

Review Article

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**BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN
THE FASHION INDUSTRY: SUPPLY CHAIN
COMPLEXITY AND CONSUMERS'
ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOR GAP**

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Abstract: *Sustainability has become the world's megatrend. Many companies are under pressure from governments and the public to implement sustainable business practices. Unlike the food industry, where demand for sustainable products is relatively easy to achieve because food directly affects the health of consumers, in the fashion industry this is not the case. The aim of the paper is to analyze barriers in the development of a sustainable fashion industry, including: the complexity of establishing a sustainable supply chain, unclear certification and labeling system, high prices of sustainable fashion products, the high growth rate of the fast fashion industry, low consumer awareness of the importance of sustainability in the fashion industry which leads to a gap between consumer attitudes and buying behavior, and low demand for sustainable fashion products. In addition, sustainable fashion is a contradictory term. The whole point of fashion is a change of styles from season to season, which in turn accelerates purchases. This is contrary to the concept of sustainable fashion, which implies a slowdown in consumption. Meta-analysis was used as the main research method in this paper to integrate the findings of many studies and direct prospective research.*

Keywords: *sustainability, sustainable fashion, sustainable development, environment, sustainable supply chain, sustainable production, sustainable consumption*

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JEL classification: M31, L67, Q01

BARIJERE ODRŽIVOG RAZVOJA MODNE INDUSTRIJE: SLOŽENOST LANCA SNABDEVANJA I RASKORAK IZMEĐU STAVOVA I PONAŠANJA POTROŠAČA

Sažetak: Održivost je u svetu postala megatrend. Veliki broj kompanija je pod pritiskom države i javnosti da sprovodi održivu praksu poslovanja. Za razliku od prehrambene industrije u kojoj je lako pokrenuta tražnja za održivim proizvodima, jer hrana direktno utiče na zdravlje, u modnoj industriji situacija je drugačija. Cilj ovog rada je analiza prepreka u razvoju održive modne industrije, uključujući: složenost uspostavljanja održivog lanca snabdevanja, nejasan sistem sertifikovanja i etiketiranja, visoke cene održivih modnih proizvoda, visoku stopu rasta sektora brze mode i nisku svest potrošača o značaju održivosti u modnoj industriji, što dovodi do razilaženja stavova i ponašanja potrošača, te niske tražnje za održivim modnim proizvodima. Pored toga, održiva moda predstavlja kontradiktoran termin. Moda podrazumeva dinamiku i sezonsku promenu stilova, što ubrzava učestalost kupovine. To je u suprotnosti sa održivošću u dugom roku, koja podrazumeva usporavanje kupovine. U radu je primarno korišćena meta-analiza kao metoda istraživanja, da bi se objedinili rezultati dosadašnjih studija i usmerila buduća istraživanja.

***Ključne reči:** održivost, održiva moda, održivi razvoj, održivi lanac snabdevanja, okolina, održiva proizvodnja, održiva potrošnja*

1. INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades, researchers shifted their attention to sustainability in the fashion industry. Sustainability has become an immense worldwide trend. Hence numerous companies, pressured by society and the public, turned to sustainable business to decrease the negative impact on the environment and increase their employees' work conditions. According to a definition by World Commission on Environment and Development, "sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Lubowiecki-Vikuk, Dabrowska, & Machnik, 2020, p. 91). Contemporary concept of sustainability is wider than this and implies simultaneously taking care of societal welfare, environmental protection and economic performances (Hiller, & Kozar, 2017).

The fashion industry encompasses the creation and production of textile, clothing, shoes and fashion accessories. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the effects of which remain to be seen in the future, according to the span of production, trade and employability, the fashion industry was one of the fastest-growing industries on the global scale. Due to its immense impact on society, the environment and economy, it is in the constant spotlight (Amutha, 2017). The growth of the "fast fashion" sector caused immeasurable consumption growth with significant consequences. The fashion industry is also considered one of the greatest environmental pollutants due to huge energy, water and chemicals consumption, emissions and waste production (Gazzola, Pavione, Pezzeti, & Grechi, 2020). Furthermore, numerous big companies were sued for extremely bad work conditions, stirring additional media attention.

Regardless of the speedy growth of the fast fashion sector, many companies want to differentiate themselves on sustainable fashion as their core business (Sarker, 2016). Organic and sustainable products are gaining popularity because consumers are becoming more interested in environmentally friendly lifestyles. Unlike the food industry, where it was relatively easy to start the demand for sustainable products because of its direct impact on health, the demand for sustainable fashion products is still relatively low (Hur, & Cassidy, 2019). Achieving sustainability in the fashion industry does not depend solely on the supply but also demands for a change in attitudes and behavior, which is rather difficult to achieve (Srinivasan, Patel, & Jain, 2020).

Even though the topic is contemporary, our domestic scientific literature on the sustainable development of the fashion industry is rather scarce. The aim of the paper is to go into detail into the problems of sustainable development of the fashion industry from the point of view of both demand and supply, which still needs to be done and is the paper's main contribution. After defining the terms and the scope of the sustainable fashion industry, we will go through the supply chain structure, the scheme of certification and labeling, and the causes of consumers' attitudes-behavior gap. All these factors have a joint effect on the creation of numerous obstacles in the development of this extremely important industry.

2. THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION

There is still no widely accepted definition of sustainable fashion. As an umbrella term, it covers a set of fashion products (textile, clothing, shoes and accessories) whose production, distribution and usage are aligned with sustainability principles, taking into consideration environmental and social-economic aspects (Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016). The implementation of this concept implies a continual improvement of all stages of a product's

lifespan – design, raw material preparation, production, transportation, marketing, sales, usage, and disposal. From the environmental point of view, the aim is to decrease all undesired effects by careful exploitation of natural resources (water, salt, energy, soil, flora, fauna, ecosystems, etc.), by using renewable energy resources (wind, sun, etc.), and by enabling upcycling, repair and product recycling (Amutha, 2017). From the social-economic point of view, all stakeholders should advocate the improvement of work conditions in the fashion industry (in factories, transportation and sales), in line with ethical principles and international standards. Companies should promote sustainable consumption and direct product maintenance (Nerurkar, 2016).

The notion of "sustainable fashion" emerged in the '60s when consumers became aware of the devastating effect of the fashion industry on the environment (Jung, & Jin, 2014). Initially, the movement had a negative meaning. A change occurred in the '80s, when numerous campaigns started demanding a ban on fur usage, and especially in the '90s when ethical business questions in the fashion industry were raised. More competition caused a drop in prices, with further repercussions on work conditions and business ethics. All this attracted media attention in 2013, when over a thousand people died due to the demolition of Rana Plaza building (Henninger, 2015). The accusations of unethical work conditions in far East countries heavily hit big companies such as Adidas, Calvin Klein, H&M, Lacoste, Nike and Puma.

Sustainable fashion is often used interchangeably with organic fashion, eco-fashion, ethical fashion and green fashion, which are related, but still differ. Organic fashion refers to products made of at least 70% organic or natural fibers (such as cotton, jute, silk, wool), by using minimum chemicals (Choi, & Lee, 2015; Sarker, 2016). Eco-fashion implies a production and trade process with a positive or negligibly negative impact on the environment and society, by using organic textile, sustainable and recycled materials (such as plastic bottles) which were primarily not made of organic fibers solely. Ethical fashion is primarily related to the moral responsibility of production and trade system towards people and the environment. Green fashion is a narrower term. It includes the impact of production, distribution and consumption on the environment.

Sustainable fashion is aligned with the movement of "slow fashion," which encompasses ethical principles in the fashion industry, a lower production volume and buying of quality clothing rather than quantity (Dahlbo, Aalto, Eskelinen, & Salmenperä, 2017). It is often falsely presented as the opposite of the fast fashion concept, but its essence significantly differs. Fast fashion is the practice of retail chains to launch collections in line with the latest trends

relatively often. The umbrella term "fast" describes how fast can a catwalk design make its way into stores to keep up with the steady demand for new styles (Bick, Halsey, & Ekenga, 2018). It is an affordable price-range clothing, aimed at mass market, as an imitation of luxurious brands (Kaikobad, Zafar, Bhuiyan, Sultana, & Rahman, 2015). It implies a prompt prototyping, limited series with numerous varieties, efficient transportation and goods immediately ready to be sold. Retail chains such as Mango, Zara and H&M base their business on such business model, so as to attract middle class, mostly younger consumers, who follow trends the most.

3. COMPLEXITY OF SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY

The fashion industry relies on an extremely complex supply chain, even more so because it uses a significant amount of various resources. Achieving long-term sustainability in such a system poses a challenge because numerous problems arise at the very start. The structure of a sustainable supply chain in the fashion industry includes several phases: design, preparation of ecological materials, sustainable production process, sustainable distribution, sustainable retail, sustainable consumption and disposal of products (Shen, 2014).

Decisions on product design and development have 80% impact on all phases of the supply chain (Hur, & Cassidy, 2019). Materials choice, forms, shades and production system influence the usage and disposal of products. That way, designers also influence sustainable consumption. Starting back in the 1990's, two general sustainability approaches emerged and have been in usage ever since: 1) eco-efficiency (producing products with fewer materials) and 2) eco-sufficiency (achieving the same effect with fewer products) (Niinimäki, 2015).

The preparation and production of ecologically sustainable materials are the basis of a sustainable supply chain. In the textile industry, 80% of the fibers used are cotton (natural fibers) and polyester (synthetic fibers). Cotton production demands enormous amounts of water and pesticides, further polluting the soil, causing salt erosion and creating ecological waste (Bick et al., 2018). On the global scale, the fashion industry causes 20% loss in water, 10% harmful gas emission, 24% of insecticides and 11% of pesticides are used in cotton growth. In comparison, 85% of textile ends up in the ground after being disposed of (UNECE, 2018). The production of PET fibers demands for less water and soil, but at the same time it emits more carbon dioxide. Hand in hand with the growth of cotton price, other synthetic fibers are being used more (such as polypropylene, nylon and acrylic). However, their production also causes air pollution and greenhouse effect (Shen, 2014). Similarly, a lot of water and chemicals are used in the process of material dyeing and treatment. In contrast,

untreated water is mostly disposed of in local waters, releasing heavy metals and poisons (Khan, & Malik, 2014). The usage of formaldehyde and certain saturated acids is legally limited in the European Union, while the situation is not the same in countries where the production actually takes place (Bick et al., 2018).

To minimize the negative impact, sustainable fashion products are often made of organic fibers, and by using as little chemicals as possible, or from recycled materials made of used clothing, plastic bottles or industrial waste. Patagonia was the first to start using recycled plastic bottles to produce jackets; Marks & Spencer launched a collection of suits made of recycled materials, while Adidas produced sneakers made of plastic bottles (Moorhouse, & Moorhouse, 2017). Natural cellulose and protein fibers are better for health and the environment, but some artificial fibers are more sustainable. Innovative material Lyocell is made of bamboo cellulose through the system of a closed-loop production cycle whereby 99% of the chemicals used are recycled (Bick et al., 2018). It is sometimes difficult to distinguish what sustainable materials are in fact. Numerous natural materials could be considered organic at the very start, however, they can get contaminated during bleaching, drying, printing and final processing. Certain "mixed" materials are made of both organic and non-organic elements because fibers of various origins are mixed into one.

Clothing sewing, and fitting are the next steps in the production process. 90% of production takes place in underdeveloped countries, where work and safety conditions are often relatively low (Anguelov, 2016). The fashion industry employs every sixth worker in the world, 80% of which are women (UNECE, 2018). Underdeveloped countries' health reports indicate that employment in the textile industry caused numerous respiratory, muscular and reproductive problems, as well as work injuries, even death (Akhter, Rutherford, & Chu, 2017; Gebremichael, Kumie, & Ajema, 2015). Since the 1911 fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in Manhattan, with 145 casualties, what emerged in the USA and Europe were textile unions and improvements in work protection and work standards. However, the initial problems were simply transferred to underdeveloped countries (Bick et al., 2018).

Distribution of fashion products is a complex one, especially for the companies which thrive on the concept of fast fashion and rely on the short delivery time. In the context of sustainability, transportation means play an important role. Carbon dioxide emissions are significantly higher in road transportation compared to water transportation and railways. One of the solutions for the big distances between production and sales locations is using local suppliers to minimize the transportation distances (Choi, Chiu, Govindan, & Yue, 2014).

Sustainable retail is directly related to sales venue marketing as one of the crucial points where consumers can familiarize themselves with the product. Other than offering information on product sustainability, retail venues have also introduced the practice of offering recycling options, raising consumers' awareness of the manufacturers' responsibility. It was observed that consumers are more likely to buy ecological products if the marketing of such products is successful (Chan, & Wong, 2012).

The product usage phase consumes over 80% of the energy required for the product's entire life cycle, especially due to washing. Temperature increase from 30°C to 40°C can increase energy consumption by up to 30% (Saicheua, Cooper, & Knox, 2011). Innovative detergents enable washing natural white fibers at 30°C instead of 90°C. A joined Marks & Spencer retail chain, and Ariel laundry detergent (P&G) campaign on the topic achieved great results. The longer the usage of clothes, the lower the negative impact on the environment. This is difficult to achieve because new clothing is constantly bought and thrown away as a result of affordable prices. At the end of its usage, majority of clothing ends up in the ground in the form of waste, where numerous synthetic fibers are not degradable, while natural fibers (such as wool) release methane during the process. Numerous products, such as shoes and winter jackets, cannot be recycled or are not degradable, meaning they remain in the ground for centuries (Pal, Shen, & Sandberg, 2019). The problem of textile waste is a particularly burning issue in underdeveloped countries, where there is usually no efficient waste management system. Clothing items unsold in the market of developed countries are sent to underdeveloped countries in stacks, then resorted again, and what is unsold in the end again remains waste (Anguelov, 2016).

The initiative on the introduction of prolonged manufacturers' responsibility attracted a lot of attention. This initiative implies the manufacturers' obligation to return the product after it has been used to enable its re-usage, redesign or recycling. That way, companies would be forced to manage waste or to compensate for the expenses (Dahlbo et al., 2017). To encourage less clothing waste, Patagonia came up with recycling vouchers, while H&M and Ikea offered the possibility to exchange used clothing and textile for new ones. Brydges, Retamal and Henlon (2020) believe that the current pandemic could even cause a "sustainability reset," which the fashion industry needs. During the last few years, numerous fashion companies underwent the business process re-engineering and introduced sustainability programs. Sustainability, in this case, is a differentiation means as well as a means to improve their public image. However, the introduction of sustainability is heavily related to global initiative and pressure, especially in developed European countries (Choi, & Lee, 2015).

Even the fast fashion sector companies such as Zara, H&M, Mango, Uniclo, Asos, etc. started investing in sustainability, contrary to their business model. H&M stands out in particular by providing sustainability conditions in all chain phases, including the growth of organic cotton, recycling materials, promoting fair work conditions, using local resources, intelligent transportation systems, etc. (Shen, 2014).

Many experts advocate the concept of a "circular economy," based on the "produce-use-recycle-reuse" principle - almost a closed circle (Geissdoerfer, Savaget, Bocken, & Hultink, 2017). Instead of disposing of damaged, unsold goods and waste to landfills, the idea is to reuse them in the production process to regenerate value (Pal et al., 2019). Some luxurious brands do make products contributing to the circular economy, such as Stella McCartney shoe collection, made of biodegradable and recycled plastics, or Viktor & Rolf collections which use pieces from previous collections (Moorhouse, & Moorhouse, 2017). Consumers could contribute to the circular economy in numerous ways: by buying sustainable and second-hand clothing, by maintaining, fixing and reusing and recycling (Dahlbo et al., 2017). However, it is crucial to form such habits in consumers, which is still at its beginnings. Achieving sustainability in all phases of the supply chain poses an immense challenge and is highly dependent on corporate responsibility, innovation, trade policies and consumer habits. Although a lot has been done to decrease the fashion industry's negative impact on the environment, the sector is still dominated by the concept of fast fashion, annulling these efforts. And, last but not least, less activities were carried out in the lowest end of the chain (consumption and disposal of), even though there is still a long way to go.

4. CERTIFICATION AND LABELING IN SUSTAINABLE FASHION INDUSTRY

Having in mind that consumers ask for ever more information, certifying and labeling sustainable products and processes attracts even more attention (Kabukcu, & Ensari, 2016). Numerous studies have helped set up sustainability standards, which refer to the safety and fair treatment of consumers, manufacturers, workers, society and the environment. An acquired certificate means that a company properly applies the standards in their business and opens the door to a possibility of labeling products or a phase in the supply chain (Amutha, 2017). In the fashion industry, certifying and labeling is quite complex due to a "multilayered" supply chain. If a company uses organic raw materials, it does not mean they are not using chemicals in the production process or that they are providing fair work conditions – all subject to various

labels (Henninger, 2015). Currently, there are over 30 certifying systems and several hundreds of labels, none of which are widely accepted. Furthermore, companies are not legally obliged to certify their products, so they do it at their free will and choose labels based on the industry they belong to, their available budgets and their decision on how much to display to the public. Some companies only certify their raw materials or finished goods; others certify all production stages. The possibility of certifying is influenced by the transparency of the supply chain, which is a difficult task to achieve in the fashion industry because almost 80% of production takes place in underdeveloped countries without adequate regulations, and the chain is heavily fragmented (Niinimäki, 2015).

The main initiators of the sector regulation and providing standards were the British Soil Association, the German International Association Natural Textile Industry, the American Organic Exchange 100, the Japanese Organic Cotton Association, the Better Cotton Initiative, the Swiss Oeko-Tex and the European Eco-Label (Saicheua et al., 2011). The first four from this list formed the Global Organic Textile Standards (GOTS) to control all textile processing stages, from fibers preparation to finished goods (Amutha, 2017). Next to the GOTS, some other environmental protection standards are the OEKO-TEX, the Better Cotton Initiative, the BluDesign, the Leather Working Group, the Organic Content Standard and PETA. Furthermore, the SA8000, the WRAP, the Nest and the Fairtrade International are focused on fair and safe work conditions, together with the B Corp and Eco-Age holistic standards.

According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), there are three types of labels: type 1 is awarded by a third party (governmental organization or a private non-profit organization), type 2 is based on the self-declared company claims, and type 3 are the quantitative pieces of information on the product sustainability comparable to other products in the category (Henninger, 2015). The introduction of sustainability labels should offer a win-win situation for all stakeholders, but some disagree because labeling is perceived as too complex (Henninger, 2016). Next to the aforementioned standards, what emerged are various tools that could help companies in achieving sustainability (such as Considerate Design, Cradle to Cradle, Eco Index, Higg Index, Sustainable Design Cards etc.), yet awareness on them is limited (Hur, & Cassidi, 2019; Kozłowski, Bardecki, & Searcy, 2019). For example, the "Eco Index" is a tool enabling companies to measure in which chain stages they could achieve improvement, considering the soil, water, energy, waste, degradability, chemicals usage and their impact on the environment (Wang, Liu, Kim, & Kim, 2019).

5. PERCEPTION OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION AND THE CONTRADICTION CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Consumers of fashion products completely differ from consumers in other sectors when making ethical decisions. Numerous studies have shown a significant gap in attitudes on sustainable fashion, ethical consumption, environment protection and recycling (mostly positive) and, on the other hand, buyer behavior, i.e. what they actually do (Connell, 2011; Henninger, & Singh, 2017; Niinimäki, 2015; Srinivasan et al. 2020; Vehmas, Raudaskoski, Heikkilä, Harlin, & Mensonen, 2018). A segment of consumers only buy sustainable fashion products, but it is extremely small. For them, these products are a part of their lifestyle. In some industries, such as the food industry, sustainability, or the so-called eco-trend, is a standard that belongs to the mass consumption segment (Kabukcu, & Ensari, 2016). However, it is easier to start the consumption of organic food because it directly influences health, while shopping for non-sustainable clothing does not have a direct health impact, thus the purchase of such products is not so easy to establish.

Most people do not even know how clothes are made, what the consequences of artificial fibers on the environment are, nor what intense cotton growth is (Vehmas et al., 2018). According to Srinivasan et al. (2020), clothes buyers are aware of global environmental pollution, especially caused by plastic waste, but are absolutely unaware of how clothing production and consumption impact pollution. Consumers know very little about clothing production in underdeveloped countries and are not familiar with the availability of ecological fashion products nor their significance (Armstrong, Connell, Lang, Ruppert-Stroescu, & LeHew, 2016; Gazzola et al. 2020). Sustainability awareness is significantly higher in developed countries, but the number of promotional activities on the topic in underdeveloped countries is low. Even the people who know about sustainable fashion are familiar with only the basics (Sarker, 2016). The notion of sustainable fashion is more related to the production process and materials and very little to its social aspects (Srinivasan et al., 2020). Consumers' awareness on the certification of these products is also rather low, and they find the labels unclear. A very small number of respondents recognized some eco-labels, although they mostly linked them to organic food (Saicheua et al., 2011).

Consumers support the idea of recycling the textile waste as well as the idea of a circular economy (Bianchi & Birtwistle, 2012). A paradox is that even buyers of fast fashion brands express environmental concern, which indicates that they are not aware of the importance of sustainable fashion (Vehmas et al., 2018). Respondents tend to claim to be interested in eco-fashion, but most are not

ready to spend more money or choose an uncomfortable material. Although for manufacturers, sustainable fashion stands for a segment of mass consumption (mainstream), consumers mostly perceive it as a premium segment because of its price (Henninger et al., 2016). Interestingly enough, although most respondents have never shopped for or considered buying these products, they believe such products are expensive and high quality (Saicheua et al., 2011). According to Landrum (2018) 70% of respondents are willing to pay a higher price for products of companies that invest in sustainability, but they fail to do so in real life. Namely, consumers have an acceptable price range they are willing to pay at their disposal.

Awareness of sustainable fashion and related notions (eco/green/ethical fashion) depends on demographic variables. Younger consumers perceive eco-clothing as boring and non-trendy (Joy et al., 2012). Even though they support the sustainability idea, they do not prioritize it. Older generations consider themselves to be more ethical than the younger ones (Henninger, & Singh, 2017). Women consider fashion to be unique, while men's opinion is completely opposite (Kozlowski, Henninger, & Alevizou, 2017). Men are less motivated to pay higher prices for sustainable fashion than women (Gazzola et al., 2020). There are cultural differences as well. Ever more consumers in China are changing their shopping habits with the desire to preserve the environment. For them, buying eco-clothing is a means of social approval (Chi, 2015). A higher price of these products for the British implies higher quality, while for the French it stands for a symbol of a higher status (Carey, & Cervelon, 2014).

There is a lot of consumer suspicion about labeling products as green/eco/ethical, thanks to numerous examples of eco-manipulation. It is a paradox that companies in the fast fashion sector turn to numerous secondary ecologically oriented activities (such as venue recycling, bags made of recycled materials, etc.) to display themselves as responsible. Many consumers do not believe in company transparency regarding ethical production or green product rankings (Gazzola et al, 2020).

When buying fashion products, trends lead the way. The choice is also influenced by the style, price, brand and quality, while sustainability is not even taken into consideration (Chi, 2015; Srinivasan et al., 2020). Fashion is a symbolic category, a part of a lifestyle and a means of social adjustment. Most consumers are led by their personal needs, not the needs of others who are a part of the supply chain. Sustainability per se does not suffice to influence shopping for clothes because sustainability is complex and often misunderstood (Harris, Roby, & Dibb, 2016). The improvement of social status, altruism, consumers' perceived value (the level of belief that a personal effort can make a difference) and the feeling of happiness significantly influence the consumers' attitudes on

buying sustainable clothing (Reimers, Magnuson, & Chao, 2017). Furthermore, for consumers, eco-fashion does not have an attractive appeal (Sarker, 2016). Manufacturers and retail sellers must be aware that trends are the main initiators of shopping for clothes. It could even be said that a human desire to harmonize one's appearance with fashion trends is in collision with sustainable fashion, which implies the production of clothing items with a long life cycle. Poor media promotion of sustainable fashion is another cause of the lack of consumer interest. Social media today are the most responsible for the dissemination of such information (Hasbullah, Sulaiman, & Mas'od, 2020). Adequate communication could encourage people to buy and recycle sustainable clothing. However, the main challenge of promoting sustainable fashion is to decrease consumption while at the same time selling a product.

6. CONCLUSION

The trend of forming a sustainable supply chain is taking momentum in numerous industries worldwide. However, there are still countless obstacles for the development of the sustainable fashion industry, some of which may be extremely high expenses and time required for research so as to start sustainable production; high prices of sustainable fashion products, unclear standards and labeling, and, most importantly – a huge gap between consumer's attitudes on sustainability and consumer behavior. Since fast fashion became a dominant business model, consumers have at their disposal more affordable products that follow the latest trends, causing higher consumption. Opposite to it is the slow fashion, implying for slower consumption. Namely, there are three-level barriers to starting a sustainable consumption: 1) individual, because it is difficult to make people give up their hedonistic needs, 2) social, because consumers are under the influence of reference groups, and 3) cultural because numerous techniques of contemporary marketing practice constantly impose a desire to keep up with the latest trends. That is why it is debatable whether the fashion industry could achieve sustainability in supply chain or just make it seem more sustainable.

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