GREENWASHING AND BLUEWASHING IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION

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Abstract: *The textile industry is facing a growing issue of greenwashing and bluewashing, which are misleading environmental and social claims made by companies to appeal to customers' environmental and social consciousness. This review examines the causes and consequences of these practices, focusing on the holistic impact on consumers, corporations, stakeholders, and society. The analysis was conducted using various sources, including review papers, case studies, book chapters, and websites, to identify relevant publications. The study explores the concept of greenwashing and bluewashing in fast fashion, their impact on the environment and society. It suggests promoting transparency, accountability, and independent certification in the textile industry to combat these issues. The lack of research on these practices in the industry makes it difficult to understand their effects. The study emphasizes the need for optimal measures to control these practices, aiming to create a sustainable and responsible fashion sector.*

Keywords: greenwashing, bluewashing, fast fashion, sustainability.

ZELENO I PLAVO PRANJE U TEKSTILNOJ INDUSTRIJI: UZROCI, POSLEDICE I REŠENJA ZA ODRŽIVU MODU

Apstrakt: *Tekstilna industrija se suočava sa rastućim problemom zelenog pranja i plavog pranja, koji su obmanjujuće ekološke i društvene tvrdnje kompanija da bi zadovoljile ekološku i društvenu svest kupaca. Ovaj pregled ispituje uzroke i posledice ovih praksi, fokusirajući se na holistički uticaj na potrošače, korporacije, zainteresovane strane i društvo. Analiza je sprovedena korišćenjem različitih izvora, uključujući pregledne radove, studije slučaja, poglavlja u knjigama i veb stranice, kako bi se identifikovale relevantne publikacije. Studija istražuje koncept zelenog i plavog pranja u brzoj modi, njihov uticaj na životnu sredinu i društvo. Predlaže se promovisanje transparentnosti, odgovornosti i nezavisne sertifikacije u tekstilnoj industriji za borbu protiv ovih problema. Nedostatak istraživanja o ovim praksama u industriji otežava razumevanje njihovih efekata. Studija naglašava potrebu za optimalnim merama za kontrolu ovih praksi, sa ciljem stvaranja održivog i odgovornog modnog sektora.*

Ključne reči: zeleno pranje, plavo pranje, brza moda, održivost.

1. INTRODUCTION

The textile industry is one of the leading polluting industry that is accountable for more greenhouse gas emissions than worldwide air and sea freight together [1, 2]. It is the third major source of water pollution and land use in 2020, where each citizen of the European Union was responsible for an average of 9 cubic meters of water, 391 kilogrammes of raw material, and 121 million tons of greenhouse gas emission to purchase garments and shoes throughout the year [3]. The worldwide textile consumption has climbed to an estimated 62 million tons of garments per year, with a projection of reaching 102 million tons of garments by 2030, causing an epidemic increase of air, water, microplastic pollution by discharging into food chain, and textile waste [4-9]. Additionally, the increase in textile production at a low price has led to fast fashion, where consumers frequently buy trending garments and quickly dispose of them prior to the products' lifecycle [10, 11]. This phenomenon draws out a dilemma because while fast fashion stimulates the economy, it also creates a problem with textile disposal as the recycling industry has to cope with all the waste that the textile industry generates [12].

Due to such negative impacts, public concern towards the protection of environment and social wellbeing is growing which has been recognised by the pioneer brands of textile industry and focused on the sustainable approaches and transparency to social issues, resulting in a noticeable growth in ethical fashion market [13, 14]. Brands are now seizing the marketing opportunity by using the consumers' sentiment on environmental and social distress by claiming their products green and socially sustainable [15-18]. This often leads to brands exploiting exaggerated, fabricated, and illusive claims of environmental and social well-being of products in order to improve brand value [19-21]. These actions are considered as greenwashing and bluewashing respectively, which dilute sustainability's true meaning and uses it as a marketable catchphrase, has not only affected consumer behavior but also penetrated the textile sector [22, 23]. This distortion has exacerbated the problems already present in the ecological footprint of the fashion and textile industry by contributing to the compounding problems of overproduction and overconsumption. Unintentionally, this creates a confusing environment where deceptive marketing tactics cast a shadow on genuine sustainability [24].

Figure 1 shows that the increase of practicing greenwashing and bluewashing in the textile industry reduces the chance of achieving environmental and social sustainability as necessary measures to ensure sustainability were not taken in the first place. Which is why it has become necessary to address these terms and find their causes and remedy.

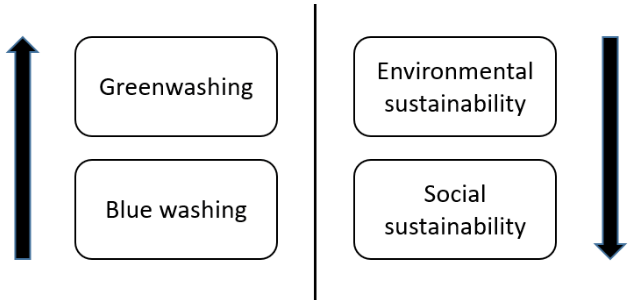

Figure 1: Consequence of practicing greenwashing and bluewashing in the terms of sustainability

This study used a process to conduct a systematic review of the literature and identify relevant papers. The research used a search approach to minimize the number of relevant publications. Resources used for searches include Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Scopus. The keywords used to search the relevant publications were „greenwashing", „bluewashing", „CSR", „textile", and „fast fashion". The study analyzed 116 articles, including review papers, case studies, book chapters, and websites, on greenwashing and bluewashing, their relationship to fast fashion, sustainability in the textile sector, and the causes, consequences, and potential solutions.

The objective of this review is to comprehend theoretical concepts of greenwashing and bluewashing in context of textile sector. It examines theory and concepts of greenwashing and bluewashing via practical examples in the textile industry, highlighting the importance of empirical insights in navigating the intricacies of the issue. This study examines how theory fits with real-world actions in the textile sector, taking into account shifting laws. This review expands on existing studies and literature on greenwashing and bluewashing in the textile sector, providing a more subtle perspective on current difficulties and remedies.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Sustainability

Sustainability has become a buzzword in recent decades, with everything from cities and economies to businesses and livelihoods being described as sustainable [25].The term was first coined by a German forester in the 18th century, but it became popular with the birth of the contemporary environment movement in the late 1960s and 1970s [26]. Sustainability refers the optimal rate of utilization of non-renewable resource without risking the ability of future generation to fulfil their needs [27, 28]. The demand on the industrial sectors to safeguard the environment and practice social responsibility has intensified as a result of the policies and strategies created in the previous decade to promote sustainable development [29]. In order to effectively meet sustainability standards, it is crucial to evaluate the sustainability performance of the industrial sectors [30]. In addition, the textile industry is both one of the most important and one of the dirtiest manufacturing sectors in the world economy. It is made up of a very intricate supply chain and has significant societal issues [31]. Table 1 shows the major process of textile manufacturing with geographical location and the environmental impact for each process. It can be observed that developing countries which are responsible for manufacturing suffer from impacts caused by energy, water, and chemical consumption. And the developed countries which are responsible for retailing and consuming suffer from impacts caused by energy consumption and waste production [1]. As consumers' growing awareness of such devastating impacts, the textile industry is shifting their focus on sustainability more in the recent years.

Many researchers have looked at consumers' attitudes regarding sustainable products and their final purchasing decisions. Several studies have discovered that even while consumers generally have positive opinions regarding sustainable products, they frequently end up refraining from buying them [32-34]. There are various factors that contribute to this divergence, such as gender, age, moral maturity, price sensitivity, personal experience, lifestyle, and lack of choice. It is important to note that sustainable fashion is not just about buying new clothes. There are a number of other things that consumers can do to reduce the environmental impact of their fashion choices, such as: Repairing and reusing clothes, shopping for second-hand clothes, buying clothes from sustainable brands, supporting the recycling and upcycling of clothes and textiles [35].

However, it is important to be aware of the political and scientific dimensions of sustainability, and to recognize that the term itself is often used in ambiguous and contested ways, which many brands can exploit to uphold their images [25].

2.2 Pillars of sustainability

Social sustainability is an ideal state of well-being which might be expected to occur when social, economic, and environmental interactions foster inter-

Table 1: Global distribution of Textile Manufacturing Supply Chain

Process	Country	Impact
Agriculture	USA, China, Brazil, India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan	Energy consumption, Chemical consumption, Water consumption
Chemical Manufacture of synthetics	USA, China, India, Southeast Asia	Energy consumption, Chemical consumption, Water consumption
Yarn Manufacture	USA, China, India, Turkey, South Korea	Energy consumption, Chemical consumption, Water consumption
Fabric Manufacture	China, India, USA, South Korea	Energy consumption, Chemical consumption, Water consumption, Waste Production
Garments Manufacture	China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, India, Turkey.	Energy consumption, Waste Production
Trims Manufacture	China, India, Southeast Asia	Energy consumption, Waste Production
Retail Distribution Centre	UK, EU, USA	Energy consumption, Waste Production
Retailers	UK, EU, USA	Energy consumption, Water Consumption, Waste Production
Consumers	UK, EU, USA	Energy consumption, Waste Production
End Life		Energy consumption, Waste Production

generational equality and longitudinal equilibrium [36]. It is how businesses identify and manage their impacts on people, both positive and negative. It is important for businesses to have good relationships and engagement with their stakeholders, such as employees, workers in the supply chain, customers, and local communities. Businesses need to proactively manage their social impacts because they can have a significant impact on their ability to operate. For example, if a business does not treat its employees fairly or respect human rights, 5it may lose its social license to operate, which is the public's trust and acceptance of the business. Social sustainability is also important for business growth. Businesses that are socially responsible are more likely to attract and retain customers and business partners. They are also more likely to be innovative and productive [37]. Social sustainability is a broad concept that encompasses many different aspects of society, including social value, liability, well-being, group improvement, social capital, social support, human rights, work rights, place making, social obligation, social equity, social skills, group diversity, and human adjustment. It is about meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is based on the understanding that social, economic, and environmental issues are interconnected. Social obligation is a related concept that focuses on the specific issues that businesses and governments have a responsibility to address in order to achieve social sustainability. These issues include asset utilization, pollution, consumer well-being, human rights, health and safety, product fairness, and quality. Social obligation is a conscious effort to maintain and improve human well- being and prosperity while being environmentally responsible [38].

In the economic debate, economic sustainability is described as the need to maintain a permanent income for humankind, generated from non-declining capital stocks, without compromising the ability to fulfill the need of future stockholders [39, 40]. By ensuring economic sustainability, social sustainability can be also ensured.

Environmental sustainability is about protecting the environment for future generations. It is important to think about the long-term consequences of our decisions, because many of the impacts we have on the environment are not felt immediately. Businesses have a responsibility to society to implement environmentally sustainable practices. However, these practices do not have to be at odds with business goals. In fact, environmental sustainability can be good for business. For example, renewable energy companies are growing and creating new jobs. Using less energy and plastic in production can save businesses money. To achieve environmental sustainability, businesses need to take a long-term view and consider the environmental impacts of their decisions. This is an investment in the future, because businesses cannot thrive in a world where the environment is damaged [41].

2.3 Greenwashing

The term Greenwashing was coined first in 1986, by an environmentalist Jay Westervelt who published an essay on the hospitality industry about their practices to promote towel reuse, referring the negative utilization of green marketing generates greenwashing which is a term used to describe the act of companies capitalizing on the market demand for sustainability by making false or misleading claims about their environmental practices[42, 43]. Due to the increase of demand for sustainable products in the recent millennium, the rate of greenwashing has been increased drastically [44].

Green advertising includes all claims about a product's environmental benefits, regardless of their validity [16]. These statements may be about the product or service given, the company's manufacturing procedures and other internal practices, or external actions such as donations and forestry programs. A study reveals that brands employ environmental appeals in commercials to establish a green brand identity [45]. They differentiate between functional and emotional brand positioning methods. Emotional techniques are utilized to elicit pleasant emotions in order to foster favorable associations with the brand. Altruistic behavior, expressing environmental consciousness through green products, and spending time in nature can all lead to positive emotions [45-47]. Functional positioning methods promote good brand associations by highlighting a product's environmentally friendly qualities. Brands may, for example, promote environmental benefits over competing products. A combination of functional and emotional appeals leads to the most powerful perceived impacts [45].

A study from 1991 pointed out misleading claims in 58% of all green ads in selected US magazines from previous two years [19]. A study investigating green German and British print ads in the subsequent two decades (1993–2009) classified 77% of these ads as potentially deceptive [16]. In a report from 2009, the environmental marketing firm TerraChoice found that 98% of products making environmental claims were guilty of at least one form of greenwashing [48]. By 2010, the number of green products offered in North

American stores had increased by 73%, while the proportion of greenwashing remained almost unchanged at over 95% [49].

2.3.1 Seven sins of greenwashing

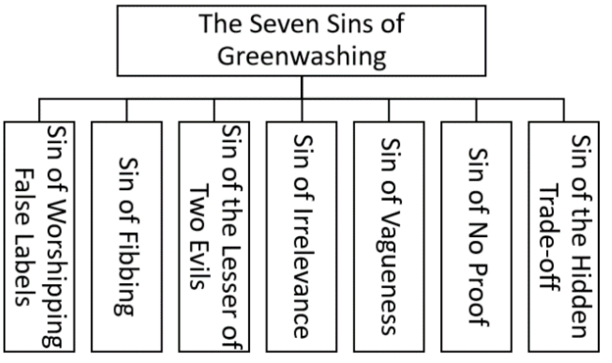

Figure 2: The seven sins of greenwashing

Figure 2 shows the seven sins of greenwashing based on the findings of TerraChoice. The „Sin of the Hidden Trade-off" occurs when environmental claims are made based on a relatively „narrow set of attributes" while ignoring other significant considerations. The „Sin of No Proof" occurs when brands fail to give credible evidence for their environmental commitments. The „Sin of Vagueness" occurs when a brand uses „poorly defined or broad" vocabulary to indicate environmental friendliness, such as uncontrolled buzzwords. The „Sin of Irrelevance" occurs when brands make promises that are irrelevant to consumers looking to make green purchasing decisions (for example, emphasizing the lack of a legally prohibited dangerous chemical). The „Sin of the Lesser of Two Evils" is committed when making environmental claims regarding a product that may be valid in comparison to a rival product but ignore the overall negative environmental impact of the product category. The „Sin of Fibbing" occurs when claims of environmental advantages are factually incorrect or deceptive. The „Sin of Worshipping False Labels" is committed when brands use „fake labels," such as those implying third-party certification.

2.3.2 Causes of greenwashing

Government rules & regulations

Over the past few years, environmental safety regulations have been implemented. However, environmental standards are not consistently followed, and some companies utilize greenwashing to appear environmentally beneficial [50]. Government rules regarding the environment encompass a range of governance strategies and principles, including strategic facts involving environmental specialists and operational issues such as integrating environmental accounting, management systems, green supply chains, government punishment, and tax subsidy mechanisms [51-54]. Companies can use government systems to meet environmental regulations, outperform competitors, and enhance their reputation [55, 56]. Greenwashing restrictions are regulated in some emerging markets, but their execution is dubious. Multinational companies might thus engage in greenwashing if their operations are driven by profit maximization.

Competitive market

Greenwashing is a common practice used by many brands to portray themselves as environmentally conscious. Greenwashing is a tactic used by institutions to gain a competitive advantage [57]. Brands compete in the product market to gain customers, grow market share, or ensure survival [58]. Competitive pressure from other firms targeting the same market consumers can impact a brand's behavior through specific routes. Greenwashing is commonly associated with supply-chain scandals [59].

Market opportunities

Market possibilities arise when a company can meet a new need that competitors are unable to supply. Multinational companies can capitalize on market opportunities by creating products that serve new markets or meet unmet local demand. Customers are becoming more ecologically conscious as global warming concerns develop [60, 61]. Greenwashing is used by corporations to recruit eco-friendly consumers and boost positive publicity [57, 62]. Some brands also frequently engage in greenwashing to capitalize on market opportunities [63].

2.4 Bluewashing

Any deceptive claims on the social initiatives or effects of a company, good, or procedure are referred to as „bluewashing"[43]. The problem of bluewashing was first brought up by critics in respect to the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. They accused corporations of leveraging their UN collaboration to hide their lax enforcement of labour and human rights norms [43]. The assertions of UNGC members avoiding their social obligations are supported by related research. It was found that while members only make low-cost attempts to improve in relatively superficial aspects, they do worse than nonmembers in critical and expensive aspects [21].

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria have emerged in response to increased transparency and accountability demands [64]. CSR programs typically express a company's commitment to addressing environmental and social challenges [65]. CSR programs prioritize legitimacy over economic gains [66]. A study found that simply demonstrating commitment increases company legitimacy [67]. CSR claims are often overstated, selective, or unrealistic [68]. ESG policies, like CSR, address a company's environmental effect and social responsibility activities, while also considering corporate governance [69]. „Bluewashing" is the practice of businesses „paying lip service" to their CSR goals instead of implementing meaningful changes to enhance their CSR performance [21]. A corporation that has been bluewashed appears more socially conscious than it actually is. Bluewashers do the bare minimum to appease detractors, advocacy organizations, and social media platforms because they believe that corporate social responsibility is the domain of the public relations division [70].

Since bluewashing is a relatively recent phenomena, research on it is challenging to distinguish because of a lack of agreed-upon nomenclature and hazy limits. Some writers, for instance, employ different terms, including „corporate hypocrisy" or „CSR-washing," which encompasses not just greenwashing and bluewashing but also pinkwashing (referring to breast cancer awareness) [68, 71, 72]. To distinguish the issue from environmental issues, other scholars favor the term „socialwashing" [73]. Furthermore, a number of researchers view bluewashing as a component of the broader phrase „greenwashing," rather than as a distinct tactic [74].

Cause-related marketing (CRM) is a common way that social appeals are used in advertising. CRM is the practice of allocating a portion of product sales revenue to charity organizations [75, 76]. The best outcomes from this approach are obtained when companies exhibit sustained dedication to nonprofits. Furthermore, brands run the danger of losing credibility if the donated amount is out of proportion to the purchase price [43]. However, although important aspects like labour and human rights are usually overlooked, CRM is commonly utilized to improve business social images. CRM is then utilized for the aim of bluewashing.

2.4.1 Common methods of bluewashing

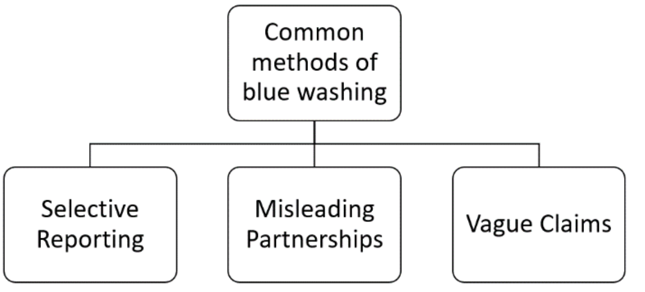

Figure 3: Common methods of bluewashing

Figure 3 shows some common bluewashing methods that is exercised by many fashion brands. Selective reporting leads textile industries to produce portrayals that may include a few positives that they intend to highlight while concealing bigger unethical actions. For example, they may claim to be donating a few pennies to charity while continuing to violate labour laws. A misleading collaboration with renowned social organizations can provide the impression that the company is ethical. Many firms use these organizations for public relations, although they do not always adhere to their criteria. It was stated that by affiliating with organisations such as the UN Global Compact (UNGC), many brands have attempted to create an ethical veneer while making no meaningful improvements to its negative affect. Vague claims lead to broad and ungenerous assertions regarding social responsibility, such as saying that the corporation concerns about 'just treatment of workers' but fails to submit evidence of their social compliance criteria [77].

2.4.2 Causes of bluewashing

Government rules & regulations

In many countries, there are weak regulations and enforcement mechanisms to hold companies accountable for their sustainability claims. This allows companies to get away with misleading marketing practices [78].

Consumer demand

Consumers are increasingly aware of environmental and social issues, leading to a growing demand for sustainable fashion. But many consumers lack the knowledge and tools to critically evaluate sustainability claims and identify bluewashing. This makes it easier for companies to deceive consumers and exploit it as an opportunity for bluewashing [79, 80].

Lack of transparency

The textile industry is notoriously opaque, with complex supply chains that make it difficult to track the origin of materials and the working conditions of labourers, suffering from low salaries, involuntary overtime, inconsistent hours, and poor safety conditions [81, 82]. This lack of transparency allows companies to make misleading claims about their sustainability practices. Brands often use vague and misleading marketing claims to promote their products as sustainable, without providing concrete evidence to support their claims. This can include using terms like „eco-friendly,““sustainable," or „ethical" without specific definitions or certifications.

Focusing on a single pillar of sustainability

Some companies may focus on one aspect of sustainability, such as using recycled materials or environmental impact, while neglecting other important factors like fair labour practices [83]. Implementing truly sustainable practices can be costly and complex, especially for smaller companies. This can create a barrier for some companies to adopt sustainable practices, leading them to resort to bluewashing instead.

3. CONSEQUENCES OF GREENWASHING AND BLUEWASHING IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

3.1 Consequence of greenwashing

Figure 4: Consequences of greenwashing

Consumers

Greenwashing has been an accepted norm among corporations, negatively impacting consumers of green products [84, 85]. Greenwashing by one brand might negatively impact consumers' propensity to purchase green textiles from other brands in the textile sector [86]. First, greenwashing causes information overload, making it harder for customers to assess textile products [87, 88]. Consumers may act suspiciously if they see a disconnect between a brand's performance and its green advertising efforts and they may have negative perceptions of that brand's hidden motivations [89, 90]. So consumers are becoming more skeptical of brands taking advantage of environmental trends [91, 92].

Corporations

Corporations often profit from greenwashing to portray themselves as environmentally beneficial, driven by pressure from shareholders and environmentalists. It can impact the role of business performance in environmental inspections and the relationship between CSR performance and reporting, causing employees to lose trust in their employer due to unsubstantiated promises, leading to anxiety as participants [93, 94]. Furthermore, greenwashing can undermine trust among customers, investors, and non-governmental organizations, leading to a crisis of belief, loss of brand value, and hindering green marketing efforts and has a detrimental impact on brand image, satisfaction, and equity [95-98].

Stakeholders

Greenwashing has become a common approach in marketing and business communication to fulfill stakeholder commitments and expectations [74, 84, 99]. It misleads shareholders about a company's social performance. This technique can garner stakeholder support, but requires minimal investment in corporate social responsibility as they lack sufficient information to analyze the environmental impact of various enterprises [59, 100-102]. Greenwashing practices undermine investors' and the community's trust in advertising. Other corporations may lose trust in a greenwashing firm diminishing their willingness to collaborate and share resources with it [103]. Partnering with a greenwashing company may increase stakeholders' fear of being identified as greenwashers, leading them to avoid the company. Greenwashing activity by corporations can hinder the integration of environmental, social, and governance factors into investment decisions, especially if the information supplied is untrustworthy [104]. Ultimately greenwashing can harm relationships with stakeholders and negatively impact financial performance and investment opportunities [59].

Society

Greenwashing can reduce trust in a company's environmental impact [105]. Some research indicates that exposure to greenwashing can increase consumer cynicism and mistrust [92, 106]. Excessive exposure might lead to confusion among consumers regarding a company's statements and motivations [57]. Even if shareholder profits surpass consumer losses, society's overall benefits will be decreased, including resource allocation and social welfare [107].

Overall, falsely claiming a product or process in the textile sector eco-friendly or environmentally sustainable results an obstacle in achieving sustainability and disrupting the environmental pillar of sustainability, which eventually disrupts the other pillars of sustainability as well.

3.1.1 Practice of greenwashing by top fashion brands

H&M

Chelsea Commodore, a marketing student, sued Swedish fast-fashion giant H&M for greenwashing. A study by Quartz validated Commodore's claim that the H&M Conscious Choice range had bogus sustainability information [108]. Although the clothing in this conscientious collection were constructed from recycled materials, H&M continues to use synthetic fibers derived from fossil fuels, which shed dangerous microfibres when washed. In addition, the company's annual manufacturing of three billion clothes cannot be sufficiently compensated for by simply supporting recycling and urging consumers to comply with the same.

Primark

Following the revelation of worker exploitation in Leicester sweatshops during the pandemic, Primark has received criticism for its 22-piece sustainable line 'EarthColors® by Archroma' [109]. The problem with these collections is that it only includes a small percentage of their „sustainable" products. It is contentious for a mass-production apparel firm like Primark to launch collections like this when the foundation of their corporate strategy is unsustainable [108]. Primark has been accused of promoting specific sustainability projects while downplaying or disregarding larger environmental and social challenges in the business. Critics contend that this strategy paints an inaccurate picture of the company's overall sustainability initiatives.

Zara

Zara faced criticism for launching the „Join Life" eco-friendly line and promising to eliminate harmful chemicals by 2020, yet making vague sustainability claims. Similar to H&M's „conscious collection," which uses materials like organic cotton, Tencel, and recycled wool does not significantly reduce its environmental impact, as the majority of its processes remain damaging. In June 2022, Zara collaborated with LanzaTech to release a special collection of clothes made from carbon emissions. Carbon emissions from industrial processes were captured and recycled to create fabric, reducing emissions into the atmosphere. Although LanzaTech has made significant progress in converting carbon emissions into fabrics, Zara's regular collections, which make up the majority of its sales and earnings, nevertheless have negative environmental implications [108].

Decathlon

A campaign aimed at exposing „greenwashing" tactics targeted French sports store Decathlon for making imprecise sustainability promises in marketing. The Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) demanded that the brand correct its misleading use of phrases such as „eco-design". Decathlon agreed to update or discontinue any sustainability claims for their products. To compensate for their transgression, the company donated £400,000 to groups promoting sustainability in the fashion sector [108].

3.2 Consequence of bluenwashing

Consumers

Bluewashing businesses trick consumers who desire to make an ethical choice by purchasing sustainable products that are not. This manipulation of consumers' goodwill is not only dishonest to customers, but it is also harmful to the societal progress toward a better future. Many fast-fashion manufacturers promote that they utilize 'sustainable' fabrics and production practices, but they continue to use processes that are harmful to the environment and workers. As a result, bluewashing undermines the credibility of companies and brands. When consumers discover that a company is engaging in mere hype or outright lying about its sustainability, they lose faith in even genuine environmentally friendly businesses [77].

Social Injustice

Bluewashing has led the textile sector to invest in items that violated alleged public pledges to human rights. Bluewashing also involves intentional or irresponsible misrepresentation, illegal business activities, and deceptive advertising regarding working conditions in various pioneer textile industries where it is claimed that child labour is exploited [110]. Auchan, a French retail corporation, engaged in misleading marketing methods despite publicly stating that it respects workers' rights, but a clothing label marketed by the company was discovered in the ruins of the Rana Plaza building collapse, which killed over 1,100 textile workers [111].

Overall, falsely claiming a product or process in the textile sector socially conscious or socially sustainable results hindrance in achieving sustainability and disrupting the social pillar of sustainability, which disrupts the other pillars of sustainability as well. Eventually, bluewashing can undermine the efforts of companies that are genuinely committed to sustainability, as it can create confusion and skepticism among consumers [77].

3.2.1 Practice of bluewashing by fashion giants

In 2021KnowTheChain benchmark evaluated the efforts of the 37 largest global apparel and footwear companies and discovered that luxury brands such as Kering and LVMH, as well as budget retailers Amazon and Walmart, are among the worst performers when it comes to addressing human rights exploitation in supply chains—clearly, a higher price tag does not guarantee better transparency and respect for workers' rights. Almost all companies (97%) declare a supplier code of conduct that forbids forced labour and a supplier monitoring system. However, they are ineffective in combating forced labour or providing worker remedies [112]. H&M, Calvin Klein, Gap, Nike, Adidas, Shien, and Tommy Hilfiger have all been accused of links to Uighur slave labour, either at the source or in factories. China is the world's greatest cotton grower, with about 84% of its cotton coming from the Xinjiang area, home to the Uighur people. Xinjiang is a major supply of cotton for global fashion firms. According to a consortium of over 180 human rights organizations, one in every five cotton products sold around the world contains charges of forced labour [78].

4. CONCLUSION HOW TO TACKLE GREENWASHING & BLUEWASHING

4.1 Regulatory frameworks and standards

The fast fashion industry requires for stronger rules and enforcement measures in the fast fashion business to address greenwashing and bluewashing. In fact, governments and authorities in many countries are beginning to make a greater impact by enacting laws to improve the transparency of environmental claims, such as the European Commission's Green Claims Directive or the UK Competition and Markets Authority's Green Claims Code. Similarly, the Netherlands' Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) launched an investigation of 170 prominent local businesses, including 70 fashion labels, in 2021 [113]. Those found guilty of greenwashing may face large fines of up to 900,000 euros per infringement, or a proportion of their company's revenue [113]. These sanctions serve as a significant disincentive to brands that engage in fraudulent greenwashing techniques. In France, forthcoming legislation in 2023 would require brands to include „carbon labels" on garments and textiles [114]. These labels will provide consumers an environmental „score" ranging from A to E, allowing them to make better informed purchasing decisions [114]. The implementation of such labeling rules seeks to empower customers by providing them with clear information about the environmental impact of the products they purchase.

4.2 Third-party verification

To combat greenwashing and bluewashing in the fast fashion business, it's crucial to develop independent certification methods tailored to the sector. Certification systems must meet rigorous standards and be endorsed by reputable third-party organizations with experience in sustainability and ethical practices. Certification programs in the fast fashion sector help prevent greenwashing and bluewashing by requiring companies to achieve sustainability requirements and prove their impact. Independent credentials help customers make educated decisions and support businesses committed to openness and ethics. They urge fashion firms to improve sustainability and lessen their environmental impact. Certifications encourage responsible behavior and promote positive change in the sector. Implementing extensive certification schemes builds trust and encourages customers to support brands that correspond with their beliefs.

4.3 Transparent supply chain

Transparency in supply chain refers to disclosing and making visible the entire manufacturing process, from raw material sourcing to distribution and retail. This transparency enables customers and stakeholders to gain a comprehensive understanding of the environmental and social implications of each stage in the supply chain. Brands should prioritize revealing supply chain information, such as factory locations, labour standards, and environmental practices. Implementing independent audits and certifications, such as those offered by the Fair Wear Foundation or the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, can improve openness and accountability to mitigate greenwashing and bluewashing.

4.4 Consumer empowering

From the customer's perspective, preventing Greenwashing should begin with an understanding of what it is. Empowering consumers with knowledge enable them to make informed judgments and evaluate the larger ramifications of their fashion choices [115]. Furthermore, educating consumers about the environmental and social consequences of their shopping habits allows them to recognize greenwashing and bluewashing, and promote truly sustainable firms. This may cause a shift in consumer behavior, with a growing desire for ecological and ethical fashion. As demand grows, brands are driven to modify their operations and provide more sustainable solutions, resulting in positive industry transformation [115]. Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and industry groups can conduct public awareness campaigns to educate consumers about greenwashing and bluewashing techniques and provide guidance on how to recognize and avoid them. These campaigns can use a variety of platforms, including social media, commercials, and events, to reach a diverse audience and promote sustainable consumption. Brands should take proactive steps to increase transparency and educate customers about their sustainable initiatives. This may involve disclosing thorough information about their supplier chain, sourcing procedures, environmental certifications, and social responsibility activities. Furthermore, organizing events, workshops, and seminars about sustainable fashion can assist increase consumer awareness. These events may include conversations about the environmental impact of rapid fashion, ethical production methods, and sustainable alternatives to identify greenwashing and bluewashing.

Online platforms can provide real-time information on a product's sustainability credentials, allowing shoppers to make more educated purchasing decisions. Furthermore, social media and online forums can encourage information exchange and awareness campaigns, allowing consumers to participate in debates and advocate for sustainable practices. Social media serves as the major medium for obtaining information and provides a great potential for companies and individuals to harness their influence in creating awareness and achieving recognition of greenwashing and bluewashing practices, especially given the significant flood of internet users [116].

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that due to increasing consumer demands, immature legislative frameworks and regulatory gaps in host nations can lead to the practice of greenwashing and bluewashing in the textile industry. These invariably harm the environment and society's advantages, even if they provide important interests for current stakeholders. While purposeful greenwashing and bluewashing may damage the environmental, social, and economic pillars of sustainability, they can raise consumer awareness and lead to more sustainable fashion solutions. One major obstacle in conducting this study was the lack of research regarding practice of bluewashing in the textile industry as many scholars considered bluewashing as a form of greenwashing rather than addressing as an individual issue. This study did not provide a further comprehensive analysis on other types of social washing. Further research is required on the mentioned field.

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