

Initiatives Toward Sustainability Among Leading Fast Fashion Industries

Iniciativas hacia la sostenibilidad de las principales industrias de moda rápida

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Abstract

The fast fashion industry is the leading clothing business globally. Regarding environmental and social concerns, the fast fashion industry needs to stand up and make a difference to minimize and provide a positive impact worldwide. This study explores the growing awareness and promotion of sustainable procedures in the fast fashion industry. This study focuses on the four primary fast fashion industries, including H&M, Uniqlo, Shein, and Zara. Collective research data has been applied and evaluated to explain how the fast fashion industry incorporates different sustainable actions in their company and describes the impact of society and other related interests on the fast fashion industry incorporating sustainable actions. The research shows that the fast fashion industry can garner consumer support and increase income through sustainable supply chains, social support, circular economy, and other corporate social responsibilities.

Keywords: Fast-Fashion Industry; Sustainability; Circular Economy; Social Responsibility

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Resumen

La industria de la moda rápida es el principal negocio de la confección a nivel mundial. En lo que respecta a las preocupaciones medioambientales y sociales, la industria de la moda rápida debe dar la cara y marcar la diferencia para minimizar y proporcionar un impacto positivo en todo el mundo. Este estudio explora la creciente concienciación y promoción de procedimientos sostenibles en la industria de la moda rápida. El estudio se centra en las cuatro principales industrias de la moda rápida: H&M, Uniqlo, Shein y Zara. Los datos de la investigación colectiva se han aplicado y evaluado para explicar cómo la industria de la moda rápida incorpora diferentes acciones sostenibles en su empresa y describe el impacto de la sociedad y otros intereses relacionados en la industria de la moda rápida que incorpora acciones sostenibles. La investigación muestra que la industria de la moda rápida puede conseguir el apoyo de los consumidores y aumentar los ingresos mediante cadenas de suministro sostenibles, apoyo social, economía circular y otras responsabilidades sociales de las empresas.

Palabras clave: Industria de la moda rápida; Sostenibilidad; Economía circular; Responsabilidad social.

Background of the Study

The fast fashion industry is the most famous and current leader in the fashion industry. They slowly became popular in the early twenty-first century. Uniqlo, H&M, Shein, and Zara are global fast fashion brands as they have the largest shares in the fashion industry (Clark, 2008). With the adoption of the changing seasons as well the demand of the current generation, this industry entered into an intense price and design competition that led to a huge amount of discarded cloth and overproduced garments production (Yu et al., 2023). In the worldwide fast-fashion industry, China is the leading manufacturer and exporter of clothing and textiles, catering to Western countries in the apparel market (Nayak et al., 2015). The labor intensity in the fast fashion industry garners around 20 million manpower, creating many job opportunities and approximately 10% of global manufacturing employers (Castaneda-Navarrete et al., 2021; Uniqlo, 2020). As the ever-growing and increasing demand for fast-fashion apparel impacts the problems of environmental concerns and climate change.

Environmental concerns such as pollution and climate change are some of the biggest problems that the world is facing right now. When it comes to the fashion industry, there is an excessive amount of carbon footprint and greenhouse effect that these manufacturers produce, as well as those clothes that were not sold due to excess production. According to a study by Hurley & Yue (2022), the amount of carbon dioxide the fashion industry releases covers 10% of global emissions. Apart from that, garment material is another reason for climate change. Specifically, polyester textile production produced approximately 1.5 trillion pounds of greenhouse gas in 2015 (Drew and Yehounme, 2017). On top of these concerns, the heavy use of water and color dye is part of the environmental pollution in the fashion industry. This will result in water or river pollution or other causes of water chemical reactions. The World Resources Institute (Drew and Yehounme, 2017) study shows that garment manufacturing causes around 20% of industrial water pollution.

Sustainable development is the current important action that must be implemented so that the current generation can see the importance of the environmental, social, and economic aspects for maintaining the sustainability of human society (Riemens et al., 2023). Legislators in the New York State Senate and House of Representatives introduced the Fashion Act so that fast fashion companies could disclose their production process to follow the social and environmental impacts and other environmental requirements (Smarch, 2022). Applying possible solutions and other alternative requirements that help to the sustainable outcomes can viewed as maintaining, renewing, or restoring activity to be part of the fast fashion industry, including trade ethics and equality treatment of labor management (Sarasi et al., 2023), should be the primary goal of the fast fashion industry. A study by Adam (2018), that could help the fashion industry improve its business model includes the previous products produced, redistribution, support for second-hand retailers, and other repair services in the fashion industry. This might help slow down the fast-phased industry's manufacturing and distribution. For example, Adidas, Uniqlo, and North Face produced recycled plastic products as part of the material in making their products (Ikram, 2022).

The fast fashion industry may find ways and alternatives to using basic fabric and cotton materials or combining other resources to minimize waste and maximize usage. Similarly, the Fast fashion industry can work on the circular water supply treatment and facilities to maintain the quantity of water used in manufacturing. On the other hand, another social impact, like manufacturing sweatshops or other terms of hard condition labor, is part of this industry's traditional and current practices. This includes a lot of no overtime pay, poor treatment, poor facilities, delays or extremely low salaries, unhealthy conditions, and child labor.

This study explores the growing awareness and promotion of sustainable procedures in the fast fashion industry. The behavior of the fast fashion industry in international trade and whether the industry is proactive or passive in applying the sustainability requirements. It investigates how the fast fashion industry responds and gains from sustainable measures for everybody's future. Are these companies willing to sacrifice for the good of the environment or continuously capitalize on everything? The study further aims to find out the effect of the fast fashion industry from the consumers' perspective. It explains how the fast fashion industry incorporates different sustainable actions in their company and describes the impact of society and other related interests on the fast fashion industry incorporating sustainable actions.

Climate change, pollution, and sustainability theory are issues that the fast fashion industry needs to focus on, innovate, and improve its operations, as they are part of the contributors to these problems (Sarasi et al., 2023). As per the study of Riemens et al. (2023), Sustainable development theory discusses the possible ways for social, environmental, and business improvement from the traditional actions of the fashion industry. This study examines whether the fast fashion industry is conducting sustainable actions or just doing a marketing agenda to manipulate its consumers. These companies have responsibilities for the world environment and how they influence their consumers as a leading companies striving to improve the environment.

Economic Impact of the Fast Fashion Industry

Overproduction of the Fast Fashion Industry

As we can see, the fast fashion industry is part of the problem when it comes to environmental concerns. Mainly, the seasonal fashion with overproduction of supplies leads to waste of resources and environmental pollution due to products that are not sold or consumers who buy products and are unable to dispose of the product properly upon end usage. On top of that, there are chemicals in the raw materials these companies use that can harm the environment. This negative impact can hurt the industry and the customer's perspective on buying those fast fashion clothes.

The fast fashion industry is part of 17-20% of international water pollution (Boström and Micheletti, 2016; Vicente, 2023). Cotton or polyester are the main components for producing clothes, and each year, around 20,000 gallons of water are used for cotton farms, and a huge amount of pesticides are maintained on the farm (Brick et al., 2018). Polyester is an artificial substance derived from petroleum, additionally, pesticides used in cotton cultivation can enter the soil and groundwater, causing cancer, various immune and nervous system disorders, birth defects, and killing wildlife (Woodside and Fine, 2019).

Approximately 70% of fabrics are dyed under bleach and other chemicals. Washing and bleaching of clothes consume large amounts of water combined with different harsh chemicals (Ting and Stagner, 2023). Then, some factories just release in some nearby rivers or directly into the public water system, which contaminates the water and impacts the health of the animals and residents in that area (Bick et al., 2018). Additionally, wool displacement and synthetic fibers may contribute to greenhouse gas emissions because of their material and are difficult to decompose (Daukantienė, 2015; Dhir, 2021).

Overproduction is a problem for the fast fashion industry as it generates a huge amount of waste on the environment (Boström and Micheletti, 2016; Zhang et al., 2021). Due to the seasonal fashion design, this waste often ends up in landfills rather than reusing and recycling (Mason et al., 2022). Yearly over \$500 billion worth of cloth is wasted globally (Zhang et al., 2021) and as per the forecasted study of Papamichael et al. (2022) more than 22 million tons of clothing are dumped in the ocean from 2015 to 2050. Fast fashion industries increase the manufacturing cycle to provide consumers with affordable clothing, which enables consumers to purchase more garments and throw them more often as the new collection of clothes is introduced in a very short period (Nguyen et al., 2021) or due to the end of the season.

The business model of fast fashion is to make and dispose of, which contributes to the continuous overproduction and overconsumption of cheap garments (Jimenez, 2023). Currently, the average person uses clothes seven times more and buys five times as many clothes as they did in

1980, and 20% of the 100 trillion pieces of clothing produced yearly are discarded (Ahumada, 2023; Thomas, 2019). 92 million tons of cloth are estimated to be in landfills each year, and by 2023, that amount is expected to rise to 134 million tons. Overproduction of fast fashion products leads to overconsumption problems as consumers take things for granted and pursue the current fashion trends under the influence of fast fashion using social media. Overproduction leads to surplus, which is part of the fashion strategy for producing more and less cost or from the over stock (Luca, 2022). As a result, fast fashion makes more and more garments that end up in landfills.

Sustainability Inclusion in the Fast Fashion Industry

Due to the ever-growing demand to improve the environment, fast fashion industries are moving towards sustainability in their supply chain process (Turker and Altuntas, 2014). Some fast fashion industries ethically follow all the necessary rules and regulations regarding business processes together with their business partners to benefit everyone (Li et al., 2014). Applying organic and biodegradable fabrics leads to plastic-free materials to produce clothes (Papamichael et al., 2023). Some fast fashion industries have replaced cotton with polyester as it is easier to recycle and reuse than traditional materials (Todeschini et al., 2020). Packaging and labeling are essential parts of the fast fashion industry for consumers to know what raw materials have been used and whether these products are created from sustainable materials (Fung et al., 2021). Proper packaging, like reusable and easy-to-recycle plastic or paper bags, helps to lessen waste, and carbon footprint can contribute to the environmental impact (Zailani et al., 2012). Some companies apply transparency for getting the consumer trust and show their corporate values to everyone. Some industries are committed to sustainable products and are creating new unique fiber fabrics that are good for the environment and recyclable (Claxton and Kent, 2020). On the other hand, other companies focus on durability by extending the lifespan of the materials used for making clothes (Moorhouse, 2020; Ojogbo and Stephen, 2023). Creating quality, sustainable products for the garment's best life cycle.

Advanced supply chain systems like the tracer platform or blockchain help consumers to track the product from how it was created until it was delivered to the store just by scanning the QR code (Moorhouse, 2017; Ojogbo and Stephen, 2023). Data sharing, transparency, or the use of blockchain can help the brand recognition of the fashion industry (López et al., 2022). It also helps to lessen overproduction because proper planning and production of enough orders leads to fewer storage problems because they will cater only to consumers' demands and will not lead to surplus or overproduction (Hill and Lee, 2015). Inditex created and partnered with some fast fashion industry to calculate effective and efficient transport software for transporting and replenishing items and request orders (Inditex, 2020; López et al., 2022). Furthermore, because the core of fast fashion has a short life cycle, sustainable logistics and distribution systems are applied to accommodate short lead times and lessen carbon emissions, for example, through local sourcing or creating branch satellites (Shen, 2014).

Social Responsibility of the Fast Fashion Industry

Social responsibility is the current trend in every business. It teaches the company to be responsible and accountable for its actions towards the good of the economy and the environment. Corporate social responsibility (hereafter, CSR) states the action that companies are willing to give back and committed to becoming a role model based on ethical operations and fair labor rights (Brydges et al., 2022; Wei and Jung, 2022). Labor rights include diversity, work fairness, and proper salary (Inditex, 2020; Jiang, 2022). For example, Zara collaborated with Water.org to promote clean and safe water use in their company and clean and sanitize water distribution in manufacturing countries like Cambodia and Bangladesh (Liu et al., 2020). Other companies like Uniqlo promote social responsibility by creating recycled clothing, donating \$257,000 and 10 million masks during the COVID pandemic time, as well as remote work for the safety of their employee (Dissanayake and Pal, 2023; Kim and Oh, 2020; Kim and Woo, 2021; Uniqlo, 2022). Social media and traditional media promote the CSR activities of the fast fashion industry to build a positive image for their consumers and give confidence to their stakeholders that the company can hold its brand image and have a positive corporate reputation (Chan et al., 2020; Kwon and Lee, 2021; Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2020).

Energy Recovery of the Fast Fashion Industry

Nowadays, the fast fashion industry is applying the textile recycling process: upcycling, downcycling, closed recycling, and open recycling. Upcycling is reusing old or unwanted material for a different take or perspective in creating new material. In comparison, down-cycling obtains a lower quality of materials than the ones that were initially used. Open recycling of used fabrics and garments refers to a mechanical or chemical process of opening and tearing the fabrics and turning them back into a fibrous form so that a discarded cloth converts to a new product later (Marques et al., 2020). Close recycling is recycling the material, mainly in an identical product, and turning it into a new product without losing its properties during recycling (Ribul et al., 2021). Reusing and recycling helps to collect valuable waste to reuse, which saves raw material, water, and energy, and decreases solid waste in landfills, minimizes carbon footprint and greenhouse gases related to cloth manufacturing (Shirvanimoghaddam et al., 2020).

Labor and Product Cycle on Sustainable Fast Fashion Industry

The fast fashion industry is a multinational corporation that operates several facilities worldwide and employs many workers in developing nations. Terrible working conditions and low salaries for developing-country workers have long plagued the fast fashion business. Multinational corporations frequently outsource production to nations with cheap labor costs, encouraging unsustainable fast fashion practices (Peters et al., 2021; Van Ree, 2016). However, there is potential

for a more ethical and sustainable fashion sector; by implementing fair trade policies, companies can ensure that workers receive fair earnings and conditions in the supply chain. Fairtrade seeks to provide fair salaries, good working conditions, and commercial agreements for producers, workers, and suppliers (Todeschini et al., 2017; Shaw et al., 2006). H&M is one of the companies working to make the fashion business more ethical. They have worked with ethical suppliers by verifying their factories 2,571 times and ensuring all business partners have received Code of Ethics training. H&M is helping to make the apparel industry more sustainable and ethical by avoiding sweatshop labor and encouraging fair trade standards (Li et al., 2014).

Labor concerns posed a significant problem to the fast fashion industry, including low and delayed salary payments and unfavorable working conditions. Some business partners in the fast fashion industry give their employees extensive overtime work with low salaries and harsh environments (Yoon et al., 2020). Another issue is the treatment of female employees, as 80% of the employees in the fast fashion industry are primarily from 18 to 24 years old (Reichart and Drew, 2019). Sexual harassment is the highest concern while working in the manufacturing area (Wang et al., 2020). On top of that, many health problems are caused by the toxic chemicals that the garment industry produces that damage the health of their employees and people living near the surrounding areas (Furlano, 2021).

Circular Economy in the Fast Fashion Industry

The circular business model involves creating, delivering, and capturing value through the use, reuse, and transformation of original products into other forms of resources to extend the lifespan of products (Dragomir and Dumitru, 2022; Huynh, 2021). The circular economy is especially advantageous in the fast fashion and apparel sectors as it helps to reduce carbon emissions (Shirvanimoghaddam et al., 2020). The circular business model prolongs the product cycle of garments, maintaining their highest remaining value to achieve sustainable outcomes.

The fast fashion industry is gradually transitioning to a slow fashion business model that prioritizes a circular economy, fair trade, reduced consumerism, and a sharing economy (Todeschini et al., 2020; Abbate et al., 2023). The circular business model achieves this by maximizing a product's value through its residual worth. For example, H&M accepts garment returns to minimize waste, while Uniqlo accepts old clothes for recycling (Mostaghel et al., 2021). Slow fashion is an emerging movement that emphasizes the value of local resources, transparent production systems between producers and consumers, and has a long-lasting product (Lee and Weder, 2021).

There are several challenges associated with establishing a sustainable fast-fashion system. One of the biggest challenges is convincing consumers that fast fashion can be sustainable. Fast fashion has lost its credibility compared to its previous leadership position, making creating a new sustainable system more challenging. However, it has been proven that sustainable fast fashion is economically beneficial (Diak, 2018). Managerial commitment and support are very important

to create a new sustainable system. Additionally, there may be financial and competency barriers within the organization, and cultural differences from external suppliers must be addressed (Oelze, 2017). Another challenge faced by the fast fashion supply chain is the difficulty of textile recycling. Each year, the textile recycling industry recycles only 1.9 billion tons of discarded textiles, approximately 15% of all textile waste, leaving the remaining 85% in landfills (Cuc and Tripa, 2014). Fast fashion brands must address sustainability and other ethical issues while consistently being economically and socially sustainable. This requires providing competitive wages, decent working conditions, and extending the product life cycles, which ultimately will increase the cost of the manufactured product (Moorhouse, 2020).

Methodology

Qualitative Approach

A qualitative analysis has been used to acquire the data to support the study on how the fast fashion industry's sustainability affects its global performance. This study analyzes the four major players in the fast fashion industry: Uniqlo, H&M, Shein, and Zara. Collective research data has been applied and evaluated to connect the different results based on the target groups' perspectives (Cooke et al., 2023; Hodge and Sharp, 2017). By comparing the similarities and differences of the four major players, this study was able to find out how the fast fashion industry responds to a sustainable approach in international trade. Even though there are some differences based on the operation strategies of these companies, the collection of different and detailed studies helps to provide a connection between Uniqlo, H&M, Shein, and Zara in terms of how they react to global issues in the fast fashion industry.

The fast fashion industry is the most well-known business in terms of the clothing industry worldwide. While the fast fashion industry supports the country's economy, the negative impact on the environment and social problems continues. On the other hand, consumers of the fast fashion industry are willing to spend a lot of items and then dispose of them immediately as seasons change or worn multiple times and then repurchase them (Bartkutė et al., 2023). With the introduction of sustainability as the current important issue that can give positive long-term solutions, consumers are now slowly adapting to this strategy; consumers are slowly becoming sensitive and concerned and are willing to move to sustainable products towards a green economy. The fast fashion industry is now moving to this process to benefit its brand performance (Lu et al., 2022). Sustainability and fast fashion are pretty challenging to achieve because of the different factors involved in producing clothes as well as the demand of the consumer; however, understanding, adjusting, and maximizing the relevant materials plus proper ethical labor policy to make the items will be beneficial for both consumers and the industry.

Main Players in the Fast Fashion Industry

This study focuses on the impact of sustainability on the fast fashion industry, covering the four major players in the fast fashion industry worldwide: H&M, Uniqlo, Shein, and Zara. Zara is the most well-known fast fashion industry, with over 4907 stores worldwide. It originated in Spain under the Inditex group in 1975 (Zhelyazkov, 2011). Zara has been known for rapidly responding to the latest fashion trends and fast delivery service (Camargo et al., 2020; Nogueira et al., 2023). H&M is the second largest in the fast fashion industry. That started in Sweden and now runs over 5,000 stores worldwide (Sandberg and Abrahamsson, 2022), which targets all classes in society as its main goal is to provide affordable fashion to everyone (Elg and Hånell, 2023). Shein is a Chinese clothing company currently the second world's most famous fast fashion industry due to their company focuses on online sales (Matsakis et al., 2021; Sandberg and Abrahamsson, 2022), Uniqlo has been one of the most famous Japanese clothing lines since 1984. It has over 2,222 stores globally. Uniqlo's primary strategy is to create basic clothing designs that are highly usable for daily wear and target mainly the middle classes (Wei and Zhou, 2011).

The fast-fashion industry is currently in the spotlight in the eye of every consumer due to their Environmental, Social, and Governance fast fashion industry operation (Li et al., 2014). They are trying to maintain a positive image and strong brand reputation to attract more consumers. This study covers H&M, Uniqlo, Shein, and Zara as representing the fast fashion industries that able to adopt sustainable procedures such as recycling their products and helping the environment to reduce waste (Rahman et al., 2023). However, based on some news and studies, these four big names are greenwashing their consumers due to still doing improper actions in other parts of their operations as consumers' demand transparency to prove their actions (Rahman and Nguyen-Viet, 2023).

Findings from the Four Fast Fashion Industries Sustainable Approach

Uniqlo's approach to Sustainability

Sustainable practice has been part of Uniqlo since 2014. In 2014, Uniqlo joined the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, an industry alliance focused on sustainable supply chains. Since then, Uniqlo has been producing environmentally friendly products and named Uniqlo's Lifewear, whose vision is to help the world by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Uniqlo, 2022). Uniqlo's Lifewear focuses on recycling and reusing its products and other old clothes donated or dropped in its recycling bin (Lascity and Cairns, 2020). These types of environmental marketing are able to motivate their customers to support their activity by donating their old clothes to Uniqlo (Namira and Indriani, 2023). Uniqlo also provides jobs and shelter for homeless people and refugees. Uniqlo provides other support by giving clothes and other essential supplies to Ukraine and other nations affected by the current war (Uniqlo, 2023). Uniqlo is focusing on its sustainable supply chain, environmental concerns, and humanitarian endeavors worldwide. Uniqlo also collabora-

ted with Grameen Bank in 2011 to start the Grameen Uniqlo project, which reinvested business, helped to uplift poverty, and improved the quality of the workforce in Bangladesh with proper education and a safe environment. As a result of Uniqlo's sustainable strategy, its profit increased by 12% in terms of global business performance (Teresa, 2014; Uniqlo, 2023).

H&M approach to Sustainability

H&M is one of the fast fashion businesses that follow a lot of sustainability practices. H&M is practicing the circularity process by reselling old and reused clothing on its official website in Germany and Sweden (H&M Group, 2022). This practice makes a lot of positive impact in lowering the carbon footprint. H&M uses 43% organic cotton for its production materials to provide better clothing materials that are durable, have less chemical reaction for the skin, and can be recycled easily (Cai and Choi, 2020). On their employment part, H&M supports their female workforce by providing career development programs to support their ambitions and improve the future of their female employees. Based on their company record, 75% of their employees are women (H&M Group, 2022). H&M is open to diversity and equal opportunity for anyone. With all these examples, H&M can show that they are applying a proper sustainable strategy and helping to solve the world's current economic, environmental, and social problems (San Miguel et al., 2021). As a result of its sustainability business process, the company has increased its net sales by 12%, as stated in its annual report by H&M Group (2023). H&M was also included in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index as a company that acknowledged sustainable performance for the benefit of everyone and the world. Overall, their effort pays well, and they are able to hold a strong and positive brand image in the fast fashion industry.

Shein approach to Sustainability

Shein is a Chinese clothing company currently one of the most famous fast fashion industries worldwide (Matsakis et al., 2021), as it caters to the current generation based on style and fashion. Shein currently ranks third in the fast fashion industry as their store focuses on online selling and can cater to every consumer worldwide. Shein's marketing style uses TikTok, collaborating with social media influencers or content creators, which targets the current generation's clothing behavior and consumption. A lot of news has hampered Shein as a violator of their company's sustainability production and labor concerns (Celestin, 2023). However, as per the findings of Topral & Anis (2018), that is just based on the perspective, which depends on the economic demands on sustainable operations and the viewpoint of the corporations. If it is still high in demand and fast fashion consumers are still willing to pay and buy this product, then production will continue with the possibility of catering to small portions of sustainability. Based on Shein's previous global community empowerment movement, they invested \$155 million US dollar in supporting the three main pillars of ESG for people, which are equitable empowerment of their stakeholders, Planet for waste-less practice, and Process for collaborating with different sour-

ces that provide sustainable products (ESG News, 2023). Shein initiatives, based on their global impact report, stated their following goals in promoting ESG like a sustainable partnership with textile companies and different associations to gather the appropriate actions for creating clothes, empowering people, including their customers, employees, and the communities, decarbonizing the supply chain by using paper-based packaging, using and reusing textile surplus, and reducing waste towards circularity by 2025 (Shein, 2024).

Zara approach to Sustainability

Zara's sustainable approach as a leading brand in the fast fashion industry is the "Joint Life" program, in which they are focused on reducing the carbon footprint by using second-hand materials, using less water for making clothes, supporting the pre-owned market, labor focus strategy and continuously will make their effort to reduce carbon emissions and lessen the environmental impact until 2030 (Cai et al., 2022; Zara, 2024). Zara is heavily involved in donations, repair services, and sales of resellers or second-hand stores. They try to provide their workers with proper and equal treatment globally by applying the appropriate business ethics (Bubicz et al., 2021). Zara also removed single-use plastic bags and redesigned their packages to benefit the environment. As a result, Zara gained a positive performance based on their annual revenue. They earn 18% higher than the previous performance (Inditex, 2022). Zara's commitment to sustainability will continue until 2040, focusing on its consumers, workers, and the environment.

Conclusion and Discussion

As per the result of this study, the fast fashion industry is slowly embracing the sustainable needs of the world. The research shows a positive impact from the fast fashion industries as they can garner consumer support and increase income performance based on their annual report by doing sustainable supply chain, social support, circular economy, and other corporate social responsibilities. They can contribute a positive and healthy outcome not just locally but globally due to their international contribution.

This study is based on collective data that comprehensively studies how the fast fashion industry applies sustainability to their business. This study helps to gain information on the impact of the fast fashion industry if they continuously do their old practice compared with the implication of sustainability. Furthermore, the limitation of this research is not knowing if the fast fashion industries are still faithfully embracing the changes and sustainable practices now and in the future. Based on what they have presented, there are doubts and questions about whether they will keep up with their promises to do good and be a better industry for the sake of the environment and humanity. Therefore, further studies are required to investigate this type of strategy.

The study of the fast fashion industry practice of sustainability has two sides. Firstly, gathering information based on the company's annual report and promotions of their campaigns of being committed to doing sustainable actions in their business. The other one is whether this industry is truly committed to what they are doing and will continuously apply the sustainable process even if people need to look. More research to support this study will help to discuss more how the fast fashion industries are actively taking responsibility for any social and climate issues we are encountering. The study shows awareness of new solutions and how the fast fashion industry will focus on and address different matters by contributing to pollution and poor management labor practices and moving forward to achieve sustainable industry growth.

Implications

The main idea of sustainability is keeping, renewing, and restoring materials for their specific use (Sarasi et al., 2023). Sustainability is not limited to preserving the environment but also tackles ethical practices and other economic equity. This study helps connect the importance of sustainability in the fast fashion industry as it changes the behavior of how the overall organization of the fast fashion industry leads toward a positive environmental, economic, and social outcome. This study helps raise awareness among everyone from consumer and business perspectives. On the consumer purchasing side, it is to help them acknowledge how the products or the clothes that the industry has produced go through a lot of processes and use up many materials gathered from different resources around the world that damage the environment similarly when the product reaches its end-of-life.

Additionally, all the sweatshop laborers sacrificed to produce all the clothes for everyone to use. Overall, stating gives more profound value to what consumers are buying. On the other hand, this study also calls the attention of the fast fashion industry to treat the environment better through proper usage and stop the abuse of our natural resources by maximizing the benefits of the old materials by generating new ideas or renewable output of products. Better and proper disposal of the products that reached their end-of-life, and minimizing or removing the chemical treatment that harms people and the environment. Lastly, adequate and ethical labor treatment by the corporation and its partner businesses, not just focusing on the cheapest bargain to seal the deal but also thinking about the welfare of all of their internal employee, external including outsourced and offshore employees.

This study helps draw a lesson to everyone to stop blaming both sides (consumer and the fast fashion industry) as both have the responsibility and accountability for what is happening on this planet. Both sides perform a reduce, reuse, and recycle attitude and give value to the people who contribute to generating the materials we buy. The environment is the source of all the materials. Sustainability should work in both ways. Product prices might increase due to the alternatives used for the raw materials, such as organic raw materials, safe and non-toxic chemicals for coloring or dyeing, biodegradable materials, better packaging, different cycling processes, and proper distribution of the products. Quality control is necessary for manufacturing and quality labor

treatment, including medical benefits, overtime pay, adequate salary, a safe working environment, housing benefits, protection, etc. Sustainability is not just defined for the environment but also for the community and social factors.

The fast fashion industry should start considering all the factors regarding sustainable development, as it will benefit both sides. By examining sustainable business strategies, the fast fashion industry may create positive, attractive programs to promote moral and ethical business. They can do research, surveys, and questionnaires to collect from their consumers and be transparent and truthful in their process to earn trust and confidence in the fast fashion industry.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study still needs to take a lot of information and data from different sources. This study only focuses on a qualitative approach by compiling some of the previous research, annual reports, and the official website of the selected fast fashion industry brand. Further studies, such as but not limited to interviews, surveys, and questionnaires, are to be gathered from the actual employees, either current or past employees. Gather information of comparison through different country experiences, etc.

Also, this study is limited to four renowned fast fashion industries. Expanding the comparison to more industries will make a big difference and better contribution to this research. If permitted to enhance the research, it is best to approach the fast fashion industry's partner suppliers for both raw materials and workforce to get further information on how the fast fashion industry works in 360 degrees and find out if they are really following a sustainable approach and not just well written in their annual sustainable result. A thorough investigation will provide the best result as this fast fashion industry may run in a similar function but still has a different system and process. Future studies can include consumer opinions on how willing they are to buy sustainable products or whether they are contented already on what they are buying, are eager to adapt to the change in the fast fashion industry, or are welcome to be part of a socially responsible citizen. Consumer opinions may be expanded by demographics primarily based on income, depending on their purchasing capacity and the value conception of buying new clothes or being a conscious, ethical consumer. Overall, further study can help fill the void by letting everyone know the value of sustainable practice and being a responsible, ethical consumer.

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