

Mobilising Consumers Against Modern Slavery: The Role of De/Humanisation

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Abstract

There are more enslaved people now than at any other time. Consumer demand for cheap, fast goods drives the perpetuation of modern slavery to meet this demand with cheap, disposable labor. Yet, consumer perspectives towards modern slavery remain severely under-researched. We conducted 111 consumer interviews (UK, Greece, and Australia) to investigate how to mobilise consumers in response to modern slavery. We discover consumer self-categorisation techniques of dehumanisation and rehumanisation to determine whether an enslaved person is worthy of their concern and care or not, thus, whether to act or not. These insights are significant for academic scholarship and public policy addressing modern slavery.

Track: Social Responsibility & Ethics