

Embracing Sustainability in Fashion: An Exploratory Study of Eco-Friendly Practices and Consumer Perception

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Abstract

Fashion industry is causing environmental harm and as a result there is need for sustainable fashion. The present study looks at sustainable practices adopted by fashion companies and also explore how consumer perceive sustainable fashion and the factors influencing adoptable of eco-friendly choices and analyze the relationship between sustainability and consumer behaviour. The study involves a systematic collection of data from literature to gain knowledge on practices adopted by fashion companies and from consumers to understand their perception on factors influencing adopting sustainable fashion. Data will be collected through consumer survey and literature review. The findings contribute to understanding sustainable practices adopted by fashion companies and consumer behavior and what can be done to improve sustainability in industry.

Key words: *sustainable fashion, Consumer perception and eco-friendly practices,*

Introduction

To begin with, it is essential to clarify the concept of sustainable fashion or sustainability within the fashion industry.

Sustainable fashion encompasses the processes of producing, distributing, designing, and consuming clothing in a manner that reduces environmental harm, conserves resources, and encourages fair trade practices. This approach focuses on minimizing waste, utilizing eco-friendly materials, ensuring equitable labor conditions, and lessening the overall ecological footprint. Practices associated with sustainable fashion include recycling, upcycling, the use of organic or renewable materials, and endorsing ethical production methods. The aim is to foster a fashion industry that is both ethical and environmentally conscious, prioritizing long-term sustainability over fleeting trends.

Terms : fleeting trends , ecological footprints

9th International Conference on**Economic Growth and Sustainable Development- Emerging Trends- November 21-22, 2024****Thesis statement:**

“Sustainable materials and production methods can mitigate the environmental impact of fast fashion , but require consumer education and industry wide implementation.”

LITERATURE REVIEW :**Analysing the challenges to circular economy in Indian Fashion Industry.**

The research conducted by Shakthi Thinakaran, Pranesh Chandravelu, S. G. Ponnambalam, and Koppiah raj Karuppiah emphasizes the importance of circular economy (CE) practices in mitigating the environmental impact of discarded fashion materials. Additionally, it identifies and assesses the challenges that hinder the adoption of CE initiatives within the Indian fashion industry. The findings of the study reveal issues such as the high cost of materials, lack of certifications, difficulties in collection and separation processes, and insufficient technical expertise.

Sustainable Operations for Fashion Manufacturing : A Dynamic Time-Varying Framework.

The research paper authored by Seyyed-Mahdi Hosseini-Motlagh, Maryam Johari, Roza Zirakpourdehkordi, and Tsan-Ming Choi emphasizes the necessity for manufacturers to harmonize their sustainability initiatives with profitability while addressing the changing preferences of consumers. This study provides valuable managerial insights regarding the effects of fluctuating sustainability considerations for stakeholders, decision-makers, and researchers within the fashion industry.

Encouraging Consumption Enhancement: Green Marketing Mix Study with Customer Satisfaction in Indonesians Sustainable Fashion .

The research paper written by Fredi Andria, Mega Triani, Azzahra Diti Gunawan, and Bayu Hananto emphasizes the awareness generated among consumers regarding the adverse effects of manufacturing industries, particularly in the clothing sector. This study was carried out across seven regions in Indonesia, with the objective of examining the influence of green marketing mix variables. Utilizing both descriptive and exploratory methodologies, the research aims to delineate and analyse the integration patterns of various green marketing mix elements and their relationship with customer satisfaction in the context of sustainable fashion.

9th International Conference on**Economic Growth and Sustainable Development- Emerging Trends- November 21-22, 2024****Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Fashion : Reshaping design , production , consumer experience and sustainability.**

K. Dhiwar's insights from Manama, Bahrain, delve into the significant changes brought about by artificial intelligence and machine learning in the fashion sector. The discussion centers on the redefinition of design, production, consumer experiences, and sustainability in light of these advancements. It underscores the profound impact of AI and machine learning on the fashion ecosystem, particularly in the realms of design and production. While the fashion industry has traditionally been labor-intensive, there is a clear transition towards the use of AI tools that streamline ideation, pattern development, and trend monitoring. The analysis also highlights the ethical and environmental implications of incorporating technology into fashion, including issues related to data privacy, algorithmic bias, and ecological sustainability, advocating for a more conscientious and sustainable integration of AI in the industry.

The impact of Digital transformation on sustainability in Fashion Retail

The article by Verica Bulovic and Zlatko Covic delves into the relationship between digital transformation and sustainability in fashion retail, underscoring the direct impact of communication technology advancements on businesses. A range of digital technologies, including cloud computing, data management, mobile applications, manufacturing software, and analytics, is driving a technological revolution. Despite being one of the fastest-growing online categories, the fashion industry is notably slow in adopting new technologies. This study discusses the role of retailers in the fashion supply chain and seeks to explore how digital technologies have shaped sustainability efforts in fashion retail, along with evaluating the potential for retailers to incorporate sustainability into their business models.

Embedding Environmental Sustainability Practices in Fashion supply chains for multinational companies and SMEs

The article by Sarah Alaghbari, Nasir Zubair, Salwa Al Balushi, and Ahmed Maher examines the critical importance of integrating environmental sustainability practices within the fashion supply chains of both multinational corporations and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It highlights the pressing need to address pollution issues stemming from the fashion industry. The study investigates companies that have successfully incorporated sustainability into their supply chains, comparing the approaches of SMEs and multinational firms through qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including thematic analysis and regression analysis of survey data. The findings indicate significant differences in sustainability practices between the two types of companies, particularly in product and process design. Furthermore, quantitative results demonstrate that SMEs outperform multinational companies in various environmental metrics, such as transparency, emissions, material usage, waste management, water consumption, and chemical usage.

Affecting factors of consumer's purchase decision on sustainable fashion clothing products

The research conducted by Hui Zheng Lei Chen investigates the various factors that affect consumers' purchasing choices regarding sustainable fashion clothing. It examines the influence of the sustainable fashion environment, the features of sustainable fashion products, and the level of awareness about sustainable consumption on consumer behaviour. Additionally, the study provides recommendations to improve young people's understanding of environmental protection and to help clothing companies implement sustainable strategies.

9th International Conference on**Economic Growth and Sustainable Development- Emerging Trends- November 21-22, 2024****Role of cottage industries in the economic development of Bangladesh: An empirical study**

This research conducted by Sadia Tasneem and Md Rouf Biswas examines both qualitative and quantitative transformations within the economy aimed at enhancing the standard of living and economic well-being of a particular region. It highlights the significance of the cottage industry in fostering economic development. To support their analysis, the authors gathered primary data using a structured questionnaire. Additionally, the study addresses the challenges faced by the cottage industry and its contributions to the economic advancement of Bangladesh, offering several recommendations to help these industries flourish and further contribute to the nation's economic growth.

The role of cottage and small-scale industries in Asian economic development:

This research conducted by Theodore Herman highlights the swift emergence of powered industry on a large-scale following World War II, emphasizing the decline of traditional handicrafts in Asian nations due to the prevalence of machine-produced goods. In Asia, six distinct categories of handicrafts and small-scale industries can be identified based on their organization, location, and market dynamics. Analyzing these six categories within the context of post-war conditions provides a more structured comprehension of the economic patterns and developmental challenges unique to the region.

The environmental price of Fast Fashion

This article authored by Kirsi Niinimaki, Greg Peters, Heleno Dahlbo, Patsy Perry, Timo Rissanen, and Alison Gwilt highlights the challenges confronting the fashion industry, particularly the environmentally damaging supply chain. It elaborates on the concept of fast fashion, which is characterized by inexpensive production, high consumption rates, and the brief lifespan of garments. The authors examine the environmental repercussions within the textile and fashion value chain, emphasizing issues such as water consumption, chemical pollution, carbon dioxide emissions, and textile waste. The fast fashion sector generates over 92 million tonnes of waste annually and consumes approximately 79 trillion litres of water. Furthermore, the authors advocate for essential transformations in the fashion business model, promoting the adoption of sustainable practices across the supply chain and a change in consumer behavior. These recommendations underscore the urgent necessity for a transition towards slow fashion, aimed at reducing and alleviating harmful environmental effects to enhance the long-term sustainability of the fashion supply chain.

A literature review on sustainable fashion marketing

This article authored by Basvuru Tanhi, Revizyon Tanhi, Makale Turu, and Kabul Tanhi discusses the various impacts and repercussions of business on society, culture, and the economy. The textile and fashion industry is particularly prominent among sectors facing scrutiny, especially regarding issues related to raw materials, production methods, and waste management. The objective of this paper is to provide a comprehensive overview of the historical evolution of textile and fashion marketing, framed within the contexts of capitalism, the industrial revolution, and modernism.

9th International Conference on**Economic Growth and Sustainable Development- Emerging Trends- November 21-22, 2024****Environmental changes and Fast Fashion****Fast Fashion:**

The concept of fast fashion has become increasingly popular among young people, capturing the attention of individuals from various demographic backgrounds. This trend is characterized by the rapid production of inexpensive clothing, allowing consumers to frequently update their wardrobes with the latest styles. However, fast fashion prioritizes quantity over quality, leading consumers to purchase multiple low-quality garments instead of investing in a single high-quality item. This shift in consumer behaviour raises several important questions about the implications of low-quality clothing on both individuals and the environment. One of the most significant implications of this shift towards low-quality clothing is the impact on consumer habits and values. As fast fashion encourages a culture of disposability, individuals may become desensitized to the value of clothing and the craftsmanship that goes into creating high-quality garments. This mindset not only affects purchasing decisions but also fosters a throwaway culture, where clothing is discarded rather than cherished or repaired. The result is a cycle of overconsumption that places immense pressure on both manufacturers and the environment. To produce garments at a lower cost, manufacturers often sacrifice quality to attract a larger customer base. This compromise can manifest in various ways, including the use of cheaper materials, less durable construction methods, and a lack of attention to ethical labour practices. The mass production of textiles requires significant amounts of raw materials, such as cotton, which raises questions about the sustainability of these practices. However, are manufacturers truly using 100% cotton in their products? The answer is often no. Many fast fashion brands blend cotton with synthetic fibers or use lower-quality cotton to reduce costs, which can lead to garments that do not perform well over time and contribute to a cycle of waste. In order to satisfy market demand, producers frequently compromise on the quality of the fabrics they create, resulting in lower prices for consumers. While this may seem advantageous in the short term, it ultimately contributes to challenges in recycling these garments. Research indicates that only 25% of clothing is recycled annually, while the remaining 75% contributes to textile waste, causing significant environmental damage. This waste not only fills landfills but also leads to pollution from the production processes and the disposal of synthetic fibers, which can take hundreds of years to decompose. In a densely populated country like India, which ranks second in global population, the rising demand from consumers, the influence of social media, and celebrity endorsements have all fueled the growth of fast fashion. Young people, in particular, are drawn to the allure of trendy, affordable clothing, often driven by the desire to emulate influencers and celebrities. However, this trend raises critical questions

How long does it take for our clothes to decompose.?

Will your clothes biodegrade?



*Rate varies with soil, climate and fibre characteristics.

Sustainable practices and circular economy

The pressing necessity for transformation within the fashion industry arises from its significant environmental impact. Fashion waste accounts for nearly 10% of global carbon emissions, alongside extensive water consumption and pollution. To comprehend the concept of Circular Economy in the context of fashion, it is essential to recognize that Circular Fashion represents a regenerative framework wherein clothing is designed, manufactured, and utilized in manners that extend their lifespan and preserve their value. This approach emphasizes the importance of closing the loop in fashion production by ensuring that materials remain in circulation for as long as feasible, maximizing their value, and facilitating the recovery and regeneration of products at the conclusion of their lifecycle. It is crucial to distinguish between Circular Fashion and Sustainable Fashion; while Sustainable Fashion aims to reduce harm through ethical practices, Circular Fashion advances this notion by prioritizing a closed-loop system that fosters regeneration. Both paradigms share the overarching goal of mitigating the environmental impact of the fashion industry, which is primarily associated with resource consumption, waste generation, carbon emissions, water usage, and pollution. The fundamental aspects of Circular Fashion include the design of products that are durable, repairable, and recyclable, the selection of renewable materials, efficient resource utilization, and the assurance that products can safely re-enter the environment post-use. Key components of Circular Fashion encompass:

Design for Longevity and Durability

Material Innovation and Selection

Sustainable Production Processes

Recycling and Upcycling

Consumer Engagement and Behaviour (including educational campaigns, promotion of second-hand shopping, and incentives for recycling and resale).

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The circular economy faces significant challenges in promoting sustainability within the fashion industry, particularly in the realms of design and production. Key issues include constraints related to limited design options, recyclability, and reuse, as well as difficulties in material selection and sourcing. The high costs associated with sustainable materials, coupled with a lack of standardization in sustainable production methods, complicate the scaling of circular production. Furthermore, consumer awareness and education are often insufficient, and there are inadequate incentives for sustainable production practices. The higher prices of sustainable products, combined with a lack of convenient take-back and recycling options, contribute to resistance to behavioural change. Supply chain and logistics issues, such as complex global supply chains, transparency deficits, inefficient reverse logistics, limited recycling infrastructure, and elevated costs for sustainable transportation, further intensify these challenges. Regulatory and policy hurdles, including ambiguous regulations and standards, insufficient support for circular economy initiatives, limited enforcement of existing laws, trade policies that obstruct sustainable practices, and tax structures that favour linear economic models, also present significant barriers. Additionally, technological challenges, such as the slow development of circular economy technologies, high adoption costs, limitations in data management and analytics, integration issues with existing systems, and cybersecurity risks, must be addressed. Economic obstacles, including the elevated costs of sustainable materials and production, limited economies of scale for circular initiatives, competition from inexpensive linear economy products, restricted access to financing for circular projects, and the potential for job losses in traditional sectors, further complicate the transition to a circular economy. The fashion industry faces numerous social challenges that must be addressed to foster sustainable practices. These include insufficient awareness and education among stakeholders, resistance to altering traditional business models, cultural norms that support fast fashion, inadequate inclusion of marginalized groups, and persistent human rights issues within supply chains. Furthermore, challenges related to key performance indicators (KPIs) complicate the situation, such as the lack of standardized metrics for the circular economy, challenges in measuring the impact of circular initiatives, limited data quality and availability, difficulties in tracking and reporting progress, and the need to reconcile competing KPIs. These issues collectively hinder the evaluation and advancement of circular economy strategies. To lessen the environmental impact of textile waste, individuals can consider adopting various circular fashion models, including:

Utilizing clothing rental options

Shopping at second-hand and vintage markets

Reselling clothing through online platforms

Engaging in clothing swaps and peer-to-peer sharing

Improving clothing care practices

Avoiding fast fashion purchases

Opting for quality over quantity in clothing choices

Donating gently used apparel

9th International Conference on**Economic Growth and Sustainable Development- Emerging Trends- November 21-22, 2024****Role of Cottage industries**

Cottage industries are well-known for their contributions to the fashion sector, particularly in fostering sustainability. These industries focus on producing handcrafted items using local labour and organic materials, which not only preserves cultural heritage but also aids in waste reduction. They are vital for economic development, especially in rural areas, as they create job opportunities and help address regional disparities, thereby alleviating poverty and improving living standards. Moreover, cottage industries promote entrepreneurship by allowing individuals to establish small-scale businesses with minimal investment. To support the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), various government policies and initiatives have been introduced. These industries also facilitate skill development, enabling the workforce to learn traditional crafts and improve their employment prospects. By tapping into niche markets for eco-friendly and artisanal products, they stimulate demand and contribute to economic growth. Additionally, cottage industries bolster local economies by utilizing local materials and markets, which enhances community resilience and mitigates urban migration. They also add uniqueness to local offerings, attracting tourism and related economic activities. The environmental advantages of cottage industries, such as reducing carbon footprints, minimizing waste, and utilizing sustainable materials, further underscore their importance in promoting sustainability within the fashion industry. Socially, they help preserve traditional craftsmanship, empower local communities, and uphold fair labor practices, while economically, they reduce dependence on fast fashion, stimulate local growth, generate employment, and support rural development.

Examples of sustainable cottage industries in Fashion

Handloom weaving (India , Africa)

Natural dyeing (Japan , Indonesia)

Embroidery and needlework (Mexico, Eastern Europe)

Upcycled and repurposed textiles

Traditional Printing techniques (Africa , Asia)

Cottage industries, which typically consist of small-scale, home-based production units, have the potential to significantly enhance their growth by adopting several strategic approaches. One effective method is to form partnerships with larger brands. By collaborating with established companies, cottage industries can gain access to broader markets, resources, and expertise that can help them scale their operations. These partnerships can also provide valuable marketing support, allowing small producers to reach a wider audience and increase their visibility in a competitive marketplace. In addition to partnerships, leveraging online platforms and e-commerce is crucial for the growth of cottage industries. The digital landscape offers a wealth of opportunities for small producers to showcase their products, connect with consumers, and facilitate direct sales. By utilizing social media, online marketplaces, and their own e-commerce websites, cottage industries can tap into a global customer base, reducing reliance on traditional retail channels and enhancing their profitability. Conducting training and educational programs is another vital strategy for fostering growth within cottage industries. By investing in skill development and knowledge sharing, these small producers can improve the quality of their products, adopt innovative techniques, and stay abreast of industry trends. Workshops, mentorship programs, and online courses can empower artisans and craftspeople, enabling them to refine their craft and expand their business acumen. Moreover, responding to

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consumer demand for sustainable fashion presents a significant opportunity for cottage industries. As more consumers prioritize ethical and environmentally friendly products, cottage industries can position themselves as leaders in sustainable practices. By utilizing local materials, traditional techniques, and eco-friendly processes, these small-scale producers can create unique, high-quality products that resonate with conscious consumers. The fashion industry, in turn, can mitigate its environmental impact by embracing cottage industries. This approach not only promotes social responsibility but also supports local economic development. By sourcing products from cottage industries, larger brands can reduce their carbon footprint associated with transportation and mass production. Additionally, this collaboration helps preserve cultural heritage, as many cottage industries are rooted in traditional craftsmanship and local customs. Ultimately, the integration of cottage industries into the broader fashion ecosystem contributes to a more sustainable and responsible fashion future. By prioritizing ethical production methods, supporting local economies, and celebrating cultural diversity, the fashion industry can create a positive impact that extends beyond profit margins. This holistic approach fosters a more equitable and environmentally conscious marketplace, benefiting consumers, producers, and the planet alike.

The leading cottage industries in India encompass Handloom weaving, Khadi production, Handicrafts, Agro-based industries, and traditional arts and crafts, all of which significantly enrich the economic and cultural fabric of the nation. The first cottage industry globally emerged from light manufacturing activities in the United Kingdom. Currently, many consumers are drawn to unique, handcrafted items, and with the increasing awareness of sustainability, numerous cottage industries are experiencing a resurgence. Artisans and creative individuals are utilizing online platforms to market their products. However, these industries face several challenges; despite a rise in employment opportunities, revenue has declined as marketers offer low prices to manufacturers while charging high amounts to consumers. Many cottage industries in India struggle with issues related to capital and labour. Consequently, there is an urgent need for the implementation of innovative strategies that enhance productivity, foster skill development, and align with market demands. The government should consider providing subsidies to support the growth of cottage industries, especially during their formative stages. At times, the workforce must contend with significant challenges throughout various phases of their business journey.

Sustainable fashion brands and startups

Inorder to create more awareness and make sustainability in Fashion a practice among everyone several startups have mushroomed India. India has become a hub for sustainable fashion , and some of the amazing brands and startups making waves in the industry are as follows :

➤ **No Nasties :**

Since 2011, No Nasties has made 100% organic , fair trade and vegan clothing. No Nasties is an eco-friendly clothing brand based in India, dedicated to promoting sustainable and ethical fashion. Founded with a mission to create transparency in the fashion industry, the brand uses 100% organic cotton grown without harmful pesticides, supporting both environmental health and the livelihoods of farmers. Their minimalist designs prioritize comfort and versatility, while eco-friendly printing methods, such as water-based inks, reduce environmental impact. Committed to fair trade practices, No Nasties ensures workers are paid fair wages and work

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in safe conditions. By supporting local artisans and fostering community development, the brand embodies a philosophy of conscious consumption, encapsulated in their tagline: "Fashion without the nasties."

The Summer House

The Summer House is a brand that embodies a lifestyle centred around leisure, outdoor living, and seasonal enjoyment, particularly during the warmer months. It often features an aesthetic that combines bright, airy colours and natural materials, creating a casual yet stylish atmosphere reminiscent of coastal or countryside retreats. The product offerings typically include home decor, fashion, outdoor gear, and gourmet food items, all designed to enhance summer experiences. Targeting individuals and families who value quality time outdoors and prioritize sustainable living, The Summer House engages its audience through social media platforms, community events, and content creation that showcases the joys of summer activities. By promoting a relaxed and enjoyable lifestyle, the brand fosters a sense of community among its customers.

➤ Okhai :

Okhai is a brand that focuses on sustainable and ethical fashion, primarily handcrafted by artisans in rural India. The brand aims to empower women by providing them with skills and fair wages, thereby fostering economic independence. Okhai offers a range of clothing and accessories that often feature traditional Indian crafts and techniques, blending contemporary design with rich cultural heritage. The aesthetic of Okhai is vibrant and colorful, often incorporating intricate embroidery and unique patterns that reflect the artisans' craftsmanship. By emphasizing sustainability, the brand uses eco-friendly materials and practices, appealing to conscious consumers who value both style and ethical production. Okhai's commitment to community development is evident through its initiatives that support education and training for artisans, promoting not just fashion, but also social impact. The brand actively engages with its audience through social media and storytelling, sharing the journeys of the artisans and the inspiration behind their creations, thus creating a deeper connection with customers who appreciate responsible fashion.

➤ Sui :

Sui is a contemporary fashion brand known for its fusion of traditional craftsmanship and modern design. It primarily focuses on creating stylish clothing and accessories that reflect cultural heritage while appealing to a global audience. The brand often incorporates vibrant colors, intricate patterns, and artisanal techniques, showcasing the richness of its origins.

Sui emphasizes sustainability and ethical practices, often sourcing materials responsibly and working with skilled artisans. This commitment not only supports local communities but also highlights the importance of preserving traditional crafts.

The brand targets fashion-forward individuals who appreciate unique, handcrafted pieces that stand out in both everyday wear and special occasions. Through engaging storytelling and a strong online presence, SUI connects with its audience, celebrating the stories behind each creation and fostering a community that values authenticity and style.

9th International Conference on**Economic Growth and Sustainable Development- Emerging Trends- November 21-22, 2024****Doodlage :**

Doodlage is a sustainable fashion brand based in India that focuses on upcycling and eco-friendly practices. Founded with a vision to reduce waste in the fashion industry, Doodlage transforms leftover fabrics and materials into stylish, contemporary clothing and accessories. The brand emphasizes creativity and innovation, ensuring that each piece is unique while reflecting a commitment to environmental responsibility. Doodlage's aesthetic combines modern design with playful elements, often featuring bold colors, quirky patterns, and thoughtful details. The brand aims to appeal to conscious consumers who prioritize sustainability without compromising on style. In addition to upcycling, Doodlage engages in fair trade practices, collaborating with local artisans and craftspeople to promote ethical production. Through storytelling and a strong online presence, the brand connects with its audience, highlighting the importance of sustainable fashion and the stories behind its creations. Overall, Doodlage not only offers fashionable items but also fosters a community that values eco-conscious living.

FabIndia :

FabIndia is a prominent Indian retail brand known for its focus on traditional crafts, handwoven textiles, and ethnic wear. Founded in 1960, the brand aims to celebrate India's rich cultural heritage by promoting products made by local artisans and craftspeople. FabIndia offers a diverse range of products, including clothing, home decor, furniture, and organic food items, often featuring natural materials and traditional techniques. The brand is dedicated to sustainability and social responsibility, working directly with rural artisans to ensure fair wages and promote sustainable livelihoods. By emphasizing handcrafted quality and unique designs, FabIndia connects modern consumers with the craftsmanship of rural India. With a strong commitment to ethical practices, FabIndia supports local communities and helps preserve traditional crafts that might otherwise be lost. Its retail outlets and online presence make it accessible to a wide audience, while the brand's emphasis on quality and cultural authenticity continues to resonate with customers who appreciate both style and social impact.

The proliferation of thrift stores has significantly contributed to the advancement of sustainable fashion, mitigating waste and promoting environmentally conscious consumption. By extending the lifespan of garments, thrift stores conserve resources, reduce carbon emissions, and provide affordable fashion options for economically disadvantaged communities. Moreover, they generate revenue, create employment opportunities, and support local economies.

In India, thrift stores have emerged as pivotal players in the sustainable fashion landscape, fostering a culture of reuse and recycling. These establishments collaborate with local artisans to upcycle and repurpose items, thereby preserving traditional crafts and supporting community development. Additionally, many thrift stores operate as social enterprises, channeling proceeds towards initiatives such as education and healthcare. Notable thrift store chains, including Goodwill, Salvation Army, ThredUp, and Poshmark, have demonstrated the viability of sustainable fashion models. Statistics underscore the industry's growth potential, with the global second-hand market projected to reach \$64 billion by 2025 and 70% of the world's population utilizing second-hand clothing. Thrift stores have been shown to reduce textile waste by 10-15% annually. In summary, thrift stores in India have become essential contributors to sustainable fashion and community development, offering numerous benefits, including:

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- Affordable fashion options
- Job creation
- Community engagement
- Unique, upcycled products
- Support for local artisans and traditional crafts
- Funding for social causes
- Environmental benefits through reduced waste

By supporting thrift stores, consumers can contribute to a more sustainable, environmentally conscious, and socially responsible fashion industry. There are several online websites and social media handles that support resale of used clothes.

Analysis

Descriptive Analytics

Methodology

The data used for analysis is a primary data with respondents of 150 customers of both rural and urban population of male and female. The model used for analysis is Regression analysis techniques like SLR and MLR.

Results

The maximum amount spent by individuals on a monthly basis is ₹10000 and customers buying behaviour is influenced by various factors like price, quality, style, brand reputation and sustainability out of which quality influences by 50.3% and 58.5% of consumers are aware of the environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry. The sustainability issues that concern the most consumers are Waste management, Environmental pollution, Labour exploitation and animal welfare. Only 44.7% of the consumers are aware of the sustainable or eco-friendly brands available in the industry. The main reasons for consumers for not adopting sustainable fashion practices are mainly due to Lack of awareness, Higher costs, Limited liability, and Lack of stylish options.

Inorder to create more awareness among the consumers regarding sustainability is by Educating consumers about sustainable materials, transparency about sustainability efforts, Incentives for sustainable purchases and collaborating with fashion influencers which is the most prominent form of promotion these days , more than 54 % of the surveyed consumers prefer buying from a sustainable brand.

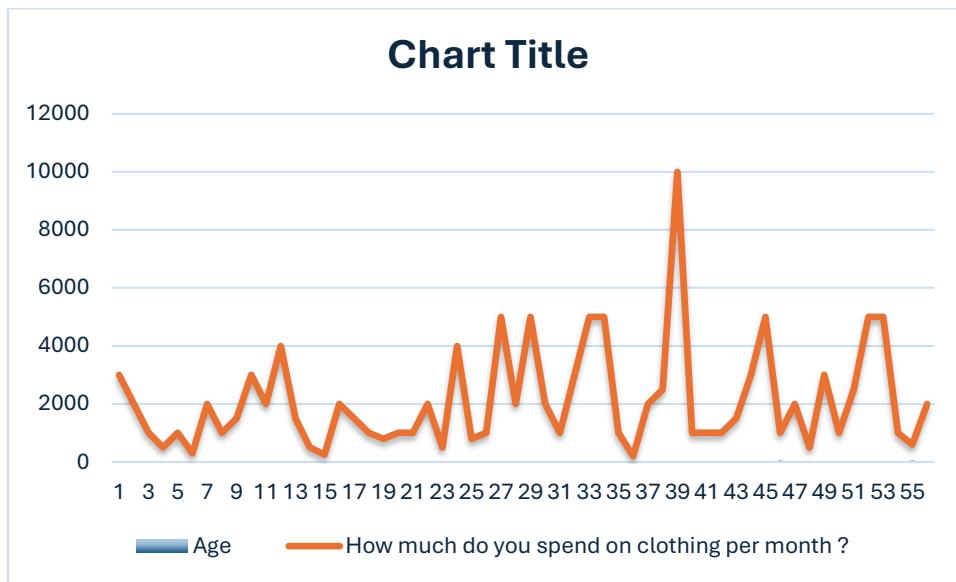
	Model 1	Null Hypothesis tested	R-Square	At Alpha = 0.1	Accept/Reject
				P-value	

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	Spending vs Age	No significant relationship between spending power with age	0.0124	0.2844	Accept
URBAN	Spending vs Gender	No significant relationship between spending power with gender	0.00394	0.547626	Accept
	Spending Age+Gender vs	No significant relationship between spending power with age and gender	0.0166038	0.4668169	Accept
	Spending vs Age	No significant relationship between spending power with gender	0.041084	0.134077	Accept
RURAL	Spending vs Gender	No significant relationship between spending power with age	0.0337926	0.1750343	Accept
	Spending Age+Gender vs	No significant relationship between spending power with age and gender	0.0960172	0.0689038	Reject

As seen in the results of the Regression analytics , it explains that Age and gender seperately or used for analytics using SLR and MLR together doesnot have any impact on the spending pattern of regardless of their demographics.

As shown in the above table , there is no significant relationship between the independent and dependent variable as the p-values are higher than 0.05 also the r-square value is very less



Implications for the fashion industry

As consumers become more quality-conscious in their textile purchases, the lack of awareness regarding sustainable fashion brands hampers their adoption of sustainable textiles. Brands need to invest in marketing and promotional strategies to cultivate a strong brand presence. Additionally, introducing incentives or benefits can encourage customers to opt for sustainable products, similar to approaches taken by other brands. The industry should also align its offerings with customer preferences, producing styles that reflect current trends. Implementing after-sale services, such as a take-back policy, can improve customer satisfaction while making it easier for companies to gather used clothing for recycling purposes.

Conclusion

The fashion industry is contributing to environmental degradation, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable practices. This study examines the sustainable initiatives implemented by fashion companies and investigates consumer perceptions of sustainable fashion, including the factors that influence the adoption of eco-friendly choices. Additionally, it analyses the connection between sustainability and consumer behaviour. The research involves a systematic review of existing literature to gather insights on the practices of fashion companies, as well as data collection from consumers to understand their views on the factors that drive the adoption of sustainable fashion. Data will be gathered through consumer surveys and literature reviews. The results will enhance our understanding of the sustainable practices embraced by fashion companies and consumer behaviour, as well as identify strategies to improve sustainability within the industry. To start, it is important to define sustainable fashion and its implications within the fashion sector. Sustainable fashion refers to the methods of producing, distributing, designing, and consuming clothing in ways that minimize environmental damage, conserve resources, and promote fair trade. This approach emphasizes waste reduction, the use of eco-friendly materials, fair labour practices, and a decreased

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ecological footprint. Sustainable fashion practices include recycling, upcycling, utilizing organic or renewable materials, and supporting ethical production methods. The overarching goal is to cultivate a fashion industry that is both ethical and environmentally responsible, prioritizing long-term sustainability over transient trends. The urgent need for change in the fashion industry stems from its considerable environmental footprint. Fashion waste contributes to nearly 10% of global carbon emissions, along with significant water usage and pollution. To understand the concept of Circular Economy in relation to fashion, it is crucial to recognize that Circular Fashion embodies a transformative approach.

Future outlook

The future of sustainability in the fashion sector is becoming increasingly promising, characterized by a heightened emphasis on environmentally responsible practices. From 2025 to 2030, one can anticipate a more profound integration of sustainable materials, the development of circular business models, advancements in digital printing technology, and enhanced transparency in sourcing processes. In the following decade, from 2030 to 2040, the principles of a circular economy are expected to gain traction, with the introduction of innovative sustainable materials and the utilization of AI-driven design to streamline production methods. Looking further ahead, from 2040 to 2050, the industry is projected to evolve into a fully circular economy, achieving net-zero carbon emissions and widespread implementation of sustainable practices. Key factors driving this transformation include changing consumer preferences, regulatory frameworks, technological advancements, and collaborative efforts within the industry. Despite challenges such as reconciling sustainability with cost-effectiveness and addressing systemic issues, there are significant opportunities for new business models, job creation, innovation, and improved brand reputation. Brands are adopting circular economy principles that focus on recycling and upcycling to minimize waste and encourage responsible consumption. There is a marked transition towards sustainable materials, including organic cotton and innovative alternatives like mushroom leather, coupled with a heightened focus on supply chain transparency to guarantee ethical practices. Technological innovations, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, are improving supply chain efficiency and recycling methods. As consumer awareness regarding the environmental effects of fashion grows, brands are increasingly motivated to prioritize sustainability. Furthermore, regulatory pressures are prompting the industry to implement more eco-friendly practices, while partnerships among brands, non-governmental organizations, and startups are driving innovation. In summary, despite ongoing challenges, the shift towards sustainability in fashion is gaining traction and transforming the industry's future.