

What is the Economic Impact of Fast Fashion? - Economics

Research Question

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ABSTRACT

'Fast Fashion' is a term used to define the sub-section of the clothing industry that produces cheap, low-quality, and trendy clothing (often, they are replicas of high-fashion items) in a very short amount of time, catering to the wants of the customer at the point of highest demand at a very low price. To quantify the increase in clothing purchases, in 1980, an average American bought 12 items of clothing annually, but today, the number is up to 68. This relatively new concept is taking the industry by storm financially with extraordinary growth rates. It is also impacting the environment negatively with a high and irresponsible consumption of natural resources in the economy. The labor conditions in the fashion world are also worsening with the need for faster production cycles stressing underpaid labor in developing countries. This paper discusses fast fashion, its origins, and the serious economic effect it is having today.

Keywords : Fast Fashion, Trendy Clothing, Smart Forecasting, Ecommerce

I. INTRODUCTION

'Fast Fashion' is a term used to define the sub-section of the clothing industry that produces cheap, low-quality, and trendy clothing (often, they are replicas of high-fashion items) in a very short amount of time, catering to the wants of the customer at the point of highest demand at a very low price. Effectively, fast fashion has changed how consumers think about clothing, the way they dress, and what they do with their garments. Even though they are buying a lot more clothes and have many they have never worn, they still look forward to buying more (Knošková, L.,

& Garasová, P, 2019). To quantify the increase in clothing purchases, in 1980, an average American bought 12 items of clothing annually, but today, the number is up to 68 (Thomas, 2020, #).

Fast fashion brands also seem to enjoy popularity among the consumers. A study found out that 88% of all consumers in the US prefer fast fashion whereas the number in Italy is 49%, and in the rest of Europe, 46% show preference for fast fashion (Knošková, L., & Garasová, P, 2019). This is proof that this industry is not going anywhere anytime soon.

This relatively new concept is impacting the industry and the global economy financially, socially and environmentally. Often, fast fashion is considered today's fashion and is held responsible for the growth of the market. Moreover, there are increased amounts of concern over the sustainability and excess resource consumption by the companies operating in this sector and their inappropriate treatment and remuneration of labor.

While there may be some gaps in the information presented, the following research paper is based off of a review of the existing literature on the matter including studies, research papers, statistics published by governments and established international organizations, and articles and videos by experts and fellow researchers. It aims to provide a thorough understanding of fast fashion and how it started while evaluating the impact it is having in the context of economics in three main areas: finance, environment, and employment.

Fast Fashion and its origins

Prior to the 19th century, cloth making was a very slow process - sourcing materials, preparing them, weaving the fabric, and making the clothes. With the industrial revolution and the introduction of machines for processes like weaving and sewing, production became faster, simpler, and cheaper. Dressmaking shops were also introduced around this time in the 20th century (Rauturier, 2022). In the 1990s and 2000s, with rising e-commerce making clothes easier to sell and the 60s' and 70s' "youthquake" (Lambert, 2014, 15-17) creating new trends and developing clothes into a form of expression, everyone caught onto the phenomenon of being able to quickly buy trendy clothes whenever they liked.

In fact, the term 'fast fashion' was coined by New York times to describe Zara as it was taking them only

about 15 days to from making the design of an article to selling it in stores (Rauturier, 2022). While normal companies have about two to four cycles each year, fast fashion companies release new clothing every two to four weeks, which adds up to 13 to 26 cycles each year, significantly more than the legacy companies (Lambert, 2014, 15-17).

Fast fashion companies focus on manufacturing large amounts of products based on latest fads as fast and as cheaply as possible to sell at low prices for a quick inventory turnover. They also hope that as a result of trend anchoring, customers do not get bothered by the bad quality. Anchoring is a vital behavioral concept in understanding the success of fast fashion. It causes "induced obsolescence" of fashion items. Fast fashion brands are able to make profits by continuously changing, adapting, and eliminating trends using visible differences such as colors, patterns, fits etc. (Lambert, 2014, 15-17)

The target audience for fashion brands remain young people as they crave for a sense of acceptance yet uniqueness, which these companies are able to provide by creating a plethora of clothing with only very small variations between the clothes. This culture creation in society made it easier for these brands to cut their costs unethically without having any repercussions as the majority opinion and popularity was in their favor. In a sense, they are making profit off of people's willingness to wear stylish clothing at a cheap price. (Lambert, 2014, 15-17)

Fast fashion, by itself, has become a market with very unique players like H&M, Zara, UNIQLO, Bershka, and Fashion Nova among many others. Although these outlets may seem very different, they are playing the same game in the same segment of the fashion industry.

These brands focus on reducing their lead times. In essence, they want to minimize the amount of time it takes for them to make their clothes reach the market. For this, they use Quick Response Manufacturing (QRM). Coming up with original designs, sourcing the right raw materials, bulk manufacturing the products carefully, and then distributing the product takes an established brand about 21 months, which is about two years. On the other hand, fast fashion companies knock-off designs, keep fabrics and materials on hand, only manufacture more if there is more demand, and streamline their distribution, which means that their products reach the markets in only about four months and sometimes, in much shorter periods of time. (Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj, 2019)

The main characteristics of QRM (Jacobs, 2020) in fast fashion are:

- 1) Fast turnaround - While making the garment takes the same amount of time, it is all about the pace of the processes that come before and after it. By speeding them, they are able to turn a sketched design into sellable articles in stores in a matter of a few weeks.
- 2) Inventory turnover - It is vital that their clothes do not stock up in stores. Fast fashion brands understand this and are able to sell out and restock their shelves about four to seven times in a year.
- 3) Test and repeat - This tactic involves the brands launching designs and understanding the level of their demand before mass producing the clothing item and ending with a huge amount of dead stock.
- 4) Smart forecasting - Fast fashion brands are also investing their resources to develop tools that can use qualitative and quantitative data to accurately predict the clothes that the consumers are likely to buy or the colors, patterns, fabrics, and styles that will become trendy.

Due to this relatively new segment of the fashion industry and its tactics, it often comes under the limelight for violation of intellectual property legislation, labor and consumer exploitation, and environmental damage. While these brands are copying designs, they are producing knock-offs, which do not replicate the exact designs, logos, or trademarks, unlike counterfeits. They only closely resemble the luxury goods counterparts, and that is usually okay. However, it is largely believed that workers in fast fashion are exploited as these brands aim to cut costs at every level to drive up the money they make. They are also not trying to cater to the poor by producing cheap clothing, but are attempting to manipulate customers to buy clothes they do not require. This introduction of cheap prices, new designs, and trendy clothing provides an ideal scenario for shoppers to constantly buy. (Lambert, 2014, 15-17) This increase in purchasing and the subsequent increase in disposal of these items is also having a massive impact on the environment and the incessant unnecessary consumption of valuable resources. All of the above factors are also leading to customers demanding increased transparency in the supply chain by these brands to ensure that all processes are ethical and sustainable. (Jacobs, 2020)

As a result, this research paper jumps deeper into the monetary, environmental, and labor-related impacts that this growing industry has.

Financial impacts

Global apparel and footwear sales were estimated to be 1.7 trillion USD in 2019 and are expected to grow to about 2.9 trillion USD by 2030 (Radonic, 2022). While sales may have definitely taken a hit and shrunk due to the pandemic, the industry recovered and shopping is said to have returned to about the pre-pandemic levels (once the lockdowns were lifted) (*Global Fashion Industry Statistics - International Apparel*, n.d.). The fast fashion market is said to have

also taken a dip due to Covid-19 of about 12% to hit 23 billion USD in 2020 but is said to fully recover by 2023, reaching 28 billion USD (Radonic, 2022). Other estimates suggest that the industry was worth about 30 billion USD in 2021 already and will reach 38 billion USD by 2025 (Eichler, 2022).

The fashion industry, of which fast fashion is a part, concerns the livelihoods of about 15% of the world's workforce. That is, 1 in 6 people employed globally has their income attached to fashion. This goes on to demonstrate the economic impact of the industry. However, with poor wages, the industry is tarnished with a reputation for poverty issues. (Radonic, 2022)

The textile and apparel industry also has a significant role in many countries' economies. Take, for example, China. According to Asia Garment Hub, China has over 10 million garment/textile workers, and the industry makes up for about 9% of the country's total exports. In Bangladesh, however, the industry employs 4.5 million people. There, textiles and garments exports alone make up for about 8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 84% of all exports. (*Countries — Asia Garment Hub*, n.d.) Such a high concentration of a single good in a country's exports shows the dependence of the nation's economy on the industry. The same thing is true in Vietnam, where the 35 billion USD textile exports make up for about 12% of their GDP (*Countries — Asia Garment Hub*, n.d.).

Fast fashion retailers seem to be taking the industry by storm by being the driving forces of growth in the fashion world. This and their success can be proven by their extraordinarily high growth rates when compared to that of the whole industry. In fact, while the industry is growing at an annual rate of about 5%, the same number for some of the fast fashion giants is as follows: Inditex (parent company of Zara, Bershka, Pull&Bear, Massimo Dutti etc.)- 9.76%, H&M - 10.61%, ASOS - 34.59%, and Boohoo - 62.61%

(Knošková, L., & Garasová, P, 2019). Meanwhile, PVH (the parent company of Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger), Levi's, and Gap are all showing much less growth compared to Zara and H&M in the same time frame (Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj, 2019). Further highlighting the extent of fast fashion brands' growth is the fact that Inditex had 7,490 stores (Inditex, 2019), which means that since 2005, Inditex, on average, has been opening one new store everyday. The fashion world only seems to have more growth set for itself in the future as there is as expected rise of 400 percent in the world Gross Domestic Product by 2050 (Reichart et al., 2019).

Established brands like J.Crew, Ralph Lauren, Burberry, Hollister, among others have voiced their desire to pace up their production to mimic what fast fashion companies are doing (Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj, 2019).

E-commerce is also bringing massive economic growth to the industry. Brands are able to cater to a much wider market, including consumers in countries where the brand does not have stores or consumers who cannot visit the stores. This makes it very easy for customers to be able to buy new clothes too. In 2018, fashion e-commerce was worth only about 481 billion USD, but in 2022, it is predicted to go over 700 billion USD. The expected average annual growth rate is about 10%. (Assoune, n.d.)

However, it is relieving to know that after the pandemic, people are willing to make better and more sustainable choices. A survey in McKinsey showed that post Covid-19, 65% intend to buy more durable clothing, 71% plan to keep their current clothing for longer, and 57% are willing to make their clothes last longer by repairing them. About 50% of the Gen-Zs and Millennials also plan to start making more second-hand clothing purchases. (Granskog et al., 2020) It is even predicted that the second-hand

market will grow to twice the size of the fast-fashion market by 2029 (*Fashion's Impact in Numbers*, n.d.).

While second hand clothing may seem attractive as clothes are being reused and the negative impact is being controlled, sometimes it has unintended consequences. Much of the donations of used clothes that are made in the west end up in developing countries. This apparel actually ruins the local market as artisans in the country cannot compete effectively with the very cheap prices of the donated, used, second-hand clothing. (Kozłowski, 2019)

As discussed earlier, fast fashion is causing a severe underutilisation of garments. Apparel is being used for an extremely short amount of time and is being thrown away, incinerated, or gathering up in landfills, and people are buying a lot more clothing. Not only customers, even companies are not recycling or donating their unsold clothing items. All of this is leading to the wastage of natural and financial resources and is estimated to be causing losses of over 500 billion USD.

With this, we are beginning to understand the economic impact of the fashion world on a customer, a worker, a country, and the global market, alongside the gains and losses it is causing.

Environmental impacts

While fast fashion has a significant financial impact, its environmental impact is also worth taking a note of. Multiple United Nations (UN) Organizations have created the UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion during the UN Environment Assembly in March 2019 to counteract the grave negative effects of the fashion industry. The UN recognises the fashion industry to be the second most polluting industry with clothing and footwear production causing 8% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. These carbon emissions

account for more than those of maritime shipping and international flights put together. (Villemain, 2019)

A UN expert also went on to explain that as the production takes place majorly in Asia, hard coal and natural gas are often the main sources of energy for electricity. They also said that if no action were taken and businesses were to continue to function like they are functioning in the present, the greenhouse gas emission would rise by 50% by 2030. Even the United Nations recognises the dominant force of 'fast fashion' as one of the key reasons for the detrimental environmental impact caused by the frequent buying and discarding of garments. With a 60% increase in clothing purchase levels in the past 15 years and manufacturing doubling between 2000 and 2014, the fashion industry now uses 93 billion cubic meters of water and is responsible for the production of 20% of the world's wastewater. In addition, over 500 thousand tons of microfibre are dumped into water bodies annually, equal to about 3 million barrels of oil. (Villemain, 2019)

It is estimated that the average American discards about 80 lbs of clothes each year (about 80% of the total clothing consumed) (Wicker, 2016). To put it into a more global context, one garbage truck of clothes is burnt or ends up in landfills every second (Reichart et al., 2019). Not to forget 72% of our clothing is made up of synthetic fibers that can take up to 200 years to decompose, creating a huge waste problem (Charpail, 2017).

Another issue with the fashion world is the excessive use of energy and chemicals in fabric production. Making materials such as synthetic fibers out of plastic is an energy-intensive process that releases hydrogen chloride and volatile particulate matter (Maiti & Thomas, 2022). These processes also come with a heavy reliance on non-renewable energy sources with manufacturing plants that use petroleum and other fossil fuels to power the production of the

clothing. (Marsh, 2022) To quantify, polyester production alone uses 70 million oil barrels each year (Charpail, 2017). This has led to fashion becoming one of the industries with the highest greenhouse gas emissions. These gasses contribute to global warming as they raise the temperature of the earth. At this rate, the world is likely to experience instability in ecosystems with drought, agricultural challenges, and dire need of migration. (Marsh, 2022) Furthermore, cotton production is making use of 11% of the pesticides and 24% of the insecticides produced globally. This heavy use of chemicals is polluting the ocean, degrading the soil, and causing severe health problems including death among cotton farmers. In fact, 20,000 people lose their lives through cancer and miscarriages caused by the chemicals sprayed on cotton.

As environmental economics divulges deeper into the allocation of scarce natural resources, this excess consumption and waste can be better understood by looking at the amount and kind of resources that are used up in manufacturing these goods. For example, it is estimated that it takes 2,700 liters of water to make just one cotton shirt, which is 2.5 years worth of drinking water for one person (Reichart et al., 2019). On the other hand, a pair of jeans uses up 7,500 liters of water, which is seven years worth of drinking water for an average person (Rauturier, 2022). This creates a huge problem as it depletes the supply of safe drinking water while 884 million individuals lack access to it, suffering from dehydration and other adverse health effects (Marsh, 2022).

The wastewater from the industry such as those from tanneries in Bangladesh often ends up in streams and rivers, polluting them. The workers and those that live around those water bodies suffer the grave consequences of the toxins such as chromium, sulfur, and manganese that pollute the water sources. (Marsh, 2022) In fact, leather tanning is one of the most toxic processes in the industry as it uses hazardous

materials that are not biodegradable and end up in the ocean (Maiti & Thomas, 2022).

On many occasions, brands in the industry are making use of synthetic fibers which are cheaper than cotton. One of these is polyester, which is made of plastic and whose production emits more carbon than that of cotton (Le, 2020). In addition, these materials contribute to microplastic pollution (Marsh, 2022). As we wash our synthetic garments in the washing machine, microfibrils enter the wastewater, reaching the ocean through runoffs. As marine animals ingest these microplastics, they suffer from adverse health effects including neurological issues. By consuming the fish that have ingested such waste, these microplastics end up in our food chain, causing many health-related challenges for humans too. (Marsh, 2022) It is estimated that 700,000 microfibrils are released each time a piece of synthetic clothing is washed, and a study even claims that simply wearing a synthetic garment releases 300 million microfibrils into the air annually (Charpail, 2017).

Furthermore, 33% of a fabric called viscose is produced using trees from ancient or threatened forests. It is estimated that 70% of the harvested wood for this material ends up getting wasted. Moreover, while developed as a cheaper alternative to cotton, it is responsible for more greenhouse gas emission than cotton and the carbon disulphide used in its production has proven deadly to the laborers (Le, 2020). The production of viscose, rayon, and modal are leading to mass destruction of forests. Annually, 70 million trees are cut down to produce clothes and 5% of the industry uses forest-based materials. Due to this deforestation, combined with excessive use of chemicals and overgrazing of pastures by goats and sheep used for cashmere and wool, used for procuring cashmere and wool the soil is degrading. We need healthy soil for growing food and absorbing carbon dioxide, but 30% of Patagonia suffers due to

desertification and 90% of Mongolia faces the threat of the same. It is estimated that food production will fall by 30% in the next 20-50 years as a result of soil degradation.

Using just some of the many instances of the negative ecological effect of the fashion industry, it is clear that there is a need for change in our ways.

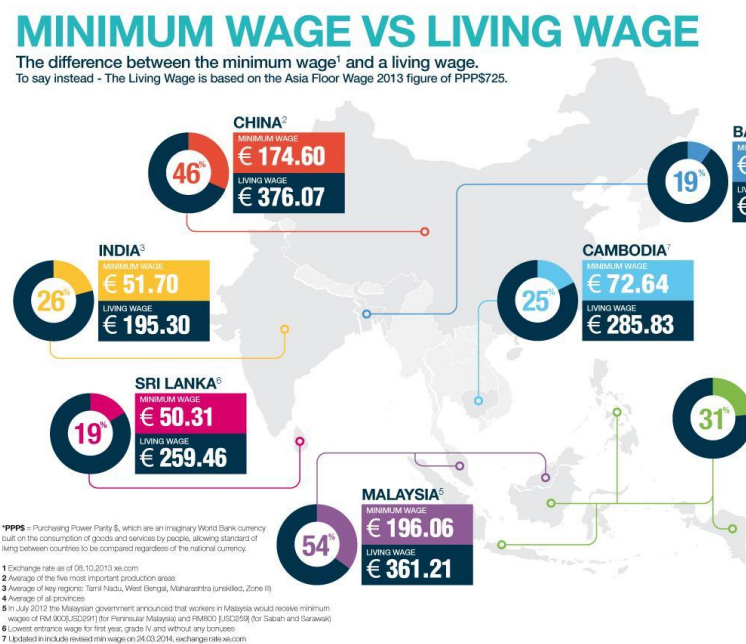
Labor economics

Another sector of fast fashion that concerns economics is the social impact, particularly in regard with labor economics. Estimates suggest that upwards of 75 million people work in the fashion world globally (Chaudhary, 2022). Research suggests that the majority of the workers are women, with certain studies showing that 80% of all apparel is made by young women aged 18 to 24 years (Maiti & Thomas, 2022). Garment production concerns the livelihood of all of these millions of workers. While the industry may be having a detrimental impact on the environment, the employment that it provides cannot be ignored. If people were to significantly decrease their clothing purchases, household incomes of all of these workers would be at risk.

With fast fashion bringing new trends into an already labor intensive industry, where each apparel is made by hand, fashion is increasingly becoming dependent on low-cost labor, making them relocate to low-income Asian countries. There, they are hiring mainly female workers as they are economically and socially vulnerable. Although fast fashion is providing these laborers some support, it is largely argued that they are underpaid and that their working conditions are dire. Fast fashion promotes smaller fashion cycles which stresses the production resources and causes human welfare to be compromised for the sake of more profit.

A minimum legal wage is the amount that the government mandates as the least sum of money that someone can be paid for their work. This differs from the living wage, which is the estimated amount of money that someone requires to be able to fulfill their basic needs. In many of the manufacturing countries, the minimum wage only represents half to a fifth of the living wage. As many companies boast about paying the minimum wage, it is the harsh reality that many others are not even receiving the bare minimum (despite it being far less than what they need to sustain themselves properly). (Charpail, 2017)

The following chart shows the difference in the living and minimum wages of the Asian countries where the majority of garment manufacturing is concentrated.



(Clean Clothes Campaign, n.d.)

Furthermore, an Oxfam Australia report found that in 2019, only 1% of garment workers in Vietnam earned a living wage while in Bangladesh, the number was 0% (Chaudhary, 2022). Also, workers in the industry in Bangladesh make only \$96 a month whereas the government suggested that such a worker needs 3.5 times this amount to be able to afford a 'decent life with basic facilities' (Reichart et al., 2019). These

numbers only begin to expose the poor remuneration of labor. Another research concluded that for a €29 shirt, only 0.6%, equal to 29 cents, went to the worker making the apparel (*Fashion's Impact in Numbers*, n.d.). It can be argued that these low salaries catch these workers in an awful cycle of having to constantly work in this industry. This is because they are never paid enough to be able to save and invest to have something to fall back on if they are fired or while they quit and look for another job.

Apart from the low salaries, the health and safety conditions in the production facilities are also extremely poor. Labor rights are heavily violated in these factories. It is very difficult for women to pull themselves out of poverty because they are not able to organize themselves into groups or speak up for their rights due to anti-union policies or cultural norms in the developing nations. Reportedly, women in Bangladesh experience bladder issues due to a lack of bathroom breaks and from being forced by their managers to use the contraceptive pill. The lack of a living wage also promotes issues like not providing maternity leave, improper sanitation, or experiencing sexual harassment. Sometimes, daughters are sent off to work at an age as young as ten. They also become vulnerable to sexual abuse, and this goes unreported because they cannot afford losing their income. In a survey by Oxfam, one in four women reported some type of abuse. (McCosker, 2021) Leaving out sexual abuse, all workers may also be subjected to verbal or physical abuse by being insulted, denied bathroom break, or disallowed from drinking water because they failed to hit their targets.

The condition of the factories is also very dire and concerning. Labor often works in unsafe buildings with little to no ventilation. They are often subjected to breathing in toxic substances, fiber dust, and sand, causing health issues. (Charpail, 2017) To give an example, in 2013, Dhaka saw the worst garment-factory accident. Rana Plaza complex in the Savar

district of Greater Dhaka collapsed, killing more than 1100 workers. The factory owners had been warned of the structural safety of the building. Cracks were appearing, and the building was made taller than it was meant to be. A bank in the same building had sent its employees home the previous day, but the garment factory, which supplied Primark and Matalan, continued to operate despite the warnings. Similar incidents have occurred in other manufacturing hub countries. In September 2012, in Pakistan, fires set off in two different factories, with more than 300 people dying. The first factory, reportedly, had closed emergency exits and the windows had iron bars, making it extremely difficult for workers to escape as the boiler exploded. These are just two of the many instances where workers' lives have been endangered for the sake of cost-cutting, profit-making, and faster production of apparel. (Hobson, 2013, 317-319)

Moreover, garment workers have extreme working hours. Their normal work week consists of 96 hours. Sometimes, they have to work up until 2 or 3 AM to fulfill the high demand and meet peak season deadlines. Overtime may not even be optional, with workers being threatened of being fired. At times, despite the very low base wages, overtime is not even paid. (Charpail, 2017)

To add to this, the US Department of Labour in its "2020 List of Goods Produced by Child or Forced Labour" found that in many countries, including Bangladesh, Burma, Brazil, and India, garment industries make use of child or forced labour (*2020 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*, 2020). In fact, the Global Slavery Index estimates 40 million people are living in modern slavery. Today, fashion is identified as one of the five major industries with a significant prevalence of modern slavery. The conditions described above are similar to that of a modern slave. Despite such widespread knowledge of labor exploitation, G20 countries imported 127.7 billion USD worth of

garments which were identified as at-risk products of modern slavery. (Kozlowski, 2019) To give an example, until very recently. The government in Uzbekistan was forcing about a million people, including children who should have been in school, to harvest cotton. (Charpail, 2017)

These cases show how fast fashion is affecting, and practically harming, the workforce, a key resource in the global economy.

II. CONCLUSION

Fast fashion has surely had some positive effects in terms of fuelling the growth of the industry and increasing revenue from garments, especially for developing countries where the production is concentrated. It has also helped provide jobs and employment to millions of workers around the globe who now have some form of income, thanks to the rapidly growing world of fast fashion. This concept has also revolutionized manufacturing as knock-off and other designs are able to go from the ramp or a sketch to available to be bought and worn in a matter of a couple of weeks. Many people are now able to stay fashionable, feel luxurious, and stay on trends with the ease of access of a fast fashion brand (with stores and e-commerce) at a very low price.

While all this holds true, the garment industry, as a whole, has also proved to be detrimental socially and environmentally. Induced by fast fashion, the culture of regularly disposing and replacing clothes to stay fashionable has only worsened the effects of the industry as production, consumption, and improper disposal rises.

On the other hand, as the research demonstrates, the garment industry, as a whole, has proved to be detrimental socially and environmentally. Induced by fast fashion, the culture of regularly disposing and replacing clothes to stay fashionable has only

worsened the effects of the industry as production, consumption, and improper disposal rises.

Fast fashion is also contributing to the stagnant or reducing market share/growth of traditional clothing brands. Furthermore, it is contributing to the increased use and wastage of energy and essential resources such as oil, wood, and water. Producing and disposing of these clothes is also releasing toxins and pollutants in the environment, which is causing the health of workers and of the people in the surroundings of the manufacturing plant and polluted areas and water bodies to be affected negatively. It has also become one of the industries with the largest amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

Moreover, with more people employed in factories producing garments, more workers are suffering in jobs with unsafe conditions, insufficient remuneration, and even forced and child labour. These are all questions of social and ethical relevance that concern the fast fashion market.

Although this research paper has attempted to shed light on the economic impact of fast fashion, a lot is still there to be studied and analyzed. A major concern that arises when speaking of this matter is intellectual property rights because much of this industry is based on producing knock-offs of expensive, famous, and luxury goods for those who want to hop on to the trends without having to spend a fortune. Even within the areas the papers considers, a lot more data is available and many more figures should be considered. In fact, this paper only conducts a literature review and secondary research while updated primary research and strict fact-checking can help better evaluate the condition of the industry. For the purpose of this research, only a literature review and secondary research were conducted, but a more recent, updated and focused primary research and a strict fact verification process will be able to solidify the research.

As these numbers will be discovered and discussed more and more, hopefully people will realize that there is a need for alternatives to fast fashion (as it is known today) and that something needs to be done to prevent things from going downhill and beyond fixing. In my opinion, a cultural and legislative change is required to overturn the way the industry operates but looking into the solutions that have been or can be implemented and that have been or can be implemented analyzing their effectiveness is another factor that can be considered further by researchers, companies, customers, policymakers, and other stakeholders but was not discussed in this paper as it did not fall under its scope.

Additional research can also focus on the potential growth and future of fast fashion and the transparency and traceability of apparel companies.

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