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Reviewing Clothing Consumption: How to Educate and Encourage Circular Economy Model in The Clothing Industry

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Abstract

Clothes are generally seen as a basic human need. The clothing industry has grown significantly over the years in terms of its production-to-sales company life cycle, becoming one of the largest in the world today. It has become critical to rethink the business model of the apparel industry and implement a more sustainable method of conducting business because of the emergence of certain global problems such as climate change, business best practices, and sustainability. The clothing industry is known for its complex supply chain, and this is a result of globalization where companies move their production and manufacturing to lesser economies due to the availability of cheap labor and this leadsto a lot of checks and balances being ignored as the linear mode of production is what is evident in theclothing and apparel industry and has been described as one of the top polluting industries. This makeswaste generated from the clothing industry more of a global issue that should be addressed by all concerned. This paper seeks to examine how the circular economy practices when incorporated into the clothing industry can be beneficial and sustainable and also how important educating consumers and stakeholders to adopt circular practices can influence their consumption habits and what strategiespromote circular economy in clothing industries through examples of sustainable business models, innovative technologies that the fashion industry and stakeholders can adopt and consumer awarenesscampaigns. This paper will leverage the theory of planned behaviour to analyse changes in consumer behaviour as it relates to the clothing industry and will also examine the role of government in creatingpolicies that encourage sustainability in businesses and how these policies influence new sustainable business models in the clothing industry.

Keywords: *Circular Economy · Sustainability · Clothing · Textile · Pollution ·*

Introduction

The cyclical economy takes its cues from the natural world. The circular economy wants to keep the supply chain for basic materials closed. Utilizing resources to their fullest potential decreases the demand for new commodities by extending their lifecycle. In summary, garbage from today becomes raw material for tomorrow, just as it does in nature. This is what differentiates the circular economy from the linear economic system where goods are created, used, and discarded as waste. On February 1, 2019, the president of the United Nations Economic and Social Council remarked that "sustainable fashion is critical to accomplishing the 2030 Agenda" during the Sustainable Fashion Summit.

In reality, with the complexity of the supply chain in the clothing industry and its reputation for being one of the industries with the highest water consumption and pollution, and frequent linkages to workplace exploitation, the clothing business has a high social and ecological effect (Fletcher 2014). This has significantly worsened in recent decades by factors such as the movement of production to

low-labour-cost emerging or developing countries, and the emergence of the "fast fashion" movement which is the want for cheap expendable apparel.

One major thing to be established is that our world has finite resources. We are dedicated to making the circular economy a viable, forward-thinking idea in business thereby safeguarding the planet. To maintain the environment, all raw materials must be used and managed sustainably and efficiently. With circular economy models, we have encountered how certain waste could be refined to produce something useful an example of such is how an eco-friendly technology converts discarded clothing into new sources of raw material for high-quality fibres that are used in heating floorboards for homes.

In the past years clothing production has nearly doubled due to the rise in the number of clothes consumers now buy. This increase in demand perhaps is due to cheap prices because of the increasing availability of ready-to-wear options for apparel. A piece of clothing is frequently thrown away after being worn for one season dueto the constant changes in design. As a result, people now buy clothes like treats, purchasing more thanthey require with the mindset that they can be disposed of after a few times wearing them (Remy et al. 2016).Due to ever-decreasing cost savings, this type of "democratic" fashion vision has made it possible to pay ever-lower prices, making it impossible to ensure excellent products and an egalitarian manufacturing procedure.

Even though there is a low level of public knowledge of how fashion affects the environment, consumers are becoming more and more demanding of goods that have little negative impact on the environment and society. The media and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have exerted and continue to pressure consumers to adopt sustainable behavior in the clothing industry (Gordon & Hill, 2015).

Correspondingly, the European Union (EU) launched a program called the European Clothing Action Plan intending to make clothes more sustainable by increasing their lifespans from beginning to end which also called for close monitoring of waste generated from textiles as it was now a significant issue worldwide (Moorhouse & Moorhouse, 2017). Two essential components that are important for the clothing industry to change its linear mode of production are waste reduction as they most likely end up in open burning which pollutes the environment or in dumps which is also equally bad for the environment.

Humans depend on textiles in many ways, particularly for apparel but the pace with which they end up at landfills or get incinerated is alarming and if this trend holds, the ecosystem would be in danger. Many social organizations are calling out for reforms in the way manufacturing is done in the clothing industry and seeking government intervention in redesigning the supply chain from its typical linear model to a sustainable model. From this standpoint, we bring to light some of the potential steps to take, which would include creating regenerative resources of raw materials, redesigning outputs, maximizing the usage, and recycling of textile goods, and relocating textiles to fresh and alternative sectors that could expand their lifespan.

As a starting point, it has already been stated that the fashion industry plays a crucial part in the journey to sustainable practices and consumption as the circular economy is an important innovation for the potential development of the clothing industry worldwide.

In this paper, we will look at how the circular economy is being integrated into business systems, particularly in countries in the European Union, and their position on how pollution from the textile industry has continued to increase dramatically making it a concern for the entire population and what changes can be made in terms of policies as well as consumer habits to change this trend.

Rationale

This paper seeks to address the growing environmental concerns caused by the fashion industry and toproffer solutions to make fashion consumption more sustainable as the introduction of fast fashion to the clothing industry has seen an unprecedented amount of clothing production with a short lifespan. The linear approach of manufacturing and utilization is not environmentally friendly and uses up too many resources. The circular economy models provide an alternative to reduce waste as it incorporatesthe idea of keeping items in use and reducing waste by closing the loop in production however for thisto be successful, it would require the participation and cooperation of certain stakeholders such as consumers, the fashion industry, and the government.

The Objective of the Paper

The objective of this paper is to explore ways in which consumers can be educated to adopt circular economy practices when it comes to clothing consumption. SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production explores sustainable methods of production by addressing current consumption trends and proposing other means that are more sustainable and non-toxic to the environment. It would also investigate the role of brands, government, and consumers in promoting a circular economy for sustainable fashion.

Research questions

1. How can consumers be educated and encouraged to adopt the circular economy in theirconsumption habits?
2. What barriers do businesses face when adopting circular economy methods?
3. How can government policies support the shift to a circular economy in the clothing industry?

Scope

This paper revolves around the circular economy and its influence on the textile industry. The paper will evaluate the possibilities of promoting and educating circular economy processes in theclothing sector and also recognize the barriers that different stakeholders such as consumers, the apparel industry, and the government must overcome to adopt this system. The study aims to provide an overview of the opportunities and challenges for promoting and educating circular economy practices in the fashion industry and to identify effective methods for driving the adoption of circular economy practices in this sector. We would be drawing out ideas and factual information from the existing studies on the research topic and would be engaging scholars who have had any say on the topic.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

According to Lieder & Rasid (2016), in the past decade, concerns about industrial production's environmental impact have led to the emergence of the circular economy as a regenerative cycle. The conventional linear business model exploits natural resources and produces waste, The circular approach on the other hand is focused on how to extend the lifespan of goods at all stages. Circular businesses are driven by net benefits, resource depletion, and ecological consequences. By recycling goods and supplies in a continuous loop, the circular model helps reduce resource consumption (Leider

& Rashid, 2016).

The fashion industry and consumers began to recycle and dispose of used clothes. A circular economy, in this aspect, opens the door to a more durable closed circuit in clothing (Vehmas et al., 2018). This has given rise to an increase in the demand for used apparel. One can always give out their used clothes to younger siblings, or close relations or donate them or they can be resold at 2nd hand clothes or vintage items.

Review of the Literature

The circular economy has changed as the years go by because of the way businesses are adapting to changes in the way people view certain products as they connect with their environment. Some writers suggest using materials that could be recycled or recovered in the manufacturing, distribution, and consumption processes to keep materials from running out. They also point out that for sustainability to be possible, a critical outlook must be given to how a community makes laws, manufactures, and consumes by increasing product life through reuse which is instrumental in achieving the circular economy (Geissdoerferet al., 2017). Kirchherr et al. (2017) made several assessments of the circular economy as the model that replaces the linear model of manufacturing by recycling, upcycling, and restoring resources in the pursuit of sustainable development for the welfare now and in the years to come.

According to Bocken et al. (2016) delaying, shutting, and shortening loops are the three resource cycles, and using services like repairs and remanufacturing business models could use the slowing resource loop strategy to create products with a lengthy lifespan. Yet there are various ways to re-use materials and should not be limited to just businesses but also consumers should be mindful of what they purchase and its impacts on the environment as well. Gopalakrishnan & Matthew (2018) state that consumers could engage in joint consumption by leasing, borrowing, or exchanging materials. These actions are inspired by sustainable concepts and recycling is another way to minimize waste. (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017). The circular economy is rapidly gaining traction as business owners consider production ideas that discourage garbage disposal and advocate for cleanliness, resulting in better environments (IISD, 2018). Recent consumption habits have been investigated to maintain a non-toxic environment. In this context, a megatrend dubbed sustainable fashion consumption now addresses quick fashion cycles and traditional business structures. Slow fashion has gained notice in opposition to fast fashion sold by large retailers by shifting mentalities from volume to value (Vehmas et al., 2018).

Maria et al. (2019) expanded on the idea of buying used clothing which are clothes that had been used or belonged to someone and then resold at a discounted price different from its initial market price also even if purchasing such clothes is viewed as an ecologically benign activity it can also be driven by factors other than environmental, such as emotional or material concerns. Maria et al. (2019) extensively discussed the essential and moral aspects of second-hand fashion purchases. This dimension consists of two concepts. First of which is the concern among consumers over the effects of mass manufacturing on the environment is the first sign of environmental and ecological consciousness. The second facet is the consumer's opposition to large-scale manufacturing and the typical cycle of production in which buyers view purchasing used goods as a method to minimize manufacturing, fight consumerism, and dispose of excess goods This behavior is driven by moral considerations, waste minimization, and reusing. One could buy used clothing thereby saving resources and minimizing garbage output. People can re-use clothes to limit the effect of waste on the environment and lengthen product life (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017).

Thanks to the eco-fashion movement, consumers are concerned about how industrial manufacturing impacts their health, the environment, and society have united (Maria et al., 2019). During the 48th annual meeting of the European Finance Association, the clothing industry was listed as one of the topmost polluting industries globally as it is estimated to consume about 1.6 trillion litersof water annually (EFA 2021). Based on estimations, it is evident that apparel consumption and likewise production creates over 11 per cent of carbon dioxide release amounting to about 1.6 metric tons per year. Therefore, adopting a circular economy will not only reduce waste but also improve lifeitself. It is incredibly resourceful to eliminate waste because what we throw away can be used to createnew items (Stahel, 2016). According to Suruchi et al. (2020), the linear economy creates consumer consumption, contributing to the enormous loss of natural resources. In this paper, the authors explain how a circular economy considers sustainable manufacturing, recycles, reuses, redesigns, and repairs resources rather than wastes them, ultimately leading to the least amount of resource waste and sustainable development.

According to Suruchi et al. (2020), Sustainable practices require tactics that promote the use of upcycling and recycled materials rather than identifying them with poor value with disposal as the result and this is very important for the clothing industry as worldwide emissions of greenhouse gases from textile manufacturing totalled 1.2 billion tonnes of CO2. Suruchi et al. (2020) also used a graphic depiction of a linear, circular, and recycling economyto demonstrate how the textile and fashion industries have embraced recycling and upcycling as designprinciples for sustainability. Trading, renting, or borrowing clothing is essential for repair, redesign, and reuse.

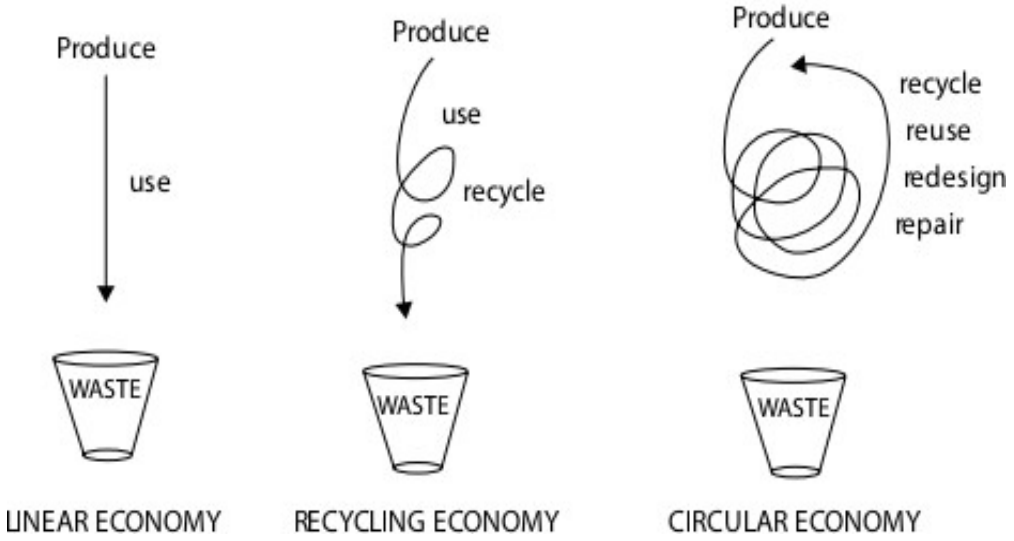

Fig. 1: Process flow of the Linear, Recycle, and Circular economy.

The figure demonstrates how beneficial upcycling and recycling textiles are for the ecosystem,saving water, preserving green space, reducing waste, and reducing air and water pollution. The expense of the textile industry's greenhouse gas emissions is reportedly higher than that of the aviationand shipping sectors. Being environmentally conscious is very important for sustainable development.

An organization that acts responsibly adapts to societal shifts. People support sustainable design because it presents a chance to change one's path from mindless consumption to mindful living. Change to a sustainable lifestyle that protects the ecosystem, cultural traditions, eco-friendly practices, and decent human livelihoods (Suruchi et al., 2020)

Also, Suruchi et al. (2020) discussed upcycling and recycling textile and fashion marketing tactics. One is the marketing blend, which piques consumers' interest, desire, and action. Researchers have investigated and elaborated on applying marketing principles and strategies for the reused and recycled textile business using qualitative methods. A circular economy is necessary almost everywhere, but the fashion business is far more harmful than is generally believed. Growing cotton and jute, manufacturing textiles and apparel, using chemicals, and disposing of waste all harm the ecosystem. Finally, they concur that recycling textiles is a win-win situation and a means to reduce waste. (Suruchi et al., 2020) as the present linear economy model does not factor in how garments can be reused at the beginning of production.

O'Cass (2022) analyses the relationship between buyers' sexual identity, age, degree ofconsumerism, the level to which they are involved in fashion, and their knowledge of the clothing industry where he also defined consumerism as the value people place on items they own. To have a better understanding of how consumers behave concerning possessions is how theyfrequently research the fashion industry, as O'Cass (2000) earlier stated, a further discussion of the cyclical and continuous nature of clothes means that some individuals are only drawn to what is seen as trendy now while others place a high value on their clothing, which invariably influencestheir purchase patterns.

Linear Economics

A take-make-dispose method is what is typically used in the classic linear economy. Accordingto this concept, resources are harvested, converted into goods, and discarded as waste. Yet, social inequity, resource depletion, and environmental degradation have resulted because of this strategy (Rizos et al., 2015). Value is created in a linear economy through mass production and product sales. Regarding the clothing sector, the "fast fashion" model's frequent changes in apparel collections and lower prices result in quicker consumption and excessive product disposal (Bouzon & Govindan 2015). According to the data gathered from Statista. (2021) In 2016, the leading producers of textile waste in the EU were Italy, Germany, France, and the UK. This may be explained by the fact that Almost 13% of the fabric needed to make clothes get recycled, and over 73% is burned or dumped in landfills (Ellen MacArthur Foundation 2017).

In addition to the enormous harm resulting from human exploitation of the ecosystem, the linear economy is doomed as people continue to push for reforms in response to SDG 12's calls for sustainable consumption and responsible production practices. People have realized that resources donot exist in perpetuity.

Circular Economy

Geissdoerfer et al. (2017) definition of a circular economy is a regenerative process where the usage of materials, disposal of waste, and carbon emissions are delayed thereby shutting down or closing the loops in production by ensuring they are in continuous use. This can be achieved through long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, refurbishing, and recycling process (Ellen MacArthur Foundation 2012). Niinimäki K (2018) highlighted that the green economy in fashion

seeks to create closed-loop systems, prolong the lifespan of clothing, and keep the value of products and resources as long as feasible. European Commission's (2014:7) definition of the circular economy is a system that "keeps the additional value in products for as long as feasibly possible and minimizes waste. According to Rizos et al. (2015), when a product reaches the end of its useful life, the resources incorporated in it are kept in productive use, delivering additional value.

The circular economy emphasizes the use of resources as if they were goods. The circular economy's approach is essentially built on the 3R principle (reduce, reuse, and recycle) (Ellen MacArthur Foundation Report 2012). Throughout production, the use of dwindling resources is minimized, while the quantity of repurposing old, used goods is enhanced because it employs the fewest resources to make one product, this manufacturing process is circular as the raw materials are either reused or recycled. This, in turn, creates a closed-loop system by repurposing, sharing, restoring and refurbishing which reduces waste, pollution, and greenhouse emissions (European Parliament, 2015). The circular economy aims to boost material productivity by prolonging the usable life of items, materials, equipment, and facilities whereby waste products are converted to energy sources which can be turned into input for other processes through waste recovery and reuse, either as a component for another industrial output or as renewable energy sources for the environment. The same product will then be extra reused rather than thrown away. A closed system of production is another term for a circular economy.

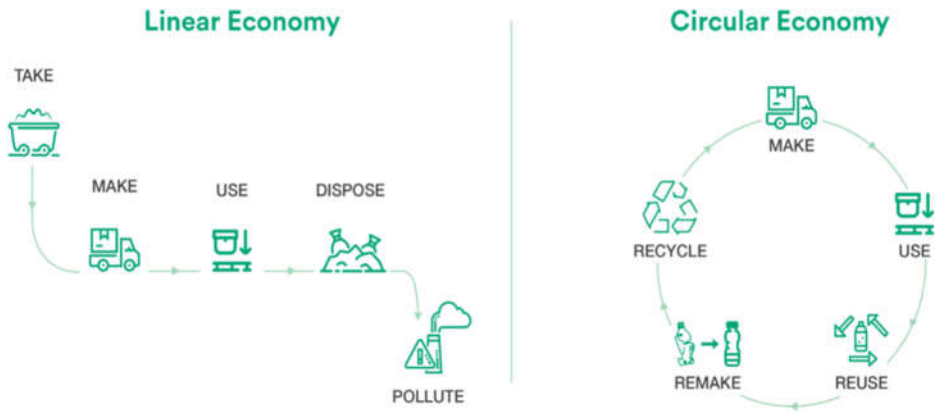

Fig 2. Circular Vs Linear Economy. Source: www.zerowaste.com

As illustrated in Fig 2, The linear economy model concludes with disposal, which invariably results in pollution of the environment; nevertheless, the circular economy keeps resources in a continuous loop/use, leaving no opportunity for waste.

Criticism of the Circular Economy Model

Given that the circular model's foundation is founded on the idea of preventing waste by keeping resources in use continuously, one may counter that it is not technically viable. Corvellec et al. (2021) argue in their article that it is difficult to imagine a future with a circular economy in which waste does not exist, resource loops are closed, and products are continually reused.

Every loop around the circle creates dissipation and entropy, attributed to losses in quantity (material losses, by-products) and quality (mixing, downgrading). To offset dissipative losses, any circular material loop must be filled with new materials and energy (Cullen, 2017, p. 483).

While the aim may be met in some businesses and materials that are utilized for longer periods before being disassembled and remanufactured, Critics contend that to guarantee the quality and safety of recycled materials, the circular economy for textiles needs greater openness and traceability in the supply chain especially because of its internationally scattered and decentralized value creation chains (Hofmann, 2019). Utilizing recycled materials may also prompt inquiries regarding the social and environmental effects of recycling techniques. Another criticism of the circular economy model is its understatement of the challenges of replacing secondary items for primary goods and linking waste streams to manufacturing (Zink & Geyer, 2017) as one can also assume that it is not clear to what extent goods made from the circular mode of production can replace the typical goods created via the linear method of manufacturing (Hart & Pomponi, 2021).

The final criticism points out that discourses from emerging countries are not sufficiently represented even though these people share the same aspirations for developing sustainable systems that maintain, revitalize, and respect the planet. In addition to the risk of reviving "anthropocentric and ethnocentric concepts" derived from "Westernized environmental discourses," this exclusion also runs the risk of undermining the circular economy's stated quest for egocentricity (Calisto Friant et al., 2020:6), especially since the era of globalization where textile industries have moved their production to the global south due to lower economies and cheap labor.

Conceptual Framework

Circular Economy

A circular economy is a production and consumption model that prioritizes for as long as possible the exchange, borrowing, reusing, repairing, and recycling of existing items and materials by basically keeping them in continuous use at all stages. The circular economy focuses on the design-based implementation of the model's three guiding principles to address problems like global warming, resource depletion, waste, and pollution by minimizing waste, repurposing products, and materials, andallowing natural regeneration by reducing exploitive activities that harm the ecosystem (Reuter. 2019).The past years have seen several kinds of research in academia, business, and government being carriedout about the circular economy and this is because of its gained popularity in areas of minimizing pollution and raw material consumption and how it also creates new market opportunities, and, most importantly, enhances consumption sustainability and resource efficiency (Reuter et al., 2019). Government officials regard the circular economy as an instrument to facilitate long-term growth anda way to combat the effects of global warming. Circular economies have the potential to link actors and resources geographically to close material loops at the local level. Ajzen (1991) theorized that planned behavior helps to understand what shapes consumer habits and drives certain buying decisions.The concept of a circular economy can be traced back to various schools of thought, not just one periodor author. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the circular economy is an industrial economy that is restorative or regenerative in its purpose and design (EMF).

Theory of Planned Behaviour

The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) is frequently cited in the literature when explaining behaviors like sustainable fashion consumption (SFC). This theory could explain the connection between barriers and sustainable fashion consumption-related beliefs. The theory of planned behavior

is a social-psychological model that asserts that certain cognitions, including perceptions towards normative beliefs, and a sense of behavioral control, are the primary indicators of a person's goals and, ultimately their behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, people would most of the time behave rationally following their attitudes, arbitrary standards, and imagined behavioural control but this is not always actively or consciously taken into account as these variables serve as the framework for making decisions. In other words, even if a person does not express a certain mindset, it may still affect their choices due to the presumption that people occasionally behave irrationally.

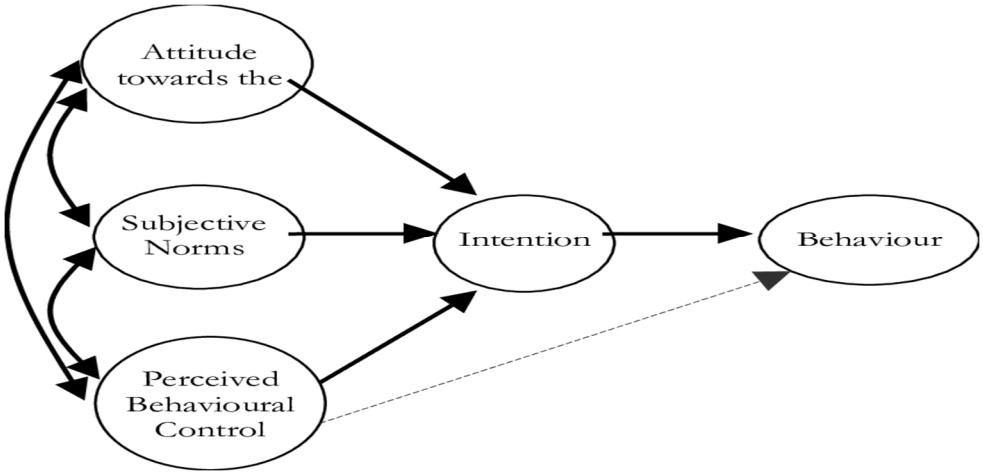

Fig.3**:** Theory of planned behavior. Source: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235937886_

According to Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior, perceptions of behavioral control, subjective norms, and attitudes affect intentions, which in turn shape behaviors. Regardless of the motivation, external influences may also directly enforce or forbid behaviors, depending on how much of a behavior is genuinely under the person's control and how well perceived behavioral control reflects actual behavioral control.

How relevant is the theory of planned behavior to changes in consumer habits?

A buyer's free will determines whether to buy a specific article of apparel now or later and whether to prioritize it over alternative possibilities. Fashion items are said to be high-involvement commoditiesdue to their symbolic aspect (Solomon. 1996). Just as Ajzen (1991) proposed in his theory of planned behavior, certain norms and attitudes can influence an individual’s intentions or decisions. The TPB (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) is commonly used in social science to describe and predict behavior and can be adapted to understand why people consume some fashion choices. Today, consumers place great importance on sustainable consumption. Roberts (1996) stated that to convince customers to change their behavior in any way, they must be made to believe that their actions affect the consequences.

Social Marketing and Education of Consumers as it Relates to the Theory of Planned Behavior

Kotler & Zaltman (1971) created the phrase "social marketing." as the use of commercial ideas and

practices to persuade a core demographic to willingly accept, decline, change, or abandon a behavior for the collective benefit of people, groups, organizations, or society. It is informed by fields of study such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, and communication theory, as well as practical origins in marketing, media affairs, and consumer research. Its goal is to effect positive social change by demonstrating that perceived benefits outweigh perceived costs. The best part is that, as a field of study, social marketing may contribute to or even drive strategies based on integrating the SDGs into people's minds and behaviors. (Carvalho & Mazzon, 2015:180)

It is important to note that underplaying the importance of stakeholder collaboration. (For example, companies and institutions) in a multi-stakeholder social system whose collective behavioral change risks neglecting the potential of such group action to accomplish the SDGs (Andreasen, 2002:8; Duffy et al., 2020:111). Customer attitudes toward the circular economy can be shaped through education and awareness campaigns. There is a growing consensus that higher education should train students to be conscientious managers and provide them with the skills necessary to build a sustainable future (Avelar et al., 2019:2).

Perceived Barriers to Adopting the Circular Model

The theory of planned behavior provides a useful framework for understanding the barriers that people may see as impeding their adoption of the circular economy paradigm. According to this theory, a person's mindset toward an action, normative beliefs, and perceived control of behavior all can influence their desire to engage in any action at any point of their decision-making process (Ajzen, 1991).

Consequently, the degree to which SMEs are generally willing to implement "sustainable" measures, as well as their attitudes toward green legislation, differs according to the industry in which they operate (Bradford & Fraser, 2007).

Some perceived obstacles people may encounter regarding the circular economy model include a lack of awareness and information, a sense of inconvenience, and a lack of infrastructure and assistance. However, the cost of adopting sustainable practices is seen as a major hindrance for businesses to go green as they do not have the financial capacity to transition (Eunomia Research & Consulting, 2011).

Government policies encourage the transition to the circular economy.

The European's Union environmental compliance support program stresses the urgency for a better regulatory agenda regarding the adaptation of sustainable business practices (Miller et al., 2011). Incentivizing policies can help convince business owners to adopt green practices and can be in the form of increasing landfill taxes and granting tax exemptions on actions like recycling, repairing, and reusing. The United Nations global alliance aims to address environmental and social issues in the fashion industry. (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2021)

The government must implement policies to promote circular business models (Kirchherr et al., 2018). The theory of planned behavior can help explain how consumer behavior affects government and industry policies (Ajzen, 1991) as it relates to the consumption of textiles/clothing.

The Role of Government in Promoting Circular Economy in the Clothing/Textiles Industry.

The government is a key participant with a great (economic and political) ability to influence businesses to incorporate practices of the circular economy into their business model. National

governments can aid in the circular shift by using regulatory, financial, and economic tools, especially by removing harmful subsidies, correcting unwelcome incentives, pricing in environmental externalities, and tightening regulations governing product eco-design (Horbach et el., 2020). Government can significantly improve the circular economy through public policies such as laws and financial assistance.

With the clothing industry being a global business with production sites located in the global south, we would like to look at this from the global supply chain direction and how government policies help shape and promote circular practices by looking at the new German Supply Chain Act.

Global supply chains" refers to the cross-border coordination of activities required to produce goods or services and deliver them to consumers via supplies and several phases of innovation, manufacturing, and distribution (ILO 2016). A supply chain consists of all phases involved in the manufacture and sales of a product (Christian et al., 2013). The supply network follows the product from its source of raw materials to its end location, which could be a store or warehouse before it reaches the final consumer.

Given the complexity of the global supply value chain in the garment industry, Governments can use the framework of the Global Supply Act to implement and recommend policies that encourage a circular economy. They can decide to work with the government of the global south where most of the production of textiles is located by proffering to support businesses who adopt these practices. Government financial assistance can be in the form of research and development funding and financial incentives for enterprises to engage in environmentally friendly creative activities (particularly among SMEs in the EU).

Government should allocate funds to research and development, strengthen institutions, and support SMEs to reduce material by exploring innovative ways to use resources without endangering the environment and, also offer support through the use of incentives by identifying SMEs along the Global Supply Chain Act, who have adopted the circular business model in their production process and giving them tax breaks and financial assistance as we have come to understand that cost implications are one of the main reasons businesses cannot engage in circular practices.

Given that sustainability efforts at the start of the supply chain can be used to increase brand awareness, the government can enforce compliance among suppliers as they are chosen based on trust, cost, and efficiency through a selection process that includes hazardous material treatment, water usage, and waste disposal as criteria. This could be achieved by cooperating with the host government of the supplier country by issuing certifications to suppliers. An example could be Fairtrade certification andgovernments might re-examine certification procedures to provide new ways of certifying the viabilityor safety of circular products.

Can Government policies shape consumer behavior?

According to the European Environment Agency. (2020) Policymakers across Europe continue to recognize the importance of persuading consumers to adopt more environmentally sustainable choices while protecting their right to choose. This is because, despite advancements in resource efficiency, policies addressing the production element of production/consumption systems are sometimes insufficient to accommodate the growing demand for resources. But, to establish effective consumer policies, the factors influencing consumer behavior must be thoroughly understood so that policies may effectively address them.

Governments around the European Union are already implementing regulations to encourage consumers to make decisions that are consistent with the circular economy, with a primary focus on informing customers through labeling. These policy initiatives must demonstrate a clear link between the proposed measure and the elements influencing consumer behavior to be effective, and the mechanism encouraging more circular economy-consistent behavior must be researched. One example would be the government's prohibition on the consumption or sale of specific products (Ellen MacArthur Foundation. 2012).

Conclusion

In conclusion, one important solution for sustainability in the textile industry is extending the life of clothing as it is evident that the linear mode of production that is the norm is no longer sustainable. Businesses will have to rethink their business model and infuse sustainable practices in their manufacturing practices and also how consumers can drive the sustainability processby changing and resisting the lure of fast fashion and also why it is important for consumers to be educated on how their consumption habits can impact the society at large and finally how Governmentis the key instrument needed to facilitate this movement because they can influence both brands andconsumers with the policies they enact. With garment consumption expanding at an alarming rate, thefashion industry remains one of the largest and most polluting sectors in the world. A circular economy paradigm in the textile sector is required to address this issue. This concept aims to reduce waste by extending the life of items and materials by recycling, refurbishing, and upcycling. Many of the circular economy's activities require a lot of labor and have the potential to enhance the economy both at the micro and macro levels (Stahel. 2017). Education is essential for promoting a circular economy in thefashion sector. Consumers' knowledge of the necessity of sustainable fashion can be increased by educating them on the environmental impact of clothes use. This education should encompass subjects such as clothing's lifecycle, the impact of quick fashion, and the advantages of a circular economy.

To address the environmental impact of clothes consumption, the clothing industry must convert from a linear to a circular economy model.

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