

**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS: A CASE STUDY OF ETHICAL
PRACTICES IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY**

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	4
1.1 Introduction	4
1.2 Background of the Study.....	5
1.3 Research Aim and Objectives	6
1.4 Research Questions.....	7
1.5 Problem Statement.....	7
1.6 Rationale of the Study.....	8
1.7 Summary	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Social Responsibility in International Business	10
2.3 A Glimpse Into The Fashion Industry	12
2.4. The Evolution of Social Responsibility in the Fashion Industry.....	13
2.5. Social Responsibility Initiatives Implemented by The Fashion Industry	14
2.6. Social Responsibility Challenges in the Fashion Industry	16
2.7. Ethical Practices Implemented by the Fashion Industry	16
2.8. Case Studies of Fashion Brands and Their Ethical Practices as well as Socially Responsible Practices	17
2.9. Future Trends and Opportunities for Social Responsibility in Fashion.....	18
2.10. Theoretical Framework	19
2.10.1: Stakeholder theory	19
2.10.2: TBL approach.....	20
2.10.3: CSR theory	21
2.11. Literature Gap.....	21
2.12 Summary	22
Chapter 3: Research Methodology.....	23

3.1 Introduction	23
3.2 Research Philosophy.....	23
3.3 Research Approach.....	25
3.4 Research Design	26
3.5 Research Method	27
3.6 Data Collection Method and Sources	28
3.7 Data Analysis	29
3.8 Ethical Consideration.....	30
3.9 Summary	30
Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings.....	32
4.1 Introduction	32
4.2 Thematic Analysis	32
Theme 1: Importance and Relevance of Social Responsibility in the Fashion Industry	32
Theme 2: Benefits and Opportunities of Socially Responsible Activities	33
Theme 3: Various social responsibility activities implemented by companies	35
Theme 4: Challenges in Implementing Socially Responsible Practices.....	37
4.3 Overall Discussion.....	38
4.4 Summary	41
Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendation	42
5.1 Conclusion.....	42
5.2 Linking with the Objectives	44
5.3 Limitations of the Study.....	45
5.4 Recommendations.....	46
Chapter 6: Personal Reflection	48
References	50

Chapter1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Taking the social responsibility of the fashion industry to organise their business internationally, ethical practices are the most necessary point. Without any such ethical phenomena, no such industries can make high profits or businesses. Organisations are being evaluated for their effects on humanity and the natural environment in addition to their profitability in today's linked globe. The idea of social accountability has grown significantly in prominence as globalisation continues to influence worldwide corporate practices (Crane et al., 2019). Beyond the statutory requirements, an organisation's dedication to behaving morally and beneficially impacts society is referred to as social accountability.

This moral structure applies to a variety of sectors, which includes the fashion sector, which has come under fire for its effects on both the natural world and society. As a direct consequence, numerous fashion firms have realised the importance of implementing ethical and sustainable socially conscious practices. The fashion business, which is recognised for its inventiveness and ingenuity, nevertheless faces many ethical difficulties. The fashion sector has come under fire for its detrimental effects on employees, neighbourhoods, and ecosystems, ranging from unethical labour practices to biodiversity destruction.

This case study will look at ethical practices in the fashion sector in order to investigate the place of social accountability in global business. This study will explore how fashion firms are incorporating social accountability throughout their main business activities, supply networks, and associations with stakeholders through practical instances and projects.

The fashion business, which is recognised for its inventiveness and ingenuity, nevertheless faces many ethical difficulties (Gao et al., 2020). The fashion sector has come under fire for its detrimental effects on employees, neighbourhoods, and ecosystems, ranging from unethical labour practices to biodiversity destruction.

In this chapter, the background of the study, which gives an overview of the fashion industry's ethical approaches will be discussed. The aims and objectives of the whole study will also be mentioned. The problem statement and rationale of the whole study will also be mentioned in this chapter.

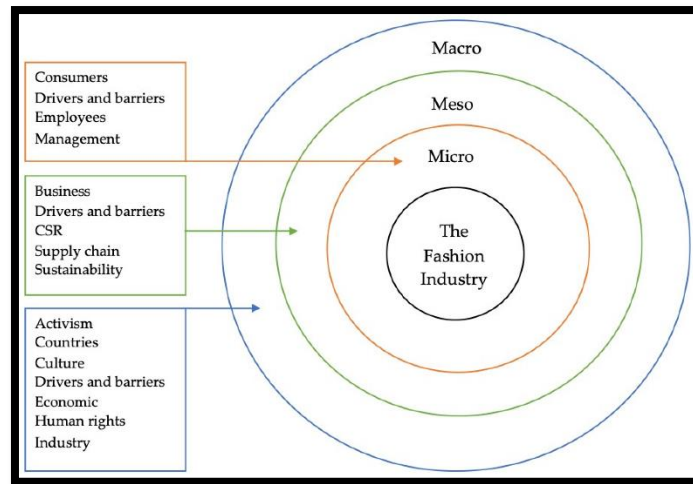


Figure 1.1: Stakeholders in the fashion industry

(Source: Gaoet al., 2020)

1.2 Background of the Study

The creation, promotion, and utilisation of clothing, shoes, and other accessories are all part of the worldwide fashion business. It contributes significantly to the worldwide economy by providing jobs and income for millions of individuals globally. However, the fashion business is renowned for its convoluted and sometimes contentious labour practices, supply chains, and adverse environmental impacts.



Figure 1.2: Objectives of CSR

(Source: Marques and Ferreira, 2019)

Increasing awareness and desire for more ethical practices in the fashion business have emerged in recent years (Marques and Ferreira., 2019). Customers, advocacy organisations, and states have pushed fashion firms to take on more social responsibility by addressing issues including child labour, sweatshop conditions, unequal pay, and pollution of the environment. As a result, several fashion stores and companies have made efforts to strengthen their ethical standards. An increasing understanding of the necessity of social accountability in global business, notably in the fashion sector, has emerged in the past few years. Transparency, responsibility, and ethical business practices from fashion firms are becoming more and more in demand by customers, advocacy organisations, and states. Increased awareness, media coverage, and social media activity that highlighted the harmful effects of the business were the catalysts for this demand for reform.

In response to these expectations, fashion businesses and retail outlets have strengthened their moral standards and exhibited social accountability. Codes of action, audits of suppliers, and licenses have all been introduced by several businesses to guarantee transparent supply chains and fair labour practices (Brewer, 2019). Moreover, there is a boom in environmentally conscious and sustainable activities, such as the utilisation of organic resources, reuse and recycling, and minimising wastage in the production or manufacturing stage.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The main aim of the proposed study will be to study the role of social responsibility in the field of international business, while specifically focusing on ethical as well as sustainable practices in the fashion industry.

In the context of the proposed aim of this study, the researcher has further proposed the following objectives that the researcher will try to address in the study:

- To understand the concept of social responsibility with respect to international business as well as its importance and relevance in the fashion industry
- To study the challenges faced by organisations working in the fashion industry while they implement socially responsible practices.
- To investigate the benefits as well as opportunities that can be gained by implementing socially responsible activities in this industry.

- To determine the examples of those organisations that have already implemented such practices successfully in the fashion industry.
- To evaluate the overall impact of socially responsible activities on businesses as well as communities in this industry.

1.4 Research Questions

With respect to the research questions, the researcher will be answering the following questions of this study:

Question 1: What is social responsibility in the context of international business and why is it important for international business?

Question 2: How are socially responsible activities relevant to the fashion industry in an international arena?

Question 3: What are the pros and cons of implementing socially responsible activities in the fashion industry internationally?

Question 4: How have international companies in the fashion industry implemented socially responsible activities?

Question 5: How is international business in the fashion industry impacted due to socially responsible activities?

1.5 Problem Statement

The fashion industry is the fastest moving according to their production standards that depend on illegal labour practices. That reports the low remuneration and improper working cases for the textile workers. Apart from this, excessive use of clothing items and wastage in order to match the trend, the growing companies have a huge impact on the environment. It leads to a reduction in resources and pollution in the world. Thus, it shows the importance of social responsibility and moral practices in this fashion industry. Therefore, building new practices related to social responsibility is very complicated for global supply chains. There are so many difficulties regarding these social practices that start from cultural differences and government regulations to price determinations (Chan et al., 2020). With the help of fashion

companies, the function of social responsibility and its factors after implementation can be studied.

With the help of some other companies that are dealing with challenges regarding social responsibility, fashion companies can tackle complex parts and strategic practices can be implemented. Competition between different companies can also be challenging to maintain social responsibility (Hiep et al., 2021). There are too many technological innovations happening in a few years for the fast-paced fashion industry and issues with technology are a never-ending challenge for this segment. To maintain social responsibilities, some companies have to face issues with production with newer practices. Sometimes the problem arrives when there is a lack of a clear framework of social responsibility and measuring the correct type. Another important problem is the lack of accountability and transparency among employees related to the company. Companies can only solve problems by developing sustainable strategies and delivering desired social services to the stakeholders can increase their overall effectiveness.

1.6 Rationale of the Study

The rationale of the study of social responsibility in international business, significantly through a study of ethical practices, is pushed by several factors.

Consumer awareness is rising as people are becoming more aware of how the items, they buy affect society and the natural world. Sustainable and ethically made apparel is increasingly popular in the fashion business. To satisfy customer expectations and keep a competitive advantage, businesses must comprehend the significance of social accountability in global business (Fransen et al., 2019). The fashion business is extremely internationalised, with intricate supply networks that frequently include several nations and players. International enterprises have both possibilities and problems as a result of this globalisation. The study can provide insight into social responsibility issues that come from operating worldwide supply chains by looking at ethical practices in the apparel sector.

Emphasising ethical business practices enhances brand perception and reputation. Companies that give priority to social responsibility have a higher probability of attracting and retaining customers, and establishing enduring relationships with suppliers, employees, and other stakeholders. Examining ethical practices in the fashion industry allows the researcher to investigate the influence of social responsibility on brand image and competitiveness in the

market. Social responsibility extends beyond legal obligations and encompasses the long-term sustainability of businesses (Feng and Ngai., 2020). Through the integration of ethical practices into their operations, companies can reduce risks, enhance operational efficiency, attract and retain talented individuals, and make positive contributions to the communities in which they operate. Conducting a case study on ethical practices in the fashion industry can delve into the business advantages of social responsibility and provide valuable insights that can be applied to other industries.



Figure 1.3: Different aspects of CSR

(Source: Feng and Ngai, 2020)

1.7 Summary

Summarising this whole chapter includes the topics that are discussed above. Mainly the first chapter of this study includes an introduction to this topic. What the topic is, and other points regarding the topic are mentioned within this point. Then the background of this study is mentioned. The research aims and objectives help to know the expected outcome of this study. There are questions as well, the study is going to answer all of those. Then there is a problem statement that depicts the issues that are seen in the fashion industry regarding ethical practices and social responsibility. The rationale of this study is mentioned as well which depicts the main principle behind this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The fashion business has a huge worldwide impact and makes sizable revenues, yet it has come under fire for its unethical behavior and social obligations. Fashion firms are being urged to adopt accountability and sustainable practices due to issues including transparency in supply chains, environmental impact, and breaches of labour rights. More specifically, the fashion sector is the subject of the literature review's discussion on the social accountability of businesses worldwide. Its goal is to review the literature on the steps adopted by the fashion industry to tackle ethical issues and the results of its social accountability programs (Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019). This paper attempts to offer useful insights into the wider consequences of social responsibility within the global business by utilising the fashion sector as an instance study. This literature study seeks to synthesise current studies in order to give a thorough knowledge of the significance of social accountability in global commerce, notably in the fashion sector. It examines the moral dilemmas confronting the fashion industry, its embrace of ethical behavior, and the effects of social responsibility upon numerous facets of global corporate operations (Neumann et al., 2020). This review aims to shed insight into how ethical practices affect consumer behavior, stakeholder relationships, credibility, and business competitiveness in fashion firms by analysing case investigations and research findings.

2.2 Social Responsibility in International Business

The concept of "social accountability" in the context of global commerce refers to the moral and ethical actions that multinational firms take to solve the problems related to society, the ecosystem, and the economy in the nations in which they conduct business. It includes the obligation for MNCs to take into account numerous stakeholders' interests when performing their commercial operations, including those of their workers, clients, neighbourhoods, and surroundings.

Because of a number of causes, the idea of social responsibility throughout worldwide commerce has recently attracted a lot of attention. Initially, as a result of globalisation, MNCs now have a wider audience and more influence, making it even more important for them to behave morally and to benefit the communities in which businesses operate (Nova-Reyes et al., 2020). In addition, stakeholders, such as customers, investors, and activist organisations,

are increasingly calling for firms to be more accountable and transparent about their ethical and ecological practices. Implementing social responsibility in the context of international business encounters various obstacles and difficulties. The existence of cultural and institutional variations among countries creates hurdles in establishing consistent global practices for social responsibility. Companies face the task of navigating diverse legal and regulatory structures, cultural traditions, and the expectations of stakeholders. Additionally, the availability of resources and financial limitations can impede the adoption of social responsibility initiatives, particularly for smaller or financially restricted businesses. There are several advantages connected with becoming environmentally conscious, according to extensive studies into the connection between social accountability and corporate performance. According to this research, adopting socially responsible behaviours is associated with favourable financial results including improved financial performance, better sales development, and greater return on capital (Woodside and Fine, 2019). Additionally, organisations that place a high priority on ethical behavior are more likely to draw in and keep talented workers, which boosts job satisfaction, efficiency, and rates of staff turnover. Additionally, social responsibility programs help to build a positive business image, encourage client loyalty, and draw in customers who are socially conscious.



Figure 2.1: Tenets of ethical trading

(Source: Woodside and Fine, 2019)

2.3 A Glimpse Into The Fashion Industry

In the past few years, fashion manufacturing has seen a considerable transition as it has become increasingly aligned with social accountability and ethical standards. This change is in reaction to increasing demand from consumers for clothing made sustainably and ethically, in addition to increasing recognition of the industry's negative effects on both the environment and society. The fashion sector is aligned with social accountability and ethical standards in the following significant ways.

- i) Sustainable Resources: Sustainable resources are being used more often by apparel manufacturers. This includes eco-friendly textiles like Tencel that is created from wood fibre obtained from forests that are managed sustainably, organic cotton, plus recycled linens (Luque and Herrero-García, 2019). By using sustainable materials, companies hope to lessen their impact on the environment and encourage resource preservation.
- ii) Fair trade: Sustainable development and ethical manufacturing practises are priorities for many fashion manufacturers. They make an effort to guarantee that production workers receive fair pay, work in safe environments, and are not exploited. In order to validate their ethical practises, brands can also work together with unbiased accreditation organisations.
- iii) Transparency in supply chain: Transparency is becoming more and more important in the fashion sector. Customers want to understand the process and exactly where their clothing is created. Brands are sharing more details concerning the supply chains they use, including where their raw resources are sourced and what production procedures are used. Consumers may make educated decisions because to this transparency, which also promotes businesses that value moral behavior.
- iv) Social Initiatives: A growing number of fashion companies are becoming involved in charitable causes and neighbourhood improvement initiatives (Jung et al., 2020). They could work alongside local communities and craftsmen to maintain traditional handicraft while giving them fair job possibilities. Additionally, brands give to charity organisations and promote social concerns on their platforms.

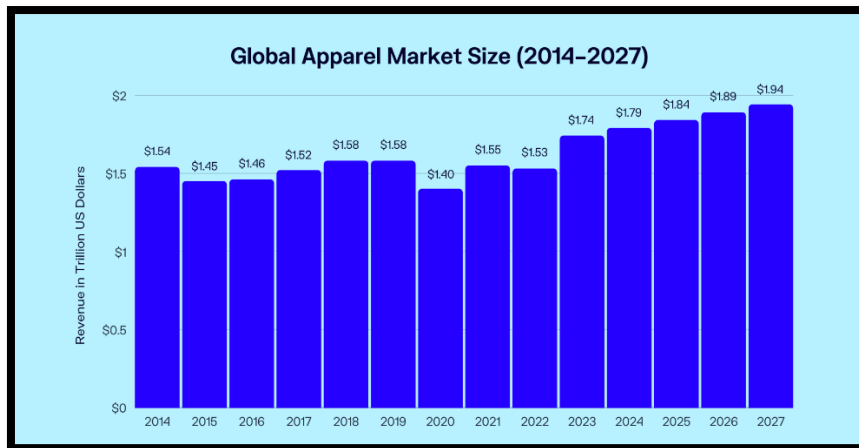


Figure 2.2: Market size of global apparel market

(Source: (Luque and Herrero-García, 2019))

2.4. The Evolution of Social Responsibility in the Fashion Industry

Social Responsibility has become an extremely important topic in the fashion industry for social and environmental impacts. The evolution reports various key factors and developments in the fashion sector. One of the vital key features in the evolution of social responsibility in the fashion industry is identifying the necessity of sustainability. Studies show that sustainability has had an important impact for the past few years as due to that there are many concerns such as environmental changes, economic changes and others (Phan et al., 2020). Nowadays there are many companies that are promoting sustainable development such as recycling products, decreasing wastage, using eco-friendly materials, using recycled items and related procedures.

Apart from this, there is a noticeable change in the fashion industry that is enhancing the examination of labour practices. This practice involves ban on child labour, appropriate wages, proper working conditions and deduction of forced workers. With the help of these issues, social media and newer consumers can increase visibility towards the whole world. Thus, it can improve optimisation of sourcing and many fashion companies are engaging in ethical labour practices. Therefore, social responsibility has changed by the changes of consumer behaviour and their exact actions. In this new world, consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about their purchases and how it is impacting the environment (Shayan et al., 2022). Now they are concerned about their demand towards more transparency and liability from famous brands. These practices report the issues that focus with growing

time in animal charities, social welfare and legal resource systems. The whole literature reports that the fashion industry is internationally influenced by a wide range of features, from consumer demand to labour practices. As the world is growing day-to-day, the fashion companies have to focus on the beneficial features that will remain more effective, relevant and competitive in this huge market.



Figure 2.3: Socially responsible initiatives

(Source: Shayan et al., 2022)

2.5. Social Responsibility Initiatives Implemented by The Fashion Industry

The fashion industry has implemented various social responsibility initiatives to detect labour practices, environmental and social issues.

- **Sustainable sourcing:** Nowadays top fashion brands are sourcing and seeking items from sustainable resources. As a result, recycled materials, organic cotton, suitable polyester and many fibres have been used and regenerated (Mahmood and Bashir, 2020). For example, from the year 2020 the fashion brand H&M are sourcing organic cotton from sustainable resources.
- **Appropriate labour practices:** In India, Patagonia is a huge brand recognised for their fair labour trade. Their initiative towards worker's welfare ensures their support. They have proceeded towards child education, farming, organic care and wellness of every individual related to the company.

- Reduction of environmental footprint: In the production process, many leading brands reduce environmental impacts by recycling, water-balanced dyeing and closed-loop systems. For example, Levi's implemented less water consumption in their jeans segment by better cotton initiative with a recycled closed-loop system.
- Transparency: Many well-known brands are disclosing their stakeholders, manufacturers and partners to increase transparency (Modak et al., 2020). Some of them are also revealing the total cost of making every product.
- Social justice: Being a reputable brand, Nike is raising voice towards social justice and promoting gender equality, rights and social aspects.

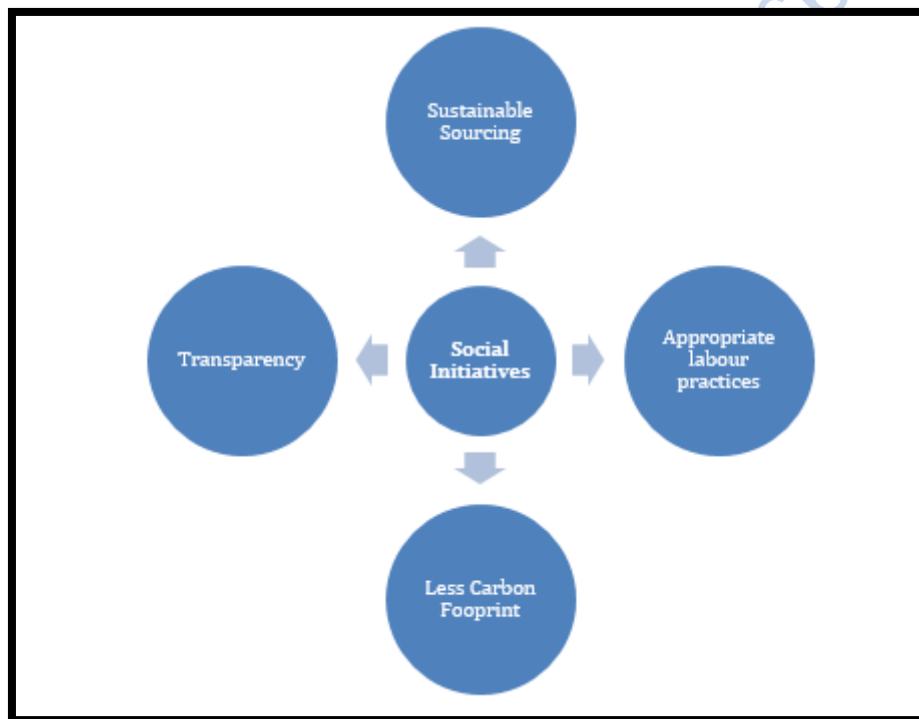


Figure 2.4: Social initiatives implemented by Fashion Industry

(Source: Mahmood and Bashir, 2020)

Therefore, all these initiatives have a greater impact in upcoming years for the growth of the fashion industry.

2.6. Social Responsibility Challenges in the Fashion Industry

The fashion industry in the past few years is facing serious challenges and it has gained the attention of worldwide media and other departments. Some of the main challenges of the fashion industry regarding social responsibility are:

i) Labour state: Poor circumstances for employees in the fashion sector have drawn criticism, particularly in underdeveloped nations where garment manufacturing is frequently outsourced. Low pay, lengthy hours, dangerous work environments, and an absence of rights for staff members have all been mentioned (Li et al., 2020). Manufacturers and companies must make sure that fair and moral labour practices are followed across the supply chains they operate.

ii) Worker Exploitation: Throughout the fashion business, there are numerous cases of being exploited, notably child labour and forced labour. To prevent such behaviours from occurring, brands must adopt rigorous standards and carefully supervise their supplier networks.

iii) Environmental Impact: The environmental impact of the fashion sector is well-known. The business is a major contributor to water shortages, releases of greenhouse gases, and a variety of environmental issues because of the considerable use of power and water during manufacturing as well as the contamination brought via the dyeing of textiles and processing (Jermisittiparsert et al., 2019). To lessen these effects, it is essential to use sustainable practices including adopting eco-friendly products, cutting waste, and putting recycling programs in place.

iv) Transparency in the supply chain: Consumers find it challenging to understand the circumstances under which their clothing is produced due to a lack of openness in the fashion industry's supply chains. Companies need to assert ownership of their supply lines, be transparent about where their products come from, and make sure that their vendors uphold ethical and ecological norms.

2.7. Ethical Practices Implemented by the Fashion Industry

The fashion industry worldwide is already under much observation at this concurrent time for their social accountability, impact on the environment, and labour practices. To address these

issues, fashion industry adopted several ethical practices. Some of the examples are mentioned below:

i) Sustainable Materials: Sustainable and environmentally conscious resources like organic cotton, cannabis, recycled textiles, as well as cutting-edge products created from recyclable materials are being used by fashion companies more and more (Gazzola et al., 2020). By doing it, this sector uses fewer resources that are not renewable and does less environmental harm.

ii) Ethical Sourcing: By assuring that manufacturing employees receive fair salaries, operate in safe environments, and do not get exploited, companies are implementing ethical trade practices. Tracking the supply line is another aspect of ethical procurement to make sure that resources are sourced from vendors that uphold the same standards.

iii) Reduction in Carbon Marks: The garment sector is making efforts to lessen its carbon footprint by developing energy-efficient production procedures, through renewable power sources, and streamlining transportation and logistical management to cut down on emissions.

iv) Circular Economy: In order to encourage customers to reuse or exchange old clothing for repurposing or reprocessing, several fashion firms have implemented recycling programs (Abbas et al., 2019). Some companies are adopting the recycled economy idea as well by creating items that are simple to reassemble, recycle or reuse.

These are some of the ethical practices of the fashion industry. Despite of implementation, the fashion industry is facing several issues regarding the practices and seeks redemption from it.

2.8. Case Studies of Fashion Brands and Their Ethical Practices as well as Socially Responsible Practices

Few case studies of various fashion brands regarding their ethical practices and social responsibilities are mentioned below:

I) Patagonia: The renowned clothing for the outdoors company Patagonia has often shown its dedication to moral conduct and sustainable development. Numerous measures have been put into place by them, including openness regarding supply chain projects, the use of repurposed

and natural resources, and equitable trade procurement (Costa and Fonseca, 2022). In order to avoid trash, Patagonia additionally advises consumers to fix current garments rather than buying replacements. They regularly support neighbourhood environmental organisations and are outspoken regarding social and ecological problems.

ii) Eileen Fisher: Women's apparel company Eileen Fisher prioritises moral and environmentally friendly manufacture. They place a high value on reusing repurposed and natural resources, consuming less water, and making sure that fair labour practices are followed within their entire supply chain. With the goal to encourage circular fashion as well as lessen waste, Eileen Fisher additionally operates a waste removal programme where consumers are able to recycle their used clothing in exchange for store credits.

iii) Everlane: Everlane is a direct-to-consumer clothing brand known for its transparent pricing and ethical manufacturing. They provide detailed information about the factories and production processes behind each of their products, highlighting fair labour conditions and sustainable practices (Nguyen et al., 2021). Everlane prioritises working with factories that meet high standards of social and environmental responsibility.

2.9. Future Trends and Opportunities for Social Responsibility in Fashion

As customers grow increasingly aware of the effects of the purchases they make on individuals and the environment, social accountability in the clothing sector will keep on to have prominent priority in future years. These the latest fashions and social accountability possibilities include:

i) Sustainable and Moral Sourcing: There will be an increase of interest for products that are sourced sustainably and morally (Sidharta, 2021). Brands must prioritise integrity and traceability throughout their vendor relationships to guarantee fair salaries, safe working environments, and eco-friendly procedures.

ii) Circular Fashion: An idea of an economic system in which goods are made to last a long time, be reused, and then be recycled, will continue to gain ground. To increase the usefulness of their goods, fashion firms will emphasise waste reduction, clothing repair, and the implementation of take-back programmes.

iii) Technology and creativity: Encouraging social accountability will be made significantly easier thanks to technological advancements. This covers the application of intelligent machines to boost productivity, blockchain technology for boosting visibility into supply chains, and novel resources that make products more environmentally friendly and free from cruelty.

iv) Customer Knowledge and Awareness: It will prove essential to raise consumer knowledge of and recognition of ecological and social challenges within the fashion business (Rathore, 2022). Companies will make an investment in open communication, teaching customers about environmentally friendly practices and the benefits of their purchases.

2.10. Theoretical Framework

2.10.1: Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory is a framework that suggests organisations have a moral and ethical responsibility to consider the interests and well-being of all stakeholders who are affected by or can affect the organisation's activities. Stakeholders can include employees, customers, suppliers, communities, shareholders, and more (Pashkevych et al., 2019). Stakeholder theory posits that organisations should not solely focus on maximising shareholder value, but instead, they should recognise and balance the diverse needs and expectations of all stakeholders.

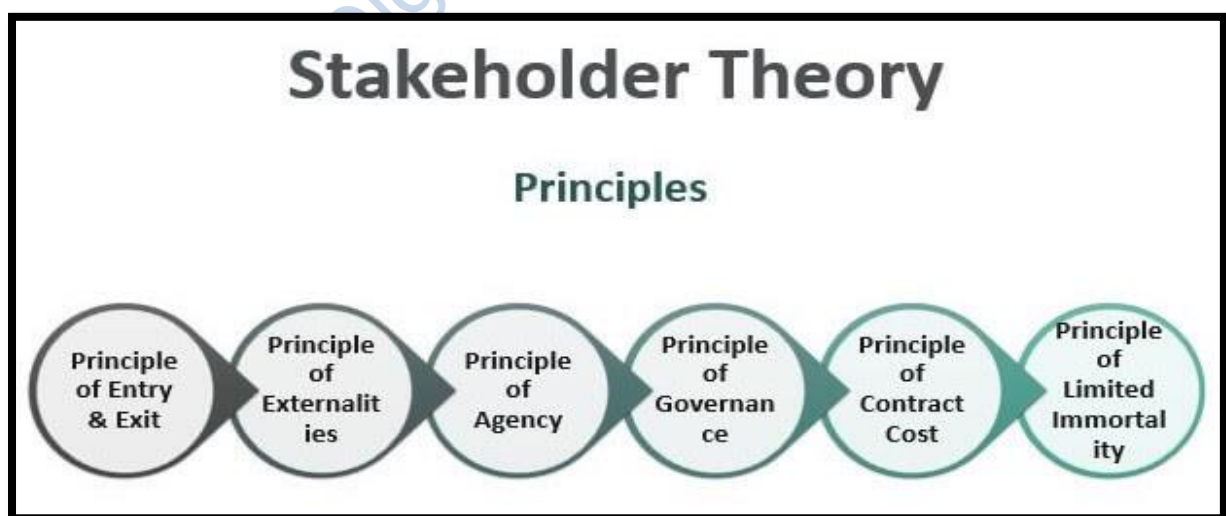


Figure 2.5: Principles of stakeholder theory

(Source: Pashkevych et al., 2019)

2.10.2: TBL approach

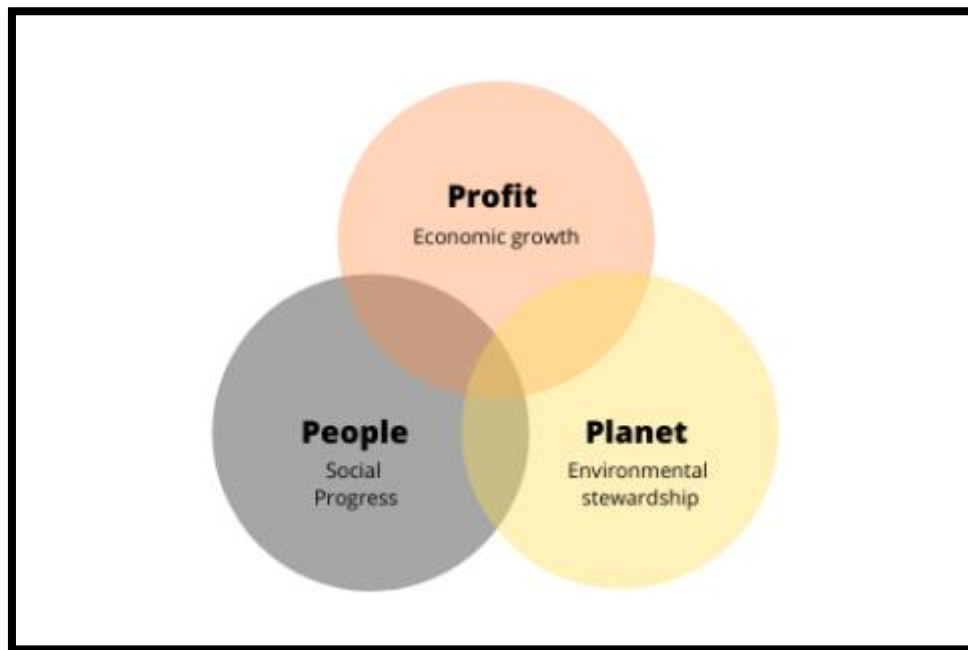


Figure 2.6: TBL theory

(Source: Blazquez et al., 2019)

Economic: This component pertains to the conventional economic performance's bottom line. It evaluates a business's capacity for making money, adding value to the economy, and promoting growth. Indicators including revenue, earnings, return on investment, and market share are measured.

Social: The social dimension is concerned with how a business affects individuals and society (Blazquez et al., 2019). It includes topics like community involvement, diversity and inclusion, labour practises, and corporate philanthropy.

Environmental: This factor considers how a corporation affects the environment. It entails activities like waste management, pollution prevention, resource conservation, and the use of sustainable technology and procedures.

2.10.3: CSR theory



Figure 2.7: Aspects of CSR theory

(Source: Kulakova et al., 2021)

The CSR of social accountability contends that companies and organisations have a moral duty to make ethical contributions to the community in addition to pursuing their own financial goals. It makes the argument that businesses ought to consider how their decisions may affect a range of stakeholders, involving their staff, clients, neighbourhoods, and surroundings (Kulakova et al., 2021). It is worth noting that the fashion industry faces specific challenges related to sustainability and ethical practices, such as fast fashion, overconsumption, and supply chain complexities. Applying CSR theory helps businesses navigate these challenges and work toward more responsible and sustainable practices.

2.11. Literature Gap

Literature gap mainly explains the gap between the previous studies and this study. There are many gaps between previous studies regarding this topic and this study. This study mainly focuses on the accurate data collection. Exact data regarding the topic is given in this study. Previous studies were lacking exact data on the fashion industry as not every source is accessible easily (Kharisma et al., 2020). This study involved the sources that can help with exact data of fashion industry worldwide.

The global supply chain of fashion industry is volatile, and no previous studies can say what is the concurrent situation of the supply chain is. That is why this study will be different from the other studies. Another major thing is the technology advancement and creativity of the

industry. Previous studies do not include so much technology and creativity phenomena of the industry.

2.12 Summary

Concluding the whole chapter of this study can clearly state that the social responsibility is one of the most important agenda for the fashion industry. The fashion industry being one of the biggest industries worldwide must implement adequate social responsibility practices along with ethical practices. These practices will help the industry to gain more sustainable business venture. More attraction for the consumers will automatically increase the revenue of the whole industry. Along with the practices implemented by the fashion industry, case studies are also given in this study to understand the topic better. Various theoretical framework has also been included in this part to exaggerate the study's quality. Literature gap includes the difference between previous studies and this one so that viewer can understand the importance of this study.

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Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is referred to as a method implemented by a researcher in a study. Research methodology is defined as methods taken into consideration by the researcher while carrying out any study, which eventually helps the researcher in accomplishing the objectives of the research (Newman and Gough, 2020). An effective research methodology ensures that the researcher is able to gain valid and reliable results. In this chapter, all the research techniques and methods implemented by the researcher to accomplish the stated research objectives (*in Chapter 1*) are described in this chapter. In this chapter, all the details regarding the collection of data and its sources, and its analysis are encompassed.

3.2 Research Philosophy

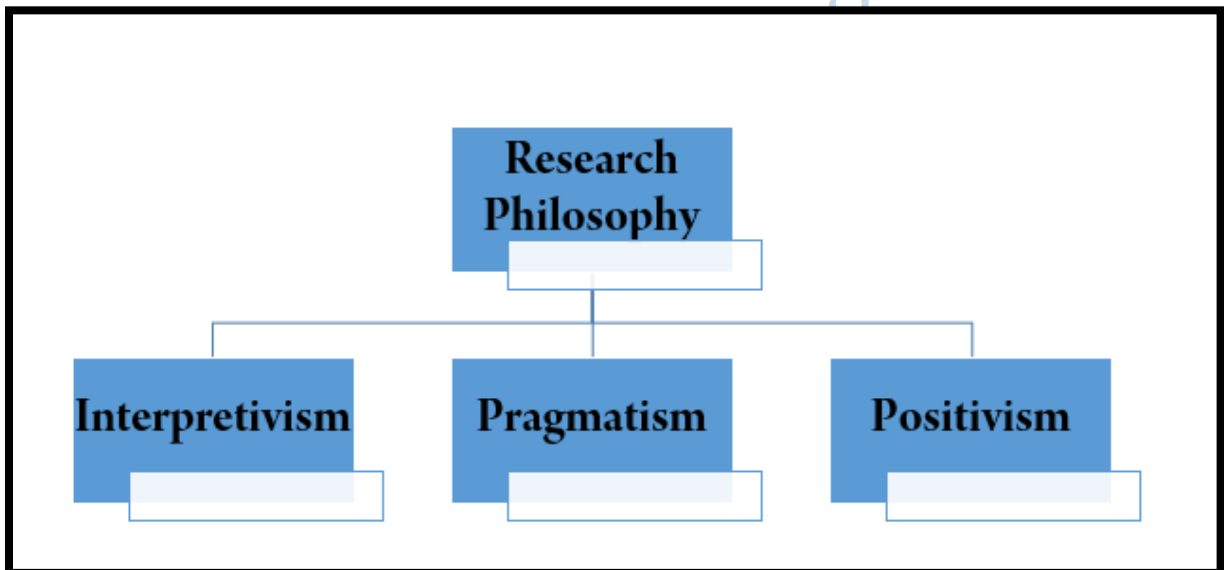


Figure 3.1: Types of research philosophy

(Source: Mishra and Alok, 2022)

Research philosophy is referred to as a belief regarding the methods to be considered that should be collected, analysed as well as used in a study (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). There are three types of research philosophies, which are **positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism**. Positivist philosophy mainly focuses on implementing objectivity and using scientific methods for uncovering universal truths (Mishra and Alok, 2022). Interpretivism is also known as constructivism philosophy that emphasises interpreting and analysing subjective meanings as well as social phenomena (Säfssten and Gustavsson, 2020). On the other hand, pragmatism philosophy strives for gaining practical solutions to the problems of

the real world by adjoining positivism as well as interpretivism philosophies (Al-Ababneh, 2020). With respect to the present research study, the researcher has selected the **interpretivism philosophy**.

The researcher has selected interpretivism philosophy because this philosophy mainly works on the assumption, which states that reality is multiple, subjective as well as constructed on the basis of social norms. In other words, it can be said that in order to understand the reality of the experience experienced by someone else, one has to experience it. Therefore, on the basis of the experiences it can be said that it may differ from one person to another due to different perceptions. Thus, in the context of this present study, the researcher has considered this philosophy to understand the need for social responsibility for international businesses. Interpretivism philosophy has been used to derive the experiences of the fashion industry in the context of implementing socially responsible activities. Apart from this reason, the researcher has also considered this philosophy because this particular philosophy is dependent on interrogation as well as observation for discovering or generating an in-depth understanding of social responsibility and ethical activities of the fashion industry in an international context. Further, this philosophy mainly deals with qualitative methods in terms of collecting data therefore, the researcher emphasised interpretivism philosophy.

At the same time, the researcher has rejected positivism and pragmatism philosophy because positivism requires quantitative data and pragmatism is mainly used by combining positivism as well as interpretivism philosophies. Therefore, the researcher has selected interpretivism and rejected the other two philosophies. This study emphasises qualitative data, thus interpretivism philosophy was favoured against interpretivism and pragmatism. The researcher also wanted to ensure that the study does not contain any personal biases, therefore, the researcher has rejected positivism philosophy.

3.3 Research Approach

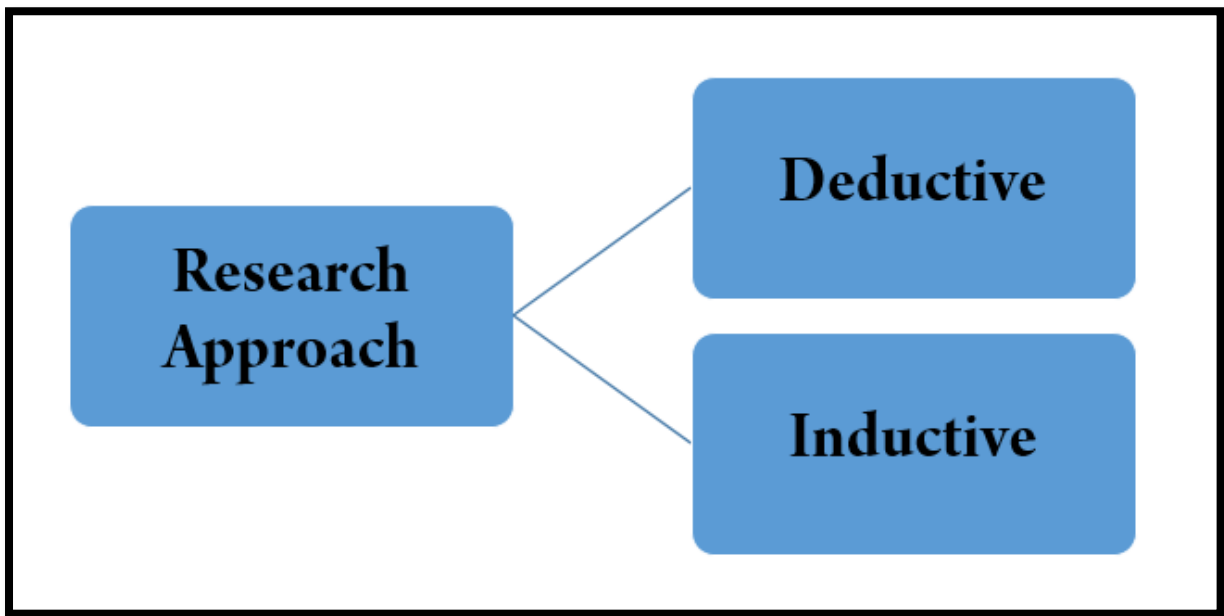


Figure 3.2: Types of research approach

(Source: Patel and Patel, 2019)

Research approach is defined as the set of procedures as well as plans implemented in a study for carrying out an effective study (Patel and Patel, 2019). Generally there are two types of research approaches, one is inductive approach and the other one is deductive approach. In the context of this present study, the researcher has specifically emphasised **inductive** approach. Inductive reasoning is another name for inductive approach. Deductive approach is mainly associated with the development of hypotheses. These hypotheses are generally generated with the help of existing theories and further formulating strategies such that the developed hypotheses can be tested. It is stated by Dodds and Hess (2020), inductive approach initiates with observations and while ending the study, theories are proposed, which are also the result of the observation.

The researcher has selected inductive approach because this approach has helped the researcher in meeting the stated objectives of the study. This particular approach requires searching for a particular pattern from the data, and further developing theories and explanations on the same. Thus, the researcher selected an inductive approach. This approach has helped the researcher to search pattern concerning social responsibilities of organisations in the fashion industry at an international level, and further developing theories and explanations on the same, which eventually helped in understanding the data and information derived from the data collected by the researcher.

On the other hand, the researcher has rejected a deductive approach because deductive approach requires preparing hypotheses based on the research objectives. Further, the data is collected and analysed and then the prepared hypotheses are deduced such that a profound conclusion can be gained and the study can be concluded effectively. Since, the process of deducing hypotheses requires quantitative data, and this study is solely dependent on qualitative data. Thus, the researcher has rejected the deductive approach and carried out this study with an inductive approach.

3.4 Research Design

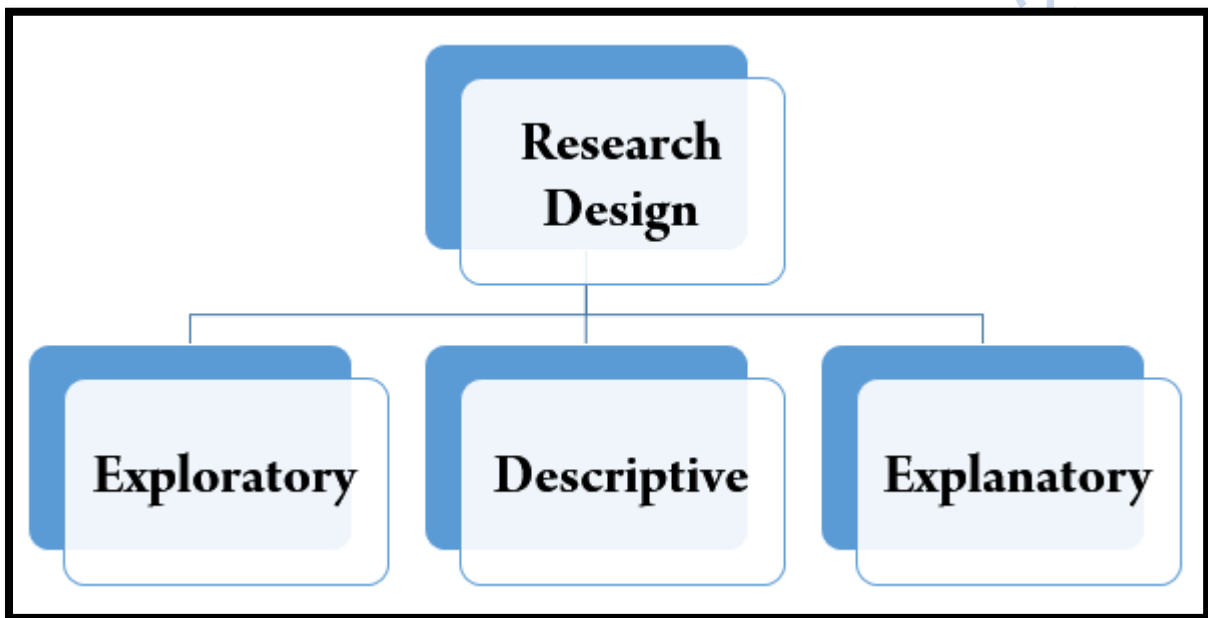


Figure 3.3: Types of research design

(Source: Snyder, 2019)

Research design is another major aspect in a research methodology. It is also known as a research plan utilised by the researcher while carrying out the study (Snyder, 2019). Research design is useful for the researcher in providing a significant structure as well as direction to the study that further yields results for the study. Generally, there are three types of research designs, which are exploratory design, explanatory design, and descriptive design.

With respect to this present study, the researcher has selected exploratory design. In the context of this research design, it can be said that this research design is usually considered for studying all the aspects of the study in-depth, which have not been explored earlier by other researchers. In the context of this present study, the researcher has utilised exploratory design, because it has helped the researcher in studying the major aspects of the study, which

were not studied by the researcher in their previous studies. Therefore, to explore all the relevant phenomena of social responsibility, the researcher has selected exploratory design. Apart from exploratory designs, there are other research designs as well, which are descriptive and explanatory research designs. The researcher has rejected these designs, because explanatory designs would not have helped the researcher in preparing conclusive results. However, in the present study, the researcher is required to provide in-depth details on social responsibility as well as ethical practices being carried out by fashion industry in an international field. Thus, the researcher had selected exploratory design and not explanatory design. In addition, the researcher has also rejected descriptive design in this study. One of the main reason for not selecting this particular design is that descriptive design is not effective in determining the relationship between two variables. However, in this study the researcher is required to find out how social responsibility affects the ethical practices of fashion industry in an international arena. Thus, the researcher has rejected descriptive design.

3.5 Research Method

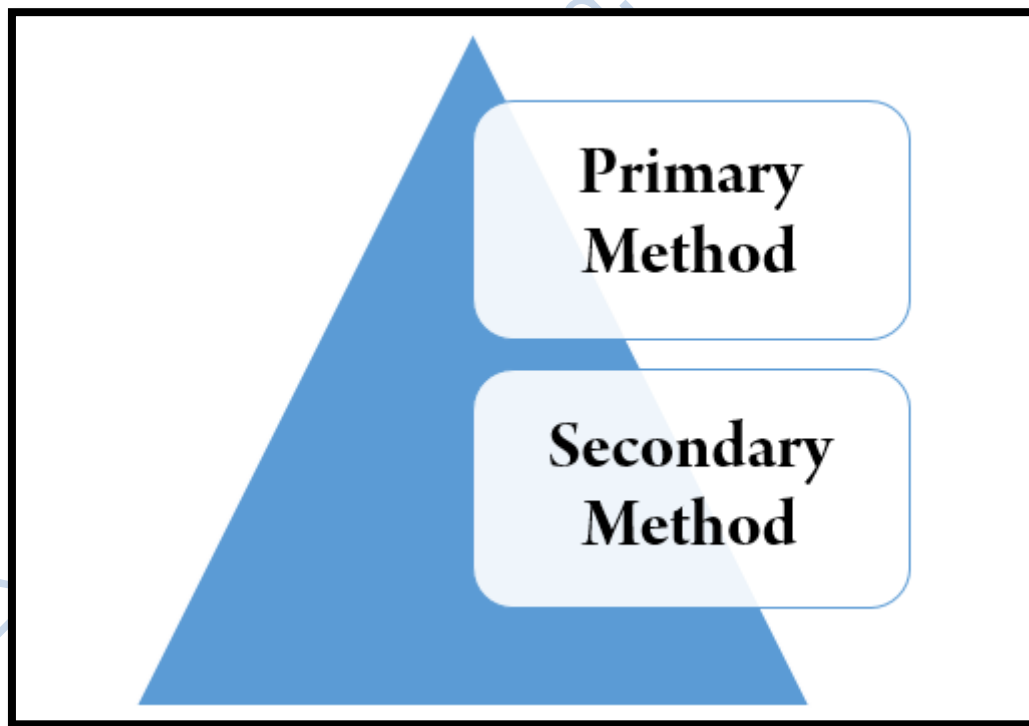


Figure 3.4: Types of research methods

(Source: Zawacki-Richter et al., 2020)

On the basis of the selected research philosophy, approach and design, it is clear that the researcher has taken secondary method into consideration. There are basically two major

types of study that are generally taken into consideration by the researchers. These are primary method and secondary method. Primary method is a type of study, where entire aspects of the study, such as collecting data, selecting the sources are primarily done by the researcher of a present study (HR and Aithal, 2022). On the other hand, the secondary study is referred to as the study, where the researcher utilises data that has been already collected by the other researcher for some other study (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2020). Thus, among these research methods, the researcher has selected a secondary study.

There are several reasons behind the researcher selecting secondary study. First and foremost, the researcher has selected a secondary study for this research topic because this form of study has helped the researcher in saving time in terms of collecting data. Due to this, the researcher has been able to analyse the collected data in an effective way. Apart from this, the researcher was also able to provide a structured analysis for the collected data. As the researcher has selected secondary method, it has helped the researcher to accumulate a lot of data on ethical practices and social responsibilities of fashion industry in an international field. Therefore, due to these reasons, the researcher has selected secondary data.

On the other hand, the researcher has also rejected primary method for this present study because primary method would have taken a lot of time to collect data. Thus, this method was not considered by the researcher in the present study. Further, the researcher was also doubtful, whether the collected results would be accurate. Thus, to eliminate this doubt, the researcher has not selected primary method for this study. Hence, with reference to the selected research methods, it can be said that the researcher has selected secondary method over, primary method.

3.6 Data Collection Method and Sources

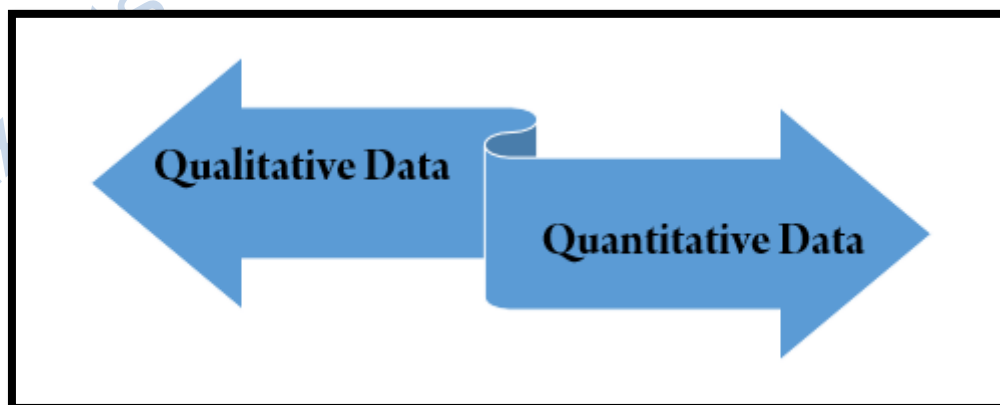


Figure 3.5: Types of data

(Source: Rumsey et al, 2022)

Data is the most important aspect in a study. Without data, the researcher cannot carry out any study, as the study would not have any importance and relevance. According to Rumsey et al. (2022), the process of collecting necessary information for the study is known as collection of data. It is an important process in any study. With reference to the current research study, the researcher has selected secondary method for this study. Several reasons have been listed above by the researcher for selecting a secondary method. Therefore, the researcher had to select secondary method for collecting data.

However, similar to research methods, data is also collected by implementing two method. The primary method and the secondary method. In the context of primary method, the data is collected by conducting survey, interview, observation, and focus group discussions. On the other hand, in order to collect secondary data, the researcher is required to take help from secondary sources to accumulate secondary data. With reference to the current study, the researcher has selected secondary method for collecting data.

Therefore, in order to collect secondary data, the researcher has selected articles, company websites, previous research studies and case studies. These sources have helped the researcher to collect effective secondary data on social responsibilities as well as ethical activities of the fashion industry in an international arena. However, the researcher could have selected primary data for this study, but collecting data would have been more tedious and time consuming. Thus, the researcher has not opted for primary data and sources for this study. Instead, the researcher relied upon secondary method and sources for collecting data.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data collection method yields two types of data. These are qualitative data and quantitative data. It is stated by Ryder et al. (2020), the analysis of data is generally dependent upon the type of data. In this present study, the researcher has selected a secondary method for collecting data. Therefore, the collected data is also in the form of qualitative. Thus, the researcher will perform a qualitative analysis.

There are two types of methods that can be implemented for analysing the data. They are, quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis. Quantitative analysis include SPSS analysis, descriptive analysis, and graphical representation of data (Sileyew, 2019). On the other hand, qualitative analysis include thematic analysis. Since, this present study deals with qualitative data, therefore, qualitative analysis is taken into consideration for this study. Therefore, it can be said that in this present study, the researcher has implemented a thematic analysis for analysing the collected data.

In order to carry out a thematic analysis, the researcher had to first collect data, and then generate patterns and themes from the collected data. Once the patterns and themes are developed, the researcher has further carried out analysis on those patterns and themes.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

With respect to the present research topic, it has been stated by the researcher that the researcher has implemented a secondary study such that the objectives of the study can be accomplished. However, while carrying out this study, the researcher has ensured that the study is being carried out in an ethical way and no unethical means are utilised for accomplishing the objectives of the study. According to Phillips and Ritala (2019), ethical issues always lie in front of the researcher, when they carry out any study. Therefore, it is always required to be ensured by the researcher that the researcher is implying ethical methods such that the study can be called an ethical study.

In the context of this present study, it has been found that the researcher has ensured that all the ethical means are adopted while accomplishing the objectives of this study. The researcher has firstly ensured that before conducting this study, the research title and the proposal of the study are approved by the ethics committee of the university. Since this is a secondary study, the researcher has ensured that all the secondary data taken into this study are cited properly. The researcher has acknowledged all the data taken from secondary sources, which were primarily accumulated by other researchers, are cited and acknowledged. Further, the researcher has also ensured that the collected data are not manipulated or altered. The researcher has maintained the authenticity and validity of the study by ensuring that the quality of the data is not being hampered. Apart from all these, the researcher has also ensured that no outdated data is used. Outdated data has the ability to hamper the final output of the study (Fidahic et al., 2020). Thus, only recent data has been taken into consideration by the researcher for this study.

These are some of the major ethical considerations that were taken care of by the researcher in this present study to ensure that the study is conducted ethically.

3.9 Summary

In this present chapter, the researcher has described the methodologies that are taken into consideration in the study. As per the stated methodology, the researcher has selected a secondary study over a primary study due to several reasons. The secondary study has helped the researcher in collecting effective and sound data in less time. On the other hand, the

researcher has selected interpretivism philosophy in this study, which further helped the researcher in carrying out in an effective way. Inductive approach helped the researcher to study the main aspects of corporate social responsibility as well as ethical practices in a better way. Similarly, the exploratory design has helped the researcher in exploring the major facts and studying the aspects of international business in terms of social responsibility and ethical practices with great detail. As it is a secondary study, the researcher has also stated that secondary methods has been implied for collecting data. It has further helped the researcher to accumulate secondary data. The collected secondary data was qualitative in nature, so, themes were developed and thematic analysis was carried out in this study. The researcher also ensured that the study is being carried out ethically, so, all the major ethical considerations were followed by the researcher in this study.

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Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

Data analysis is a crucial part of any study. It helps the researcher to present the collected data in a proper form and also provides specific meaning to it. In this present study, the researcher mainly collected through secondary methods. Therefore, the researcher has collected secondary data for this study. Further, it has been found that the collected data is qualitative. Hence, based on the collected data, the researcher generalised the findings. Based on these findings, the researcher has further developed a pattern and themes for this study. Those themes are presented in this study as thematic analysis. The thematic analysis additionally helps the researcher present the findings appropriately and provides a better analysis of the collected data.

4.2 Thematic Analysis

In the context of this present study on social responsibility and its role in an international business context, which also focuses on the ethical practices implemented by the fashion industry, the researcher has developed the following themes for this study. These themes are prepared based on the aim, objectives, literature review, research questions and the collected data. However, the data collection method is carried out by emphasising the purpose, objectives and research questions. Thus, the following themes are prepared by the researcher:

Theme 1: Importance and Relevance of Social Responsibility in the Fashion Industry

Rendering clothing environmentally friendly requires an increased emphasis on corporate social responsibility. A business's initiatives to better mankind or preserve the environment are referred to as CSR. This involves developing ecologically friendly rules throughout every step in the production chain, which is important for the textile sector. Effective sustainable CSR initiatives may assist the business while reducing the negative effects on the surroundings and improving the long-term sustainability of clothing. As a result of their growing awareness of their responsibilities to society as well as the natural world, companies and companies in the textile sector are creating CSR initiatives that are both successful and interesting (Abbas et al. 2019). To put an end to the present destructive fast-paced cycle, CSR is crucial, and customers, businesses, and manufacturers should all contribute.

Businesses' responsibility for society is incredibly advantageous to businesses. An organisation can benefit greatly from the implementation of a strong CSR program that has a beneficial influence on ecological issues and textile durability. These advantages included improved brand awareness, improved company image on a worldwide scale, and more chances to recruit better and more skilled workers (LatapíAgudelo et al. 2019). With the help of a textile administration expert, a designed effective CSR plan for textiles sustainably can boost administrative savings in costs, and improve development, and financial results in general. Those concrete advantages are evident, but an innovative garment company may also benefit significantly from the enhanced PR chances and compassion brought about by eco-friendly and environmentally conscious products.

The long-term sustainability of the clothing industry can be significantly impacted by sound corporate social responsibility procedures. Focusing on sustainability is essential as the recycling market struggles and the cycle begins to falter. H&M has put into place effective CSR programs like clothing collection in-stores, strong collaboration and open communication with producers and vendors, and a goal to utilise only environmentally friendly cotton from organic farms by 2020. H&M's efforts to openly complete the circle have greatly increased awareness of its brand and placed itself at the cutting edge of successful CSR initiatives for the textile sector (Vafeiadis et al. 2021). Manufacturers and organisations should invest the time necessary to implement CSR programs that have a significant positive impact and contribute to a more environmentally friendly worldwide textile sector.

Effective CSR programs have an effect on a textile company's overall operations as well as on the textile sector at the global and societal levels. Decreased environmental effects and eco-friendly production statements by creating good brand advantages including enhanced PR, confidence among consumers, and greater brand recognition. Social responsibility as a business is now an integral part of a contemporary textile firm and is no longer an option.

Theme 2: Benefits and Opportunities of Socially Responsible Activities

Numerous consumers, particularly millennials, anticipate that companies leave a beneficial influence in addition to a favourable perception. Corporate social responsibility is what this is. Corporate social responsibility is, by means, the practice of achieving equitable growth for the betterment of every stakeholder on the level of the economy, society, and the environment. It has a lot of authority as well. Fashion companies are now actively involved in

advertising their CSR initiatives via a variety of media channels. Shoppers and investors urge businesses to be environmentally conscious now as much as ever. According to a 2015 Global Sustainability Study, 90% of consumers worldwide would reject a firm if it engaged in unethical business practices, and 91% of consumers worldwide want businesses to act ethically to solve a variety of environmental and social issues (Sharma, 2019). Prominent fashion companies are taking attention and consequently used a variety of methods of communication to increase awareness of their CSR initiatives.

Adidas is a well-known apparel company that is outspoken about its CSR initiatives. Adidas has worked with other companies and non-profit organisations in previous years and today to lessen its total effect. The Adidas with Stella McCartney line and Adidas' association with Parley to support Oceans are two of those most well-known partnerships (Upadhyay et al. 2021). The collaboration with Stella McCartney focused on generating the least amount of waste and repurposing any excess fabric. In addition, Stella McCartney is an established business for its CSR initiatives. The alliance was a huge success, and people praised it for accomplishing its goals.

Adidas is quite pleased with the Parley partnership. Adidas and Parley collaborated to develop a range of items utilising recovered marine plastic. A pair of shoes made completely of recycled material stood out among the new products. Both of these partnerships received a lot of media attention and improved brand recognition. Adidas has successfully promoted its CSR through relations with public activities.

Although CSR is extremely significant, communications professionals have a crucial role in promoting and disseminating every bit of knowledge about it. In the age of digital technology, businesses make the ability to demonstrate to a wide range of stakeholders exactly what they are achieving and the benefits their efforts impact on their chosen field of concentration (Abbas, 2020). Customers in general want this kind of openness in the businesses they want to invest in. Companies may effectively disseminate information and enhance every communication by being transparent on social media. Social networking sites are a very effective and practical instrument for promoting CSR. Public relations experts are given the option to communicate with their target demographic in multiple ways. Companies can now bring together sizable crowds of individuals to build a sizeable fan base.

CSR is a very effective tool for professionals in communication when used properly. Apparel sustainability is an increasing concern and an internationally recognised CSR strategy. To reach as numerous individuals as achievable, marketers are now actively marketing this through a range of media outlets (Raza et al. 2021). Communicating an organisation's social and ethical values is additionally effective, but it also enhances the brand's reputation and fosters connections to every customer and various stakeholders.

Theme 3: Various social responsibility activities implemented by companies

Responsible sourcing: Sustainable procurement is the process through which a company continuously looks for items and offerings at every level of the chain of custody that is produced with integrity and environmentally. Customers and investors are more willing than ever to put their money into more environmentally responsible products and solutions because they have grown more conscious of the ethical development and the long-term viability of a good or service.

Businesses have to integrate sustainable, ecological, and ethical practices into the way they operate, assume accountability for the full product life cycle, and safeguard the freedoms that employees have throughout the manufacturing process. It may prove challenging for businesses to be informed of or comprehend the possible hazards that could be harming their organisation and their suppliers due to the complicated nature of a multi-tiered chain of custody (Long et al. 2020). To source ethically, a company must be able to track goods or services through every link in the chain of custody and collaborate with both its customers and suppliers to guarantee ethical hiring practices and responsible environmental practices. Enterprises to overcome the difficulty of tracking, put legitimate business practices into place, and control risks.

With the help of the products and services, organisations can communicate knowledge quickly and effectively, prioritise their assets, and create action plans that will have the biggest influence. An organisation's basic ethical principles are upheld through the lifespan of its products and offerings if it is committed to responsible buying. The best course of action would be to adopt environmentally friendly strategies that improve the sustainability time of the business's sustainable investments and purchases (Stahl et al. 2020). The initiatives and approaches for sustainable procurement rely on the necessity to future-proof one another, especially with respect to supply limited availability, the capacity to handle resulting market

demand, and rising prices, and being able to lower expense by means of decreases in consumption of energy and garbage.

Responsible consumptions: conscious buying is engaging in financial activity while being more mindful about the way we purchase choices that affect society as a whole. Customers who are ethical and considerate of the environment buy products. Along with their own physical wellness and overall happiness, they think about the effects the things they buy will have on the surroundings.

Several retailers now provide a wide range of environmentally conscious goods as conservation and environmental initiatives keep continuing to excite consumers around the world. Minimising our environmental impact is the main goal of mindful shopping. When determining which things to buy, product licenses are helpful resources. Sadly, not all qualifications and claims imply that a product is sustainable (Islam et al. 2021). For instance, some businesses utilise practising "greenwashing strategies to profit from the agriculture industry's lack of oversight.

Companies might make sweeping statements about preservation without necessarily having to back them up. Greenwashing is the false representation of a brand's true environmental impact and sustainability standards. A key component for environmentally friendly buying is knowing which credentials to seek and which advertisements to believe. everyone possesses clothing and other possessions that are no longer useful to us. Recycling is all about giving used items a new, responsible purpose and extending the life of objects. Responsible customers buy from second-hand retailers as well as contribute to them. Shopping second-hand is a terrific method to save products that would have been thrown away and lessen our impact on the environment. Check out the neighbourhood charity stores, market stalls, and second-hand shops rather than shopping at quick-fashion chains and big-box retailers. disposable plastic substitutes are now readily accessible and reasonably priced (Faisal et al. 2020). There are plenty of alternatives to single-use plastic, including generic reusable packaging made of hemp or straw and specialised product containers like banana leaves.

Everyone can restrict how we dispose of single-use materials without causing too much annoyance, even though eliminating them altogether may be an unattainable goal. Improving the consumption of recyclable containers is a positive step as we make the shift to a more environmentally friendly way of life. Many businesses have changed what packaging they

use to make it reusable, compostable, or made of more environmentally friendly materials (Lee et al. 2021). Each one of these practices will have an effect on the environment and strengthen ties among people because of our shared love of the world. Sustainability is the driving force behind the transformation in the agriculture sector, which is being led by numerous producers and consumers. However, the shift to a more environmentally conscious culture can leave customers perplexed and inequalities among suppliers and customers (Kraus et al. 2020). Most consumers don't interact with the producers who grow our food, and vice versa. To help to create a world that is more nutritious and profitable, it is our mission at Producers Trust to assist in bridging this gap among our farming communities.

Theme 4: Challenges in Implementing Socially Responsible Practices

A lack of a defined framework for executing and assessing CSR efforts represents one of the greatest problems firms encounter in this area. Contrary to other commercial endeavours like accounting or promotional activities, there is no pre-existing CSR structure that companies can adhere to. Because of this, companies frequently have to create their own CSR policies and measures, which can take time and money. Additionally, it can be impossible to gauge the success of CSR activities because their effects are frequently long-lasting and hard to assess (Orazalin and Baydauletov, 2020). Lack of responsibility and openness is an additional problem with CSR.

Organisations must be upfront and sincere about their CSR initiatives if they want to be successful. This entails being open concerning their political, ecological, and economic implications as well as the measures they take to mitigate any unfavourable effects. But a lot of businesses lack transparency on their CSR initiatives, which can erode confidence and raise doubts about their dedication to social and ecological responsibility (Chen and Wan, 2020). Businesses can create effective CSR organisational structures that give accurate data regarding their corporate social responsibility (CSR) endeavours and the consequences of tackling this difficulty. To get opinions and comments on their CSR initiatives, they can also interact with stakeholders including investors, staff, and consumers.

The challenges of striking a balance between immediate economic concerns and the requirement to conduct long-term, sustainability CSR efforts is a third problem. Organisations are constantly under pressure to make money and provide benefits to shareholders in the fast-paced commercial world currently. As a consequence, lots of companies could be reluctant to contribute to CSR initiatives that might not immediately

provide a profit (Yu et al. 2020). The idea of sustainable clothing is repurposing garments by creating, acquiring, and using items with the purpose of having them exploited and widely dispersed in the market. Nevertheless, a sizable portion of clothing cannot be reused because there are no technical options available. Although incorporating recyclable materials, clothing producers struggle to keep up with the requests for additional clothing. Ineffective garbage collection, a faulty system of classifying clothing, a lack of recovering creative thinking, and a financing shortage for items for recycling are all obstacles to recycling clothing.

Eco-fashion companies must address these challenges by increasing the financial scalability of recycling technology in order to enhance manufacturing. Due to their perception that fashion that is environmentally friendly is more premium than rapid trends, teenagers may not find it appealing. They also have trouble finding and buying environmentally friendly apparel (Akben-Selcuk, 2019). Additionally, it could be challenging to get young Indians to comprehend the advantages of environmentally friendly culture and perceive it as a practical substitute for current trends due to a lack of knowledge and comprehension about the effects of rapid design on the surroundings and society.

To overcome this difficulty, the fashion industry must educate consumers and work with regulators, entrepreneurs, and merchants to advance environmentally friendly apparel and lessen the negative effects of conventional clothing on the surroundings and community.

4.3 Overall Discussion

Within the business sector, social accountability is a relatively new idea. Businesses are increasingly recognising the idea of social responsibility on the part of corporate organisations. There is no exception in the textile sector. Companies that manufacture and trade textiles are becoming more aware of their obligations to the community and to the natural world. The purpose of this essay is to analyse the idea of social accountability and the typical means by which textile companies attempt to uphold it. "An organisation's duty to maximise its beneficial effects and minimise its adverse effect on society" is known to be social accountability. It is, in a sense, "the idea that corporations ought proactively to care about the welfare of society as a whole." Businesses, individuals, and governments all fall under the umbrella of social accountability. 'Corporate social responsibility' is the term used to describe a business's social duty.

Adopting environmentally conscious strategies helps businesses gain and keep buyers, which is crucial for their long-term success. In addition, many people are willing to pay extra for items if they know that a portion of the earnings of the business will be put toward tackling social problems that are important to them. Businesses that are dedicated to helping those around them may also see a boost in customer traffic. Companies that provide credit to people with low incomes, for instance, are likely to experience an increase in revenue as an immediate consequence.

The use of corporate social responsibility can boost engagement among staff members. These businesses frequently hire people who want to do more than just get paid; they want to change the world. With big businesses, there is power in thousands and combined worker efforts can produce significant outcomes, boosting company morale as well as efficiency. Businesses and their customers may both use social responsibility as an opportunity to positively influence local and international societies. Businesses that launch a corporate social responsibility program consistent with their principles stand to get more satisfied and committed clients. Any effort, no matter how modest, might influence an entire neighbourhood. Even if startups and smaller companies might not have the capacity to do so, giving resources or cash to organisations can have a significant positive impact. Companies can get started by planning modest events to raise funds, promoting volunteerism, defining social objectives and specific goals, putting staff education programs into place, or collaborating with organisations that share the same philosophy.

Strategies for sustainable fashion

Recognise the Meaning of 'Truly' Sustainability in Fashion- Let's take the example of a fashion company that is regarded as being ethical given that it provides employees with respectable conditions of employment and fair remuneration. The similar designation, nonetheless, stops being responsible if material and other artificial substances are used. As a result, implementing just one of the behaviours is inadequate for an organisation to be considered durable. The business must follow as many regulations as practicable and have a comprehensive understanding of sustainability in order to ensure its social and environmental viability.

The Problem with "Greenwashing"- An example of an advertising strategy is greenwashing. False advertising is used to persuade consumers that a company's goals, plans, and practices

are environmentally friendly. Through false qualifications, greenwashing in the fashion industry occurs. Certificates are intended to boost customers' and store confidence. However, it is sometimes sufficient for a firm to obtain one of these certificates by producing only one certified organic cotton t-shirt. Always confirm the legitimacy of the document provider and the resource's country of manufacture hence.

Clothing that is ethically and fair-traded: This describes actions taken to improve the lives of those who work in the apparel business. This covers the avoidance of child labour, gender equality, healthy workplaces, decent remuneration, and all other facets of social justice.

Upcycled style: Upcycling is the practice of reusing and recycling clothing, substances, and apparel to create new clothing. In fact, reused clothes have become so well-liked among celebrities and designers that the resulting fad is being seen as an entirely novel kind of luxurious clothing.

Ethical and free-of-cruelty clothing: These trends relate to goods produced by using components from animals or acquired through the use of cruel methods in an effort to raise consumer awareness of industrial agriculture and the exploitative treatment of animals for fashionable.

Green fashion trends- green design firms are promoting the use of natural, biodegradable, and eco-friendly fibres instead of plastics, including cotton made from organic materials, cannabis, mushroom-based leather, and seaweed leather, in this trend.

Creative and ecologically friendly products are increasingly important to the textiles industry's development. Research and development costs are necessary to gain an advantage over others, which calls for funding and skilled individuals. As a result, it's anticipated that operational expenses would go down, the quality of goods will rise, and environmental effects will be kept to a minimum. International brands are crucial to luxurious clothing because they set patterns and invest heavily in PR and advertising. They can construct and grow market segments for manufacturers, communicate corporate responsibility to consumers, and integrate CSR practices into accepted industrial practices thanks to their financial capacity and legitimacy. Environmental labels could be quite important in this process.

4.4 Summary

Based on this chapter, it can be summarised that this chapter deals with the study's major findings. The findings of the study are presented in the form of themes. Thus, the researcher has carried out a thematic analysis such that the data can be analysed effectively. In this chapter, researcher has mentioned all the concepts and ideas that highlight the role of social responsibility and ethical practices in the fashion industry. The aspects that are highlighted above show ways the existing and future companies can mitigate the challenges and develop the business process of the fashion industry for a better environment and society.

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Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This present study was conducted by the researcher to carry out extensive research work on social responsibility and ethical practices implemented by the fashion industry at an international level. In the context of this present study, the researcher has clearly stated the aim, objectives as well as research questions, which has further helped the researcher to carry out this study systematically, and with great effectiveness. The researcher carried out a review of existing literature to provide knowledge on the current research topic. The researcher mentioned a literature gap in this study, which is addressed by the researcher in this current study.

According to the literature gap, previous literature lacks in explaining the technological aspects in the field of social responsibility and ethical practices implemented by the fashion industry at the international level. On the basis of the collected data and its analysis, it has been found that ethical practices are the core practice of the fashion industry at an international level. Organisations in the fashion industry also focus on socially responsible activities that help them to ensure that they do not hamper the environment.

It is evident from the above part of this study that corporate social responsibility is an integral aspect of any organisation. The companies are required to carry out their activities by focusing on three main elements of the society, which are planet, people as well as profit. It is defined in the TBL approach, which ensures that while making profits, the companies ensure that planet as well as people are taken care of. Social responsibility is very important for organisations in the fashion industry, as organisations in this industry rely on environment for its raw material. Thus, it becomes important for the fashion industry to implement initiatives that help in saving environment. It has also been found that plastic bags have been replaced by degradable and environment friendly bags, which is a very common initiative taken by all organisations to lessen the negative impact on the environment.

Further, it has also been found that the organisations that operate in the fashion industry, do not follow ethical practices, in terms of labour working conditions, and pay. Usually, the organisations in this industry outsource their manufacturing in under-developing countries. It has been found that the working conditions in the manufacturing units of some organisations are worse, and even the workers are paid less. Therefore, in this context, it has been found

that several organisations such as H&M, Primark, Zara, ensure that the working conditions in their manufacturing units are appropriate, and the workers are being paid fairly. It helps such companies to carry out ethical practices by being socially responsible. Being socially responsible also means that the society, and the environment are benefitted from its activities. Implementing fair HR practices ensures ethical practices, and providing employment opportunities to the people residing in that particular society promotes social responsibility of an organisation.

Furthermore, the analysis state that if an organisation undertakes socially responsible activities, it help the companies to gain financial as well as non-financial benefits. In terms of financial benefits, the company can reach to several customers and stakeholders that prefer companies performing CSR activities. On the other hand, non-financial benefits can be gained by building good relations with stakeholders promoting ethical as well as social responsible behaviour. The analysis further states that ethical activities as well as socially responsible behaviour also help the companies to increase their reach and also provide several opportunities to grow, and enhance the reputation of the brand.

In the context of ethical and socially responsible behaviour, organisations are found to be carrying out various kind of activities. These activities include responsible sourcing, responsible consumption, fair practices, and transparency and so on. These activities help the companies to ensure that they are fulfilling the non-financial goals of the company, which eventually help in accomplishing the financial objectives of an organisation. However, when the organisations are ought to implement ethical and socially responsible activities, the organisations often face several challenges. Among all the challenges faced by the organisations in the context of ethical and social responsibilities, it has been found that while carrying out such activities companies end up spending a lot of cost. Thus, these activities lead to financial issues for an organisation. Apart from this, there are several other challenges that are being faced by the companies.

On an overall basis, it can be said that social responsibilities and ethical practices, both play a very important role for an organisation. The organisations are required to carry out both the activities fairly. These practices are not only good for the companies in terms of financial aspects, but also provide several non-financial benefits to the company. Apart from benefits, the company also gains various opportunities, which in turn, help in gaining several gains. However, these practices sometimes, end up posing challenges to the companies. Thus, it is

recommended to ensure that all the activities that are being implemented by the companies are well-researched and planned.

5.2 Linking with the Objectives

The findings of this study are linked with the objectives stated in chapter 1 of this study. The findings of this study have been stated in the form of themes. The themes prepared in the previous section of this study are linked with the objectives. It is explained in the further part of this section.

Objective 1: To understand the concept of social responsibility with respect to international business as well as its importance and relevance in the fashion industry.

In order to accomplish this objective, the researcher has prepared theme number one. In the context of this thematic analysis, the researcher has explained the concept of social responsibility as well as ethical behaviour. Further, the researcher has also provided various points in the analysis, which helps in proving the relevance of ethical as well as social responsibilities of an organisation carrying out its activities in this industry. Further, the researcher also ensured that the analysis is done while considering the international arena. The analysis contains all the major aspects that determine the importance as well as the relevance of ethical behaviour as well as CSR of an organisation in the international fashion industry.

Objective 2: To study the challenges faced by organisations working in the fashion industry while they implement socially responsible practices.

With respect to the second objective, the researcher has prepared theme number four. According to this theme, the researcher has explained all the challenges faced by an organisation, when it carries out any ethical practices or social responsibilities. Determining the challenges was a difficult task because ethical and social practices provide positive results. However, research conducted by the researcher proved that there are some challenges too that are faced by organisations when they implement socially responsible behaviour or ethical practices.

Objective 3: To investigate the benefits as well as opportunities that can be gained by implementing socially responsible activities in this industry.

In order to accomplish this particular objective, the researcher has prepared theme number two. In the context of this particular theme, the researcher has talked about the benefits as well as opportunities that are posed by ethical and socially responsible behaviour. In this regard, the researcher has talked about various benefits that an organisation can gain if it implements ethical behaviour and carries out social practices. Based on the analysis, it has been found that these practices are carried out to benefit the environment as well as the stakeholders. However, by providing benefits to the environment and stakeholders, organisations, in turn, can gain significant benefits from them.

Objective 4: To determine the examples of those organisations that have already implemented such practices successfully in the fashion industry.

In the context of this particular objective, the researcher ensured that all the themes consist of examples of such activities that help in describing ethical activities as well as social practices that are implemented by the companies. However, the researcher has prepared theme number three specifically to ensure that this particular objective is accomplished. In the context of the third theme, the researcher talks about various ethical and social activities that are implemented by companies. Apart from this theme, the second theme also helps in describing the activities implemented by various organisations.

Objective 5: To evaluate the overall impact of socially responsible activities on businesses as well as communities in this industry.

In order to accomplish this objective, the researcher has provided an analysis by preparing all four themes. All the themes provide an analysis of the social responsibilities of an organisation along with ethical behaviour. These analyses are explained in different themes, which describe the different impact of these aspects on businesses as well as communities. However, the overall discussion section clearly provides a detailed analysis that helps the researcher in accomplishing this objective.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

While carrying out this study, the researcher has faced the following limitations, which minimised the overall effectiveness of the current study.

First and foremost, the researcher has faced an issue of limited time. The researcher had a very limited time to collect the required data for this study, and further analyse it. The data

collection took a significant number of days, which eventually hampered the analysis of the data.

Further, the researcher also had very limited data. Due to limited time, the researcher opted for a secondary study, which created another limitation for this study. In this context, the secondary study led the researcher to collect qualitative data, through secondary means. However, if the researcher had carried out primary data through interviews, the quality of the collected data could have been better. It would have eventually led the researcher to provide quality and better results for the study.

Further, the researcher also faced a limitation of limited data. The researcher found that there is a very limited study on CSR and ethical practices, with respect to the international fashion industry. It has eventually impacted the study adversely.

These are some of the limitations that are faced by the researcher that has eventually impacted this study.

5.4 Recommendations

On the basis of this present study, the researcher provided the following recommendation:

First and foremost, it is recommended to increase awareness as well as education among the people of the society. In this regard, it is important for organisations to conduct various educational programs as well as initiatives for raising awareness regarding the importance and pros of social responsibility. Apart from this, collaboration with industry associations, and NGOs can be done for providing training as well as resources on sustainable as well as ethical practices.

Secondly, collaboration and partnerships with NGOs, and various stakeholders should be fostered for ensuring that the challenges concerning social responsibilities can be addressed. Effective partnerships with NGOs and stakeholders can help in leveraging knowledge as well as expertise in the field of implementing such practices.

Clear as well as robust practices should be implemented. In this regard, fashion organisations must enforce comprehensive social responsibility policies that ensure all the major aspects such as labour practices, transparency in operations, and environmental sustainability are covered. Further, it is also required to review as well as update policies regularly such that evolving standards of the industry are aligned with the best practices.

Organisations are further required to promote transparency in their operations. Transparency in SCM is required to carry out smooth operations. Organisations must focus on the importance of transparency in SCM and also focus on mitigating social as well as environmental threats. Further, fashion brands should be encouraged for engaging with their suppliers and other vendors such that ethical practices as well as sustainable sourcing can be ensured.

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Chapter 6: Personal Reflection

This section of the study provides a reflection on the study. In order to provide my personal reflection, I have used GIBBS reflective cycle, which has helped me provide reflection in an effective way. According to the GIBBS reflective cycle, I am describing the learning journey in six phases. These phases are explained below:

Description: To start with my reflection, I would like to thank my supervisor, who has helped me a lot, wherever I got stuck with my research study. This study explores the area of corporate social responsibilities, and ethical practices that are carried out by the fashion industry at an international level. I had an interest in this topic, and my supervisor provided me with significant guidance, which helped me to complete this study effectively. It was a secondary study, which required significant efforts for collecting secondary data and further analysing it. The further section explains my feelings regarding this study.

Feelings: I had mixed feelings regarding this study. I was aware that I am required to prepare a dissertation in this semester. I was very excited to start with my dissertation study. However, at the same time, I was quite nervous about this study. But with continuous guidance and feedback from my supervisor, my nervousness went down. There was a moment, where I was able to bring in my ideas, which helped me to provide better results to this study. Furthermore, I was terrified of the data collection process, as I was unable to collect authentic and reliable data during the initial days of the data accumulation process.

Evaluation: With respect to my feelings, I would state that being excited was good for me, but being nervous, somewhere, hampered my progress in this study. The experience during data collection was very bad for me, as I was unable to collect authentic data at the initial stage. However, when I reached out to my supervisor for help and guidance, I think, it was a good move, as it helped me to create and prepare a thoughtful study.

Analysis: Thus, I analysed that being nervous while conducting any study or starting any new thing, is quite normal. But, I implemented several ways such as seeking help from my supervisor, which is one of the best things, one can do, to minimise the negative effect of such feelings. Most importantly, I can analyse that with continuous feedback, I have learnt to take constructive feedback from others, and also take feedback from others positively.

Conclusion: Thus, I conclude that carrying out this study is one of the best experiences I have had. It has helped me to learn several new things. Most importantly, I have learnt to take

feedback positively. I have further enhanced my analytical skills along with my research skills. However, I need to work on my communication skills, which I found to be underdeveloped. I am further seeking exercises that would help me in enhancing my communication skills.

Action Plan: With respect to learnings, and shortfalls, I have planned to take up some courses and sessions that would help me in enhancing my analytical skills, research skills, communication skills, and several other technical skills. These would definitely help me in my career growth.

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