A study on the adoption of sustainable fast fashion among Millennials and Xennials

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ABSTRACT :

Sustainable fashion seeks to reduce the textile industry's social and environmental effect by encouraging ethical consumption, fair labour practices, and environmentally friendly materials. This study investigates the adoption of sustainable fast fashion by Millennials and Xennials, focusing on their awareness, purchasing behaviours, and major variables influencing their decisions. As environmental concerns and ethical consumption become more prominent, sustainable fashion offers a potential alternative to traditional fast fashion, which is frequently chastised for its environmental and social impact. The study looks into how much these generations value sustainability, their willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly apparel, and how aspects like brand transparency, ethical manufacturing, and quality perception influence their purchasing decisions. The study's quantitative technique, which includes Likert-scale-based surveys, aims to find behavioural distinctions between Millennials and Xennials as well as opinions toward sustainable fashion. The findings will help to better understand customer behavior in the fashion industry and provide valuable insights for firms looking to improve their sustainability initiatives. Encouraging ethical consumption can assist to lessen the fashion industry's environmental impact.

Keywords: Sustainable Fashion, Fast Fashion Adoption, Eco-friendly Consumption, Millennials and Xennials, Ethical Clothing Practices.

Introduction :

The fashion business is one of the most significant contributors to environmental degradation, with fast fashion hastening resource depletion, pollution, and unethical labor practices. Sustainable fashion arises as a solution to these problems by emphasizing ethical consumption, fair working conditions, and environmentally friendly manufacturing methods. Unlike typical fast fashion, which favors mass production and quick turnover, sustainable fashion focuses on quality, longevity, and environmental responsibility. Consumers that adopt sustainable fashion can help alleviate the industry's negative impact, reduce textile waste, and promote ethical business methods.

Sustainable fashion seeks to reduce the environmental impact of garments throughout their entire lifecycle, from raw material procurement to disposal. It promotes the use of organic and recycled materials, energy-efficient manufacturing practices, and responsible waste management. This movement prioritizes ethical production methods such as lowering CO_2 emissions and assuring fair salaries. Transparency is critical, as customers increasingly demand accountability from brands for their environmental promises.

This study investigates the adoption of sustainable fast fashion among Millennials and Xennials, two significant consumer generations that shape industry trends. Their awareness, attitudes, and shopping habits toward eco-friendly clothes will be examined to better understand the primary drivers and hurdles to adoption. The study investigates price sensitivity, perceived quality, brand trust, and readiness to pay a premium for sustainable alternatives. Understanding these factors can help firms create initiatives to promote sustainable consumption.

The goal of this study is to determine how sustainability affects fashion choices among Millennials and Xennials. The study's goal is to determine what inspires or inhibits people from adopting sustainable choices by examining generational variations and consumer preferences. Additionally, the study aims to uncover how organizations might improve their sustainability efforts while remaining affordable and appealing. These findings can help governments, brands, and consumers make more responsible fashion choices.

As fast fashion continues to dominate the market, moving to more sustainable options is critical for reducing environmental damage. This study adds to the existing literature by offering a better knowledge of generational attitudes regarding sustainable fashion. Sustainable fashion can help develop a more environmentally conscious industry by promoting ethical consumerism and responsible manufacturing practices. The study's findings can help firms integrate their business strategies with sustainability goals, promoting a shift toward a greener, more ethical fashion future.

Review of Literature :

Meital Peleg Mizrachi and Alon Tal, 2024 in the study titled "Fast Fashion, Sustainability, and Nudge Theory- Examining the Effects of Choice Architecture on Consumption of Sustainable Fashion, over Fast Fashion". This study investigates techniques for increasing sustainable fashion consumption by looking at the impact of choice architecture (nudges) in real-world retail contexts. The study, conducted in partnership with a prominent

shopping mall in Israel, evaluated treatments that boost long-term purchases and willingness to pay more. Nudges such as offering information, increasing accessibility, and appealing to social identity were tried. The findings demonstrated that providing sustainable options effectively changed consumer behavior, although education and social norm reinforcing remained critical. However, many participants found it difficult to recognize truly sustainable apparel, underlining the importance of clearer labelling and regulations. The study emphasizes the importance of regulations that promote openness and make sustainable fashion more accessible to the general public.

Nailejileji Mollel-Matodzi, Anne Mastamet-Mason, 2024, "A Review of South African Consumer Awareness of Fast-Fashion and Sustainable Practices in the Textile and Clothing Industry". The worldwide textile and garment sector, driven by fast fashion, has a substantial environmental and societal impact. This study uses narrative and systematic reviews to investigate South African consumers' awareness of the socio-environmental implications of rapid fashion and sustainable fashion methods. The findings emphasize the need for additional research on consumer misconceptions. Collaboration between the government, industry, universities, and marketers is critical for ensuring continual information transfer, raising sustainable fashion awareness, and encouraging responsible consumption among South African consumers.

L K A P Madubhashani, Mananage Shanika Hansini Rathnasiri, 2024, "Factors influencing sustainable fashion avoidance intention among millennial shoppers in colombo district, Sri Lanka". Sustainable fashion choices are not always a direct result of millennials' growing environmental concerns. Despite being seen as an ecologically conscientious generation, millennials' views on sustainability and their fashion sector purchase habits are not aligned. Fast fashion continues to be the more popular option, and sustainable fashion is still not widely adopted despite the fashion industry's substantial environmental harm. Thus, this study examines the variables influencing millennial customers' intentions to shun sustainable fashion in Sri Lanka's Colombo region.

Tiara Nur Anisah, Andika Andika, Danang Wahyudi, Bimo Harnaji, 2024 in the study titled, "Fast fashion revolution: Unveiling the path to sustainable style in the era of fast fashion". Fast fashion's fast production and inexpensive pricing have fuelled its global expansion, but its environmental impact is severe. It causes excessive water consumption, pollution, high greenhouse gas emissions, and non-biodegradable textile waste. This study looks at how fashion orientation (FO) and fast fashion purchase intention (FFPI) affect fast fashion purchasing behavior (FFPB). Furthermore, it investigates the moderating influence of sustainable clothing consumption attitudes (SCCA), offering insights into consumer behaviour and sustainability in the fashion sector.

Lisa McNeill, Rebecca Moore, 2022, "Sustainable fashion consumption and the fast fashion conundrum: Fashionable consumers and attitudes to sustainability in clothing choice". The fashion industry is evolving toward ethical and ecological production, yet many consumers are hesitant due to their rapid fashion inclinations. This study investigates attitudes toward ethical fashion and sustainable products, using the developmental theory model to divide consumers into three categories: "Self" consumers, who are motivated by personal enjoyment; "Social" consumers, who are concerned with image; and "Sacrifice" consumers, who prioritize sustainability. These diverse opinions underscore the importance of tailoring marketing methods to each customer niche in order to effectively promote sustainable fashion.

Research Gap

While much study has been conducted on sustainable fashion in global contexts and industrialized countries, few studies have examined the adaptation of sustainable fashion choices among Millennials and Xennials in urban Indian settings such as Bengaluru. The existing literature is primarily concerned with consumer behaviour in Western nations, leaving a gap in understanding how socio-cultural, economic, and environmental issues influence sustainable fashion choices in urban India, particularly in Bengaluru. Furthermore, nothing is known about how these two generational cohorts (Millennials and Xennials) view sustainable fashion in terms of cost, accessibility, and willingness to make environmentally responsible shopping decisions in a quickly evolving economy.

Statement of the Problem :

The fast fashion business has greatly contributed to environmental degradation and ethical concerns as a result of its excessive resource consumption, pollution, and exploitative labour practices. Despite increased knowledge of sustainability, many consumers, particularly Millennials and Xennials, continue to buy fast fashion due to its cost, accessibility, and trend-driven appeal. While sustainable fashion offers an alternative that reduces environmental and social harm, its uptake remains low among these consumer groups. Understanding the variables that influence their purchase decisions, willingness to pay a premium for sustainable alternatives, and adoption hurdles is critical to encouraging responsible fashion consumption.

Millennials and Xennials are important market segments with significant purchasing power and influence over fashion trends, making them critical drivers of sustainable fashion adoption. However, there is a vacuum in knowing their awareness, views, and behavioural patterns in relation to sustainable fast fashion. Price sensitivity, brand trust, fashion orientation, and social influence can all have an impact on their decisions. The purpose of this study is to investigate these aspects, identify barriers to sustainable fashion adoption, and provide ways to promote responsible consumption. By addressing this issue, the research hopes to give insights for fashion firms, legislators, and marketers looking to improve sustainability efforts and generate long-term change in the industry.

Objectives :

1. To assess the level of awareness of sustainable fast fashion among Millennials and Xennials.
2. To explore the key factors influencing Millennials' and Xennials' adoption of sustainable fast fashion.

Hypothesis

*   **H0:** Millennials and Xennials have no significant awareness of sustainable fast fashion.
*   **H1:** Millennials and Xennials have a significant awareness of sustainable fast fashion.
*   **H0:** There is no significant influence in the Millennials' and Xennials' adoption of sustainable fast fashion.
*   **H1:** There is a significant influence in the Millennials' and Xennials' adoption of sustainable fast fashion.

Scope of the study :

This study investigates the adoption of sustainable fast fashion by Millennials and Xennials in Bengaluru, a rapidly urbanizing metropolis with increasing environmental and ethical consciousness. It seeks to discover critical elements impacting their sustainable apparel purchasing decisions, such as environmental awareness, cultural influences, and price sensitivity. Social media and peer behavior heavily influence their fashion choices, making it critical to investigate how these external variables influence sustainability preferences. Furthermore, the study analyzes their willingness to pay a premium for sustainable fashion, which is critical in an industry where affordability sometimes trumps ethical concerns.

The differences in sustainable fashion adoption between Millennials and Xennials will be examined, taking into account age, socioeconomic level, and exposure to sustainability discourse. Understanding these distinctions will reveal whether ethical considerations, style, or affordability influence their decisions. By examining these behavioral patterns, the study adds to consumer research on sustainable fast fashion, providing a better knowledge of how young urban populations move to eco-friendly clothes. Finally, the findings will provide entrepreneurs and regulators with actionable ideas for promoting sustainability in Bengaluru's fashion market, making sustainable fashion more accessible and appealing to these significant consumer groups.

Research methodology :

This study takes a mixed-methods approach, collecting both primary and secondary data to examine the adoption of sustainable fast fashion among Millennials and Xennials in Bengaluru Urban. Primary data will be collected using a standardized questionnaire designed to examine demographics, awareness, attitudes, and behaviours related to sustainable fashion. The questionnaire will include both closed and open-ended questions to collect quantitative and qualitative data. A non-probability convenience selection method will be used to pick 150 respondents, assuring accessibility via internet platforms and social networks. Stratified sample will also assure proportionate representation of both generational cohorts. Secondary data will be gathered from academic journals, industry reports, and sustainability literature to offer contextual information. The study will last three months and will include data collection, SPSS analysis, and results interpretation. The findings will provide actionable information for sustainable fashion manufacturers and regulators seeking to promote environmentally conscious customer behavior.

Analysis and interpretation :

Objective 1:
To assess the level of awareness of sustainable fast fashion among Millennials and Xennials.

Hypothesis:
H0: Millennials and Xennials have no significant awareness of sustainable fast fashion.
H1: Millennials and Xennials have a significant awareness of sustainable fast fashion.

Crosstabs
Table 1.1 showing the cross tabulation on the awareness level of Millennials and Xennials towards sustainable fast fashion
Count

		Awareness level					Total
		Not at all aware	Slightly aware	Moderately aware	Very aware	Extremely aware	
Generation	Millennials	5	5	22	21	23	76
	Xennials	1	6	17	32	18	74
Total		6	11	39	53	41	150

Interpretation:
The crosstab analysis demonstrates disparities in generational attitudes toward sustainable fast fashion. Among Millennials, 44 (57.9%) are very or highly knowledgeable, whereas 10 (13.2%) are unaware. In contrast, Xennials have a higher share of strong awareness, with 50 (67.6%) being very or extremely aware and just 7 (9.5%) expressing poor awareness. Moderately knowledgeable respondents make up a large proportion of both groups, with 22 (28.9%)

Millennials and 17 (23%) Xennials. Overall, Xennials appear to be slightly more knowledgeable than Millennials, indicating possible generational disparities in exposure to sustainability discourse.

Chi-Square Tests

Table 1.2 showing Chi-Square Tests on the awareness level of Millennials and Xennials towards sustainable fast fashion

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	6.266ᵃ	4	.180	.183		
Likelihood Ratio	6.529	4	.163	.180		
Fisher's Exact Test	6.104			.187		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.532ᵇ	1	.466	.491	.258	.047
N of Valid Cases	150					

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.96.

b. The standardized statistic is .729.

Interpretation:

The Chi-Square test results confirm the null hypothesis (H₀), which indicates that Millennials and Xennials have no significant difference in their awareness of sustainable fast fashion. The Pearson Chi-Square value (6.266) with a p-value of 0.180 ($p > 0.05$) shows that the relationship between generation and awareness level is not statistically significant. Similarly, the Likelihood Ratio ($p = 0.163$) and Fisher's Exact Test ($p = 0.187$) support this. The Linear-by-Linear Association test ($p = 0.466$) indicates no significant linear link between the variables. Furthermore, 20% of the cells had predicted counts of less than 5, which may have a minor impact on the test's reliability. Because the p-value is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject H₀, indicating no significant difference in awareness levels between Millennials and Xennials. This implies that both generational cohorts share a comparable level of awareness regarding sustainable fast fashion.

Objective 2:

To explore the key factors influencing Millennials' and Xennials' adoption of sustainable fast fashion.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant influence in the Millennials' and Xennials' adoption of sustainable fast fashion.

H1: There is a significant influence in the Millennials' and Xennials' adoption of sustainable fast fashion.

Correlations

Table 1.7 showing correlation between key factors influencing sustainable fast fashion

		Social media scores	Friends/ Peers	Environmental sustainability and ethical concerns	Brand reputation	Quality and durability
Social media scores	Pearson Correlation	1	.333**	.403**	.283**	.336**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Friends/ Peers	Pearson Correlation	.333**	1	.243**	.155	.219**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.003	.058	.007
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Environmental sustainability and ethical concerns	Pearson Correlation	.403**	.243**	1	.614**	.632**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.003		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Brand reputation	Pearson Correlation	.283**	.155	.614**	1	.650**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.058	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Quality and durability	Pearson Correlation	.336**	.219**	.632**	.650**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.007	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:

The correlation analysis demonstrates strong links between major parameters impacting the adoption of sustainable fast fashion. Social media scores are moderately positively correlated with environmental sustainability concerns ($r = 0.403$, $p < 0.01$) and quality and durability ($r = 0.336$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that online platforms influence attitudes. Friends and classmates had a reduced link with environmental concerns ($r = 0.243$, $p < 0.01$) and quality ($r = 0.219$, $p < 0.01$), indicating a lesser but still significant influence. The most significant connections are between brand reputation and quality

(r = 0.650, p < 0.01) and environmental concerns and quality (r = 0.632, p < 0.01), emphasizing the significance of ethics and product durability. All significant correlations (p < 0.01) indicate interrelated influences; therefore, we reject H_0 and accept H_1, demonstrating that these factors significantly influence Millennials' and Xennials' adoption of sustainable fashion.

Findings :

1. Xennials exhibit slightly higher awareness of sustainable fast fashion, with 67.6% being very or extremely aware compared to 57.9% of Millennials.
2. Poor awareness levels are lower in Xennials (9.5%) than Millennials (13.2%).
3. A significant proportion of both groups are moderately aware (28.9% for Millennials and 23% for Xennials).
4. Overall, generational differences in sustainable fashion awareness exist but are not statistically significant.
5. The Chi-Square test results (p = 0.180) confirm no significant association between generation and awareness levels, supporting the null hypothesis (H_0).
6. The lack of significance is further supported by the Likelihood Ratio (p = 0.163) and Fisher's Exact Test (p = 0.187).
7. The Linear-by-Linear Association test (p = 0.466) shows no strong linear relationship between generation and awareness level.
8. Social media has a moderate positive influence on attitudes toward environmental concerns (r = 0.403) and quality/durability (r = 0.336).
9. Friends/peers have a weaker but significant influence on environmental concerns (r = 0.243) and quality/durability (r = 0.219).
10. Strong correlations exist between brand reputation and quality/durability (r = 0.650) and environmental concerns and quality (r = 0.632).
11. These strong correlations highlight the importance of ethics and product durability in sustainable fashion adoption.
12. All significant correlations (p < 0.01) demonstrate that key factors are interrelated in influencing adoption behaviours.
13. The correlation analysis rejects H_0 and accepts H_1, showing that these factors significantly influence sustainable fashion adoption.
14. Generational cohorts share a comparable level of awareness, indicating a need for broader educational initiatives across both groups.
15. Social media and ethical branding emerge as critical tools for driving sustainable fashion adoption among Millennials and Xennials.

Conclusion :

This study looked at the adoption of sustainable fast fashion by Millennials and Xennials in Bengaluru, focusing on awareness levels and key influencing factors. The results show that, while Xennials have slightly higher awareness than Millennials, the difference is not statistically significant, as shown by the Chi-Square test (p = 0.180). Both cohorts show moderate awareness, indicating a common understanding of fashion sustainability challenges. Correlation study demonstrates the importance of social media, peer influence, brand reputation, and product quality in determining consumer sentiments. Social media emerges as an important driver, positively increasing environmental concerns (r = 0.403) and quality perception (r = 0.336), although friends and peers have a smaller impact. The substantial relationships between brand reputation, quality (r = 0.650), and environmental sustainability (r = 0.632) demonstrate the importance of ethical considerations and product durability in purchasing decisions. These findings contradict the null hypothesis (H_0) and confirm that numerous factors have a substantial impact on the adoption of sustainable fast fashion. Given these findings, sustainable fashion firms should use digital platforms and ethical branding tactics to reach both generations. Furthermore, more comprehensive educational programs are required to raise awareness and drive long-term transitions toward sustainable fashion consumption in metropolitan Bengaluru.

Limitations of the Study :

1. Sample Bias - The convenience sample method may not adequately represent Millennials and Xennials from low-income or rural communities.
2. Self-Reported Bias - Survey responses may be influenced by social desirability bias, resulting in an overestimation of sustainable fashion commitment.
3. Limited Generalizability - The findings may not be applicable to other parts of India, particularly rural or less urbanized areas with distinct cultural influences.
4. Short Study Period - A three-month study period may not capture long-term changes in attitudes and practices toward sustainable fashion.
5. Context-Specific Insights - Because the study focuses on Bengaluru, the findings may not be applicable to other cities with diverse economic and fashion industries.

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