

Conscious Consumers or Unconcerned Fashionistas: Barriers to Ethical Fashion Consumption

Julianna Faludi

Corvinus University of Budapest

János Márton

Corvinus University of Budapest

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Abstract

Sustainability, ethical production and supply chains are at the forefront of conscious consumer concerns, especially with regards to clothing. Consumers may lower their consumption due to environmental motivation (Egea & Frutos, 2013), or exercise different behaviour patterns despite of their concerns. As a response, ethical mainstreaming (Joy et al., 2012) of global companies is complementing the narrow product lines of ethical brands (Ertekin & Atik, 2015), profiting from the ‘ethical premium’ (Shaw et al., 2006). Despite that some brands offer ethical products, we know that there is a gap between the demand and supply in ethical clothing. This study looks into the environmental and ethical concerns in fashion consumption practices and the attainability of ethical fashion. The findings of the survey reveal a clustering of attitudes and purchase behaviour around five groups, and give insights to barriers that ethically motivated consumers face in exercising their preferences. This study is a valuable source for brands and future entrants to the market.

Keywords: *ethical consumption; fashion; barriers to consumption*

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