate the targets of SDGs into this industry necessitates a shift in the fashion industry's unsustainable nature, which can only be accomplished in the long run if consumers support sustainable fashion by purchasing it. Fast fashion is defined as low-cost, trendy apparel that takes inspiration from the catwalk or celebrity culture and rapidly transforms it into garments at high-street stores to meet consumer demand. Given the importance of identity formation to many consumers, the desire to be "fashionable" often outweighs the desire to be ethical or sustainable. This paradox exemplifies the tension between the human drive to consume and the will to do so in moderation. Previous research suggests that there is an attitude-behavior gap when it comes to determining consumer purchasing behavior, but to the best of our knowledge, no study has analysed how to encourage customers to shift from fast to slow fashion. Against this backdrop, the aim of this study is twofold: first, to identify and examine the factors that impact consumers' decisions to engage in sustainable fashion, and second, the authors develop a comprehensive framework for conceptualizing and encouraging researchers and practitioners to foster sustainable consumer behavior. This study used a systematic approach to collect data and analyse literature. The approach included three key steps: review planning, review execution, and findings reporting. Authors identified the keywords "sustainable consumption" and "sustainable fashion" and retrieved studies from the Web of Science (WoS) (126 records) and Scopus database (449 records). To make the study more specific, the authors refined the subject area to management, business, and economics in the second step, retrieving 265 records. In the third step, the authors removed the duplicate records and manually reviewed the articles to examine their relevance to the research issue. The final 96 research articles were used to develop this study's systematic scheme. The findings indicate that societal norms, demographics, positive emotions, self-efficacy, and awareness all have an effect on customers' decisions to purchase sustainable apparel. The authors propose a framework, denoted by the acronym SHIFT, in which consumers are more likely to engage in sustainable behaviors when the message or context leverages the following factors: (s)social influence, (h)habit formation, (i)individual self, (f)feelings, emotions, and cognition, and (t)tangibility. Furthermore, the authors identify five broad challenges that encourage sustainable consumer behavior and use them to develop novel propositions. Finally, the authors discuss how the SHIFT framework can be used in practice to drive sustainable consumer behaviors. This research sought to define the boundaries of existing research while also providing new perspectives on future research, with the goal of being useful for the development and discovery of new fields of study, thereby expanding knowledge.

Keywords : consumer behavior, fast fashion, sustainable consumption, sustainable fashion, systematic literature review

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