

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

***What are the conflicts between economics and the sustainable
environment within the fashion industry?***

(6,101 Words)

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BA (Hons) Illustration

Year 3

Independent Inquiry

ADAD6001

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Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of BA (Hons) Illustration,

University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Swansea

Submission:

Wednesday, December 11th 2019

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Summary of Topic

Within this independent inquiry, I will be discussing the issues and conflicts within the fashion industry, mainly on the topics of economics and maintaining a sustainable environment.

I will briefly look into a variety of sources, websites and books explaining the treatment of workers which also touch on their working conditions, how certain clothing creates an impact on the environment and other important topics with regards to them.

I insist on also discussing the financial implications of major clothing companies adopting a more sustainable approach to producing clothes by improving working conditions and using materials with the least environmental impact.

Introduction

I will be introducing and discussing multiple issues and topics within the field of fashion. I shall be focussing on how companies produce their clothing and the steps a few are doing to create change for the climate, further including information on the economic side of it all.

My interest for this dissertation question comes from my inner enthusiasm for the world of style and fashion throughout my everyday outfits inspired by magazines and social media posts.

I see myself genuinely eager to have more knowledge about the damages unsustainable clothing has caused towards the environment, including my experience within the industry as I currently work for a fast fashion clothing company named Primark also having background with retail giant ASDA, where I worked within the clothing and food departments.

In the future when I graduate from my BA Illustration course, I am aiming to work for the fashion illustration industry or furthering my education by taking a masters in Creative Arts.

This Inquiry will be separated into three chapters.

Chapter One: 'The Environment', **Chapter Two:** 'Treatment of Workers & The Economy' and the final chapter, **Chapter Three:** 'Fast Fashion'

The pages after my third chapter will include the overall conclusion of this dissertation.

The last section will involve the bibliography for each reference, relating to each paragraph within the text with superscripts. My sources will originate from books within the university library, the internet and course lecturers.

Chapter One

The Environment

The environment plays a major factor when discussing the importance of the production of clothing within brands. Every piece of clothing has an impacted fixed cost towards the environment in terms of the energy, land, chemicals and water used to create them.¹

Sustainable fashion in definition is producing clothes, shoes and accessories in an environmental and sociology-economical way. Which is taking the environment and cost of production into consideration from the patterns of consumption. The responsibility comes to the field when companies change on how their clothing is produced from the environmental standpoint, in process on the strategies and practices taken to create change.²

In regard to the patterns of consumption, they are expected to change over time which will potentially change a company's response to sustainability and subsequent consumerism as it is an evolving process.

The negative aspect which makes some clothing within the fashion industry rather harmful to the environment is the growth of multiple fast fashion company's in recent decades, among the first were said to be brands such as H&M and Zara.³

The effects of having a large quantity of fast retail stores has created a big negative footprint towards the environment. As more companies lead to more

factories, More and more workers are needed to produce these clothes in bulk to meet consumer demands.

“Not as it’s currently constructed, as something that’s disposable, So fashion has to change itself in order to become sustainable” - *Tony Ryan, Faculty of Science at Sheffield University*

As this quote explains, fast fashion clothing is commonly known as ‘disposable clothing’ due to its use of poor quality materials and cheap price tag within shops. Fashion needs to change the way clothing is produced and advertised through campaigns to make improved changes to the environment.

Consumer waste is shown that the typical customer throws away the majority of their clothing due to trends and having the need to consume far more clothing due to the desire in making themselves feel happier because of clothing sales during holiday seasons. Consumer’s should be able to allow items to get old and unfashionable without attracting prejudice. It is shown that retail seasons become shorter with time and styles are forever changing every three months.⁴



Fig 1: Image of a pile of clothing, showing consumer waste.

Studies on consumer waste show that the global apparel market is valued at three trillion dollars, this marks the fashion industry to be two percent of the world’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). 75% of the market of clothing are bought and based around Europe, the United States, China and Japan.

With relation to waste, the production of materials alone count to be one of the main issues of water consumption. 20,000 litres of water is needed to produce one kilogram of cotton for clothing, this creates a single t-shirt.

20 percent of global waste water is said to be produced by the fashion industry alone. With the textile industry, China is one of the biggest water wasting country in the world where they dispose around 2.5 billion tons of used water every year.⁵

Looking at the psychological factor with people, Fashion gives the consumer's the confidence by expressing themselves through clothing within society, giving excitement, fun and pleasure.

"Importantly, fashion satisfies consumer's' psychogenic needs; what we wear communicates who we are and our status. The non-verbal communication about ourselves through the clothes we wear is a vital part of society. This has been the basis for fashion for thousands of years, and our modern culture is no different." ¹

I acknowledge this as a current light consumer of fast fashion shopping. In this 'millennial' era, I admit in enjoying the access to affordable clothing due to me being in full time education at university and also being part time employed.

I believe many clothing brands target students with exclusive offers and deals, drawing students in because of their access with student loans from the government, putting people like me for example, to be in even more debt.

Reflecting on my personal experience with shopping for clothing, I do not get the complete luxury of buying many expensive items which tend to last longer than cheaper items bought from fast fashion brands.

Saying that, I have recently taken different routes these past two years by going 'thrift store' shopping. It is where I pick out used vintage labelled clothing that have been looked after by the previous owner. I do this to try to lessen my personal waste of pollution on this planet.

I feel as following trends tends to lead to happiness as being seen as 'one of the crowd' makes one feel accepted. It helps the consumer give the sense of individuality when finding their style.

Ways in which will help create change for the environment will be going back to how the pieces of clothing were designed by influencing young/experienced designers to construct pleasing designs that will last multiple years in a consumer's wardrobe due to its broad usability and well made materials.⁴

In evidence from Peter Waeber, CEO of Bluesign Technologies, Switzerland who explains; "From a sustainability point of view, fast fashion is not such a good thing, and slow fashion is discussed as a solution for the future; for instance, we create a particular style that is so good, that we like it for one or two years.

An example of this sort of enduring design is the work of Le Corbusier: he created chairs in 1928 that are still fashionable. We should motivate young designers to create good design." ⁴

From my own standpoint, I agree with this as I believe starting from the very beginning from the designs itself will help with the sustainable efforts in attempting to reduce more waste, even though the current fashion industry is forever evolving.

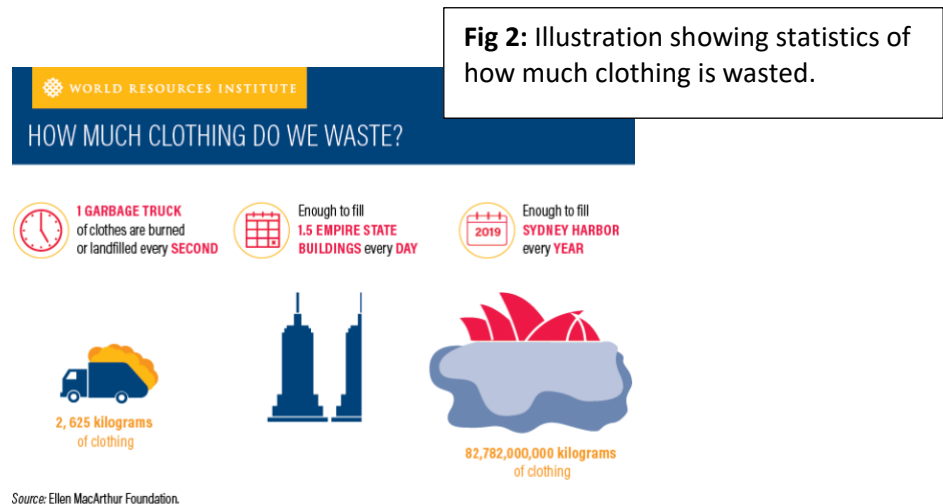
Many designs in this recent century within tops, jackets and jeans follow the 'temporary' trends within social media that people enjoy in the fashion world. Fast fashion brands tend to create cheap replicas of clothing which are considered luxury and runway material from labels such as Yves Saint Laurent, Versace and Gucci.

Social media plays a rather big role in the fashion industry as more people are drawn to the digital age, where everything is photographed from celebrities wearing a look to runway collections from more luxurious brands. People can get updates from rival companies, which can give them the inspiration and idea to create a similar look based on the reactions consumer's give on tweets and trending topics from Twitter, and likes from Instagram and Facebook.

An example where the digital age first arose with the opening of Google Images is Jennifer Lopez' infamous green Versace dress from the Grammy Awards at America in the year 2000. It sparked the biggest search query at the time thus the creation of Google Image Search was born which expanded from just text to images.⁶

Companies that create clothing that are heavily influenced by luxury lines are part of the majority that creates disposable clothing due to the poor quality and synthetic materials. Examples are Urban Outfitters, Forever 21, ASOS and many more.

Almost every piece of clothing is created and made of mixed fibres, which creates the issue of making clothes recyclable. It is shown that the cost of un-mixing these fibres would be far more expensive in comparison of the price of the material itself. The ones apparently who are to be at fault are the consumer's, the manufacturers and the retailers.⁷



There are many dangers with regards to synthetic fibres and fabrics on the environment where there is unwanted harm and unhealthy carbon emissions going towards the shift in climate change when producing such man-made materials. The textile industry is seen as one of the biggest reasons for environmental degradation than any other industry, being responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions.⁷

Although its said the textile industry is one of the biggest reasons for environmental degradation, many years ago during the 1950s and 60s; workers primarily used natural fibres over the use of synthetic fibres. In recent decades, with the growing demand for clothing from production for consumer's and the shift towards low-priced fast fashion clothing, there has been an increase with non eco-friendly materials due to its cheaper price to produce.

The main materials that are present and used the most recently within factories and the textile industry are Polyester, Nylon, Rayon and Acrylic.⁸

“This may be good for profit and the economy in general, but it is confirmed that it is also damaging the environment on a massive scale. The dangers of these synthetic fibres and fabrics are dire to the environment.”⁸

From research I have gathered, this is the sad truth of the effects of synthetic fibres have towards the earth. The misuse of these materials can result in wasting usable textiles by slowly leaking harmful toxins into the earth and also putting microfibres into the global waterways, this can contribute to awful methane emissions which can be harmful to the environment.

Forthcoming results show that by 2050, 30 years in time – the fashion industry will accumulate up to 25 percent of the worlds carbon budget. Being one of the most polluted industries, it is said to be second to the oil industry in the future.⁹

Ideas that have been thought of to improve the environment with the consumption of clothing is the idea of renting clothes. Active businesses which are currently out and running in public are, Rent the Runway and Gwynnie Bee. They support the new industry that reuses clothing instead of the irresponsible consumption of clothing in the fast fashion world.¹⁰

Chapter Two

Treatment of Workers & The Economy

Regarding at how clothing is made, the garment industry is what allows the clothing to be produced through workers. The industry is based around garment manufacturing and textile work. It exemplifies the objections associated with global manufacturing from low wages and sweatshop conditions. With affiliation to this, mistreatment of workers often experience isolation, feeling of invisibility and lack of power when speaking up.¹

In discussion with the garment industry, the industry makes a positive contribution to the economic development of many countries. Those being in Asia, Latin America, Africa, North America and Europe. The positive side that comes from this, is that jobs within factories give employment to millions of workers ranging from 25 to 60 million people globally. This is considerably one of the biggest sources of foreign exchange, where money and investments are turned into the local currency.

Economic development brings higher material welfare by increasing output of goods and services. Disadvantages can be pollution towards the environment by overuse and misuse of natural resources.²

Even though this helps many workers who are in need of employment to fend for themselves and family, poor pay and conditions are common in many global garment factories. Evidence shown from a trade union named 'IndustriALL' stating,

“Continual downward price pressure by companies keeps wages low while their real value declines against inflationary increases. The wages of most garment workers are no higher than the level of the minimum wage in their country, which in many cases is well below the level of subsistence. Excessive working hours are a continuing and entrenched problem.”³

This displays the issues with regards to garment workers being put in stressful and poor conditions, they tend to work excessive working hours during peak times to supply the bare minimum amount of pay to help support themselves and their families as stated above. Most of the times, the contracts are temporary with uncertain futures for many workers.³

(Figure 1) showing a factory worker in a Garment factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Fig 1: Factory worker producing clothing.



A huge portion of garments sold within the United Kingdom is said to be produced in Asian countries, In evidence from ‘Dr Mark Sumner’ saying that this way of how clothes are circulated within the country “...are getting pleasure and enjoyment from fashion, that is coming at a cost to workers and the environment in extraterritorial, overseas production routes as well as agriculture.”⁴

The mistreatment of workers has been occurring for many decades throughout history where appropriate wages are not paid to workers to live a comfortable and healthy life within their own originated countries, so they venture out

to work in factories, including the garment industry. They do this without taking other jobs into consideration as they are rather limited due to the lack of skills, including language barriers and limited experience within other fields of work.

Another topic which has historically been around for thousands of years is slavery amongst workers which still happens to this day with children and adults in poor countries.

“Slave labour sneaks into the fashion industry in myriad ways, from children who are lured into coerced factory labour via promises of free education to cotton pickers who are kept in debt bondage by their employers. In an increasingly globalised industry, where fabric may be woven, cut and sewn in different nations before being shipped to yet another to be sold, slavery in any country is a problem for every country.” – *Whitney Bauck (2018)*

One of the massive countries in trade for worker exploitation is Bangladesh, where they hold some of the smallest salaries in the world.

After the global Rana Plaza disaster in 2013, they have been told to work even harder in factories stated by a former child factory worker named Nazma Akter. She is the founder for the Awaj Foundation which fights for labour rights in Bangladesh for workers that have been exploited and mistreated.⁵

The Rana Plaza disaster was one of the biggest garment factory disasters in history taking around 90 seconds to collapse. In the most horrendous way, over two thousand workers were sent inside the building for the demolition thus killing more

than 1,100 people. This caused changes within company policies who had clothes produced within the factory, from fast fashion brands such as Primark and Matalan. Two initiatives were signed, from the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, and the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, Improving safety in over 2,300 factories in 2018.⁶

Over the years, reports on terrible working conditions within garment factories are not unfamiliar with people, poor effort and limited knowledge with consumer's are shown in giving low possibilities in presenting improvement for living standards and working conditions in the future of the fashion industry.⁷

Words that associate with the exclusive topic of this discussion, is the specific word 'Sweatshop.' This has been used to describe the conditions where a worker is put into doing deep lengthy hours in impoverished unhealthy conditions for low pay.

Originating within the early 1850s, it defines below;

"To describe an employer who exacted monotonous work for very low wages.

"Sweating" became widespread in the 1880s, when immigrants from eastern and southern Europe provided an influx of cheap labour in the United States and central Europe." - *Britannica (1998)* ⁸

In the present day within the 21st century, practices which include slavery and exploitation amongst people still exist to this day, examples of this include procedures such as the 'Sandblasting' technique with denim jeans where they replicate a distressed and worn look. The dangers of this procedure is that without

the proper equipment and health and safety rules, this leads to fatal health risks for workers which result to lung diseases.⁹

Slavery is an issue where people tend to think that is a practice which is no longer applicable in today's time but the reality is that slavery is increasing daily. In accordance to the U.S Federal Bureau of Investigation; "Human trafficking alone generates a staggering \$9.5 billion in yearly revenues worldwide." This translates that there are more slaves, including those that are illegally trafficked in history. It is estimated that 27 million men, women and children are in slavery/forced labour. This includes those who are severely exploited within factories.¹⁰

The problem is that forced labour, slavery and human trafficking are now globally recognised to be severe crimes, but the majority who are caught doing such practices are barely ever punished. The government of the United States provided data to help prosecute those that are doing such cruel methods amongst people, but the aftermath from the analytical figures are very little.¹⁰

The economic side of it all, the industry of exploitation accumulates around \$150 billion a year, according to the ILO (International Labour Organisation). Around half of that calculation is generated in the Asia-Pacific region where modern slavery is mostly present, which makes 56% of the \$150 billion total.

"Production chains are more complex than ever before, so it's difficult for businesses to have complete oversight. But unless companies can understand what is going on

at each step, they run the risk of damaging their reputation and losing customer trust and brand value.” – *Wolfgang Lechmacher, Head of Supply Chain and Transport Industries at the World Economic Forum*

Looking at this quote at what I can gather, companies who have their clothing produced through factories within different regions are unknown as to what is happening within the procedures with workers leading up to the final product. If addressed I believe the companies would face major backlash as to why such methods were happening within the production of their clothing, being oblivious to the matter for so long.¹¹

Research from business ‘Walk Free’ states that the superiority of people are willing to purchase clothes that are sustainably produced and would leave a fast fashion brand if they discovered that slavery was part of the supply chain.

An example of a company that received major criticism in the past was popular sportswear brand, Nike where in the 1990s were targeted by activists.

The global boycott campaign in the 90s was due to the fact Nike denied responsibility for any malpractice which was taking place within its factories, also not allowing workers have rights.



Fig 2: Nike Protest.

In today's time, reports in 2012 state that similar problems regarding malpractice still exist in the supply chains but the progress they have made during the 20 years has made a dramatic

effect on the policies Nike have put out for workers. Nike is not the only sportswear brand that has had issues with workers not receiving the right treatment, other popular companies such as Adidas, Puma and Reebok.¹²

By 2020, the brands that created issues amongst workers and the environment (Nike & Adidas) aims to produce a plan to go toxic free with their products. Those being not dumping the toxic chemical waste into water.¹²

The fashion industry in relation to the economy was worth around £32 billion in the United Kingdom in 2017. An increase from 2016 by over 5%.

In retail, the industry employs up to 800,000 people in the UK also including manufacturing, and fashion design businesses. Profits are higher every year between the years 2003-2013, gaining more money than the industries of technology and telecommunications.³

The concerns that have arose with relation to money is that \$500 billion of value is lost yearly as clothes are under-utilised and because of the lack of recycling by companies and consumer's.

It is estimated by 2030 global apparel consumption of clothing are set to rise by more than 60 percent, giving a total of around 102 million tons, equivalent to 500 billion t-shirts additional from the 62 millions tons from today.³

Professor Tim Cooper from the Clothing Sustainability Research Group at Nottingham Trent University stating, in need of culture change, consumers should be given knowledge and the encouragement to purchase fewer clothes for the future of consumer society for the economy.

“Sustainable consumption demands cultural change. The throwaway culture applies to the whole economy, not merely the clothing sector. If consumers are to be encouraged to buy fewer clothes there needs to be a wider public debate on [the] future of the ‘consumer society’, including an evaluation of its benefits and costs.”

Back to the treatment of workers, during the nineteenth century, multiple movements by people took place to stop workers being further mistreated within factories. A movement named the ‘Abolitionist Movement’ took place that had merged to go up against another issue in relation to chattel slavery, many which found relation to both slavery and work exploitation. An important law that addressed the practice of sweatshops then was named the Factory Act of 1833 which was passed in the United Kingdom. This caused the Abolitionist movement to dissolve and split into other groups to address and focus on other global issues.¹³

The factory act at the time was an act passed by the parliament of the United Kingdom to control the conditions of industrial employment, mainly looking on regulating working hours and moral welfare of young children who worked in cotton mills.

With association with acts within the United Kingdom today, an act which is active and effective is the 'Health and Safety at Work Act 1974'

This provides protection for workers against health risks and have the controlled use of dangerous flammables, also securing the welfare for workers.¹⁴

In recent times, charities such as Oxfam have worked effortlessly to help workers who are abused in factories within the fashion industry. Taking countless actions by requesting American and Australian brands to sign accords since the Rana Plaza disaster in 2013 that killed a thousand workers due to a collapsed building, but many brands refuse to sign an accord due to fearing the future liability.¹⁵

Chapter Three

Fast Fashion

The phrase 'Fast Fashion' has become a popular saying from companies to people being, for and against the term. It can be described as inexpensive designs that move quickly from the catwalk to stores, towards meeting new trends.

"An approach to the design, creation, and marketing of clothing fashions that emphasises making fashion trends quickly and cheaply available to consumer's." ¹

In the 1960's, the United States created 90% of the clothes worn by humans, in recent years, the US now creates around 3% of clothing, this immense decrease of production is directly because of the shifts within the fashion industry. The shift is known as 'Fast Fashion'.

Fast fashion companies such as H&M and Zara have multiplied within recent decades. Companies who include themselves into the world of fast fashion, many are seen to be very identical as they have their clothes produced in bulk. This includes brands such as New Look, River Island and Topshop.

Discussing the effects unsustainable clothing has had on the planet, Companies and factories are part of the reasons as to why such are disposable. An example of a company that uses strategies to boost its companies profit is Primark. Working for Primark myself, whilst studying my course in university; I have had the opportunity to learn and have knowledge on how the clothing I help put out onto the shop floor is produced.

Having information from my current colleagues and supervisors, Primark manages to sell their clothing with a cheap price tag as they do not create their own clothing but buy items in bulk from suppliers around the globe from countries that create rather low quality clothing, giving cheap labour from countries such as Bangladesh and Taiwan.

Although it has been researched that Primark has given workers cheap labour pay to be producing bulk items of clothing for consumer demands, they have stated in recent years they are providing better ethical measures for labour.

They do not spend money on commercials, advertisement billboards and magazines, they save money by doing this to ensure the best amount of profit.²

The strategies that they put to ensure sustainability in current times is recycling cardboard from boxes to create their well-known brown shopping bags and the use of sustainable cotton in a few of their clothing lines.²

A consumer's experience of what they bought for a good price tends to lead to a brilliant experience in which they recommend to other people as it follows, "The positive sensation helps the customer to keep coming back in the near future and also to recommend the retail clothing store to his/her friends to buy. As you can see, neuromarketing is quite powerful and it applies to this concrete situation."

Neuromarketing is a strategy that Primark includes in their marketing where in science terms includes the direct use of brain imaging, scanning, or the use of any other brain activity measurement technology to measure the subjects/consumer's

response to specific items. For example clothes and advertisements in the fast fashion industry. Relating to both psychology and sociology, it is giving curiosity to people by understanding the brain and using the knowledge in advertising and marketing.³

Another company which is aiming to spread awareness in helping the planet is company, H&M where they want to turn the brand around to be more climate positive with reduced waste, leading the way in reducing the carbon footprint in its company, using only recycled materials by the year 2030.⁴

Hennessey & Mauritz AB, most commonly known as H&M is also notorious in recreating luxury clothes. An example is a pair of trousers from streetwear brand 'Fear of God' where they retail a pair of trousers for a whopping £600. H&M creates quite similar designs as to the luxury brand and sells a pair for £20 to £30.⁵

A visual example of Fear of God's pair of trousers on the left (**Figure 1**) and H&M's pants on the right. (**Figure 2**)

Where they both show the white drawstring and elasticised waistband, with a slim silhouette fit.

Fig 1: Fear of God Pants.



Fig 2: H&M's take on Fig 1.



There has been growing concerns that the current fast fashion business model is encouraging the over consumption of clothing from people, which thus produces extreme waste in the future. Garments which are sold for relatively low prices are shown to be aimed at those who want to change their wardrobe items regularly due to trends seen from social media or those that are hugely popular from popular magazines/blog posts. Magazines such as Vogue, GQ, Cosmopolitan.⁶

A term which relates to fast fashion is 'Fast Luxury' where luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton produce short termed collections every few weeks from accessories to t-shirts. These items produced for such luxury retailers are often created in the same factories producing clothing for fast fashion companies.⁷

Fast fashion brands in the past exclusively only had two seasons in their collections, them being fall/winter and spring/summer. In which has been heavily influenced by luxury brands on the way they introduce their two season designs on the runway. In the recent decade fast fashion brands have adapted to over 50 seasons instead of two.

The purpose of this motif is that they aim to have consumer's buy as many products as they can, it being limited edition or sold in a specific time frame for that exact season.⁵

Growth in the retail market in the United Kingdom shows progression with fast fashion brands, it shows the popularity with the low value end of clothing.

In recent years online retailers such as ASOS, Missguided and Boohoo/Boohoo MAN which are based online without any shops where customers can physically go into, are vastly popular with consumer's due to the deals and sales being put onto the websites, attracting teenagers and young adults.

The products being sold from these retailers include marketing where they show prices being slashed by over 50 percent to give the person satisfaction and pleasure that they just purchased a fantastic deal, when in all sorts is the complete opposite as the 'deal' is often the actual or under the price it cost to produce. In reality, the clothes that the customers purchase from such websites are actually made with poor materials.⁶

The most successful companies continuously improve or update their product lines to remain competitive within the industry. Branding is an important factor with selling items as maintaining a loyal customer base in a cost-effective way achieves the best amount of income for a company, this strategy ensures customers come back for more in the future.

An example of this is clothing brand Zara, the way Zara positions itself within the industry is putting themselves across as a universal consumer market. With the inclusion of Zara's involvement with fast fashion they target the ages of 20-35 for young and mature adults, those who are most sensitive to fashion and pricing. Including their strategies of rapid imitation from luxury brands and quick production times on putting their clothes in store racks first before the luxury brands themselves include their own with new season clothing for consumer's to purchase.⁸

“Fast fashion has allowed all segments of society, irrespective of class, income or background to engage in the hedonistic and psychogenic pleasures of fashion.

At no other time in human history has fashion been so accessible to so many people across our society. This is the power of fast fashion.”⁶

This passage shows the psychological factor with consumer's in relation to the first chapter where I explain how people find pleasure buying items from fast fashion retailers. I thoroughly agree that buying such items are very accessible to everybody no matter the race, colour and sexuality. The advantages is that the cheap clothing will always give individuals a sense of identity in an affordable way in comparison to expensive luxury clothing.

Talking about the future of fast fashion, like I discussed previously - retailers such as H&M are focussing on the long term use of its products and are looking at solutions, Being as one of the biggest polluters of the fashion industry they are recycling the items in which they originated from, reprocessing fabrics into different goods such as blankets and pillow stuffing.

Fast fashion will always be seen as one of the biggest damages towards the environment due to its multiplying mass production.

“.. high consumer demand remains, fast fashion will continue to be a business model for the foreseeable future.”⁹

Conclusion

Concluding the end of this Independent Inquiry question as to find out the conflicts between economics and the sustainable environment within the fashion industry, I have found out a broad range of information that I had either some or no knowledge about. The information as to what I have learnt and enjoyed researching about was the environmental aspect of the fashion industry.

Learning about such a large issue, I had limited knowledge on the production of fast fashion clothing. It globally being a massive issue towards the environment being second in pollution to the oil industry was something I thought should be thoroughly addressed publicly with advertisements and talks to give insight to consumers.

The interest I have had towards this has further on increased as being employed for a company such as Primark, gave me more the reason to share the research I have gathered with colleagues as I believe there would not be any change if more and more people are continuously in the cycle of buying clothing daily not knowing of the effects it has with the economy and sustainable environment. Working there makes sense on as to why there is too many clothing for me to tidy and fold, put out and serving customers on a weekly basis in my shifts. It gives me the small experience as to how workers are feeling doing the same tasks every hour of every day.

A topic that I touched on was the exploitation of workers within factories, having previous knowledge on this, I found this to be an important topic close to me as being born of filipino and spanish decent, my ancestors and grandparents have

lived in poverty, those working as slaves and my grandmother in the Philippines being a seamstress in the past. It is an issue which is very present to this day with poor countries such as Bangladesh and India, evolving throughout the years.

As the issue is still present, improvement has been made with policies amongst popular fast fashion brands from Europe and the US which makes a start to change.

Reflecting on my question, I do believe there is a complicated relationship between economics and sustainability within the industry. I say this as the disadvantages towards them both are the unnecessary needs with consumer's buying clothes constantly, especially those that follow temporary trends by purchasing items from fast fashion brands.

The statistics from my references and information in chapter two prove that in the year 2050, we will have billions of wasted clothes weighing at around 102 million tons, \$400 billion worth of total clothes being discarded every year. Relating to the environment, the lack of recycling, demand of more cheap clothing from people and the production of clothes with the vast amount of water and resources wasted, this will be an ongoing issue for many years to come and will continue to harm the environment until information is spread to the consumer's.

Advantages with how the economy is with fast fashion and retail businesses, they are still one of the largest industries which provides jobs like mine to people who are in need of employment to fend for themselves and their families.

Ways in which I think should take place to improve the conflicts economics and the environment have with each other, is the usability with clothing in my discussion towards the end of chapter one.

Companies such as 'Rent the Runway' introduce a new type of industry where clothing is rented and reused, in similar comparison with Netflix and their streaming service – becoming a superior replacement to buying DVD's also Uber, who changed the way of transportation.

Leasing clothes could give ease to workers that are forced to work continuously within factories as to less clothes are needed to be made.

In relation, the more clothes that are made reusable with services such as the uses of rentals, the less waste it will be towards the environment.

Although there would be a guaranteed loss in the economic growth of fashion within companies, there would be less of a demand for fast fashion clothing. There would be drawbacks with this, from companies who decide to jump onto the concept there would be a massive shift from whether consumers would rather wear items that are used in comparison to unused brand new low priced clothing.

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