




Slow Fashion Consumer Behavior: A Literature Review

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Abstract: This study aims to understand the dimensions associated with the behavior of the Slow Fashion consumer, their values, attitudes, and motivations, as well as to know in depth the literature related to Slow Fashion. The present article is a literature review related to the concept of “Slow Fashion”, and follows a qualitative methodology based on an in-depth literature review of 25 papers from the Scopus and Web of Science research databases. For this literature review, a content analysis was initially performed through a bibliometric analysis. Then, a mind map was developed where the five major dimensions related to Slow Fashion consumer behavior were identified: “ethical values”, “sustainable consumption”, “consumer motivations”, “consumer attitudes”, and “sustainability awareness”. We then related the mind map with the main conclusions of the literature review. The main limitation of this research results from the low number of published papers approaching the research concept. We were, however, able to identify the main concepts associated with the movement of Slow Fashion, thereby contributing to the available information on the variables that impact consumers’ purchasing decisions.

Keywords: slow fashion; slow fashion consumer; consumer behavior; sustainability



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1. Introduction

The social and ecological impact of the fashion industry has been the subject of much research and considerable documentation in recent years. It is recognized as one of the most polluting industries at all stages of its life cycle [1–3]. At an early stage and until approximately twenty years ago, two collections were produced per year (Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter); currently, trend cycles have sped up and between 50 and 100 mini-collections are placed on the market per year [2]. An example is the Inditex Group, especially the Zara brand, which changes its in-store collection every fifteen days [4].

Nowadays, some companies are increasingly adopting green initiatives such as cultural innovation and social responsibility as a part of their business philosophy and core values. This is mainly due to three reasons: being socially and environmentally responsible (one of the main concerns of all markets), gaining competitive advantages, and following consumer trends [5].

In 2017, Europeans bought 6.4 million tons of new clothes; between 1996 and 2012, studies estimate that each person increased by 40% the amount of new clothes they purchased [2], increasing the ecological negative impact of this industry. Actual well-informed clients are concerned and focused on the long-term well-being of people and the planet itself, and thus a new movement has appeared called Slow Fashion [6]. It represents the need to adopt sustainable performance and a change in core values in the fashion industry [1,6]; the challenge is to focus on more durable products and traditional production techniques or design concepts that have no season [6–8], emphasizing quality in order

to achieve sustainability [9,10]. In other words, the movement encourages brands to embrace a quality-based rather than a time-based business philosophy based around slower production, ethical attitudes, and well-made and long-lasting products.

There are data on the values that drive consumers to invest in Slow Fashion, namely increased awareness of sustainability, the key explanation for the acceptance of this movement. Concern for preserving the environment and guaranteeing the well-being of individuals is leading to a consequent change in consumers' value perceptions and purchasing behavior. Slow Fashion is seeing an increasing support over the last several years as consumers begin to demand higher standards in sustainability and corporate ethics [7,9,10].

Despite several studies proving that social and ecological awareness influence purchasing decisions, it has been discovered that other variables such as style are often related to fashion buying decisions [1,5,11–13]. This leads us to the following question: in which way and how do consumers engage in this movement by adopting more responsible consumption habits and demands?

A study developed in Finland in 2009 by Niinimäki [13] on eco-fashion consumption and consumer buying decisions concluded that during a purchase journey, consumers think about aspects related to ethics and the environmental impact of the products. However, at the moment of buying these thoughts tend to decrease. This can be related to individual and personality traits and consequent ethical commitment; it seems that the greater consumer ethical commitment is, the higher the importance of sustainability and the lower the attention towards physical appearance [13]. This leads to more sustainable consumption; in other words, consumers with higher ethical commitment and stronger values place more importance on their ideals than on aspects related to their own identity and/or beauty [13].

The main reasons that seem to lead consumers to engage in sustainable consumption are related to the capacity to find alternatives that minimize the damage caused to the planet without giving up on style, that is, "sustainability as a facilitator of style and sustainable fashion as a source of pleasure and well-being" [12] (p. 12). This complements Szmigin and Carrigan's study [14] that associates sustainable consumption to feelings of personal growth, well-being, and experiential pleasure.

Previous studies on Slow Fashion consumer behaviour have addressed specific issues such as the sales journey and the fashion industry's evolution over time. The consumer and consumption habits are addressed as contexts and often analysed as secondary data. Furthermore, the already extant literature is dispersed due to lack of systematization, and there are no studies that allow for tracing consumer profiles in order to understand how they behave. Thus, in order to be able to profile them in the future, it is necessary to understand in depth the related literature and the dimensions associated with such consumers.

The present study has a two primary aims: (1) to permit understanding of the main dimensions associated with Slow Fashion consumer behavior (e.g., values, attitudes, and motivations); and (2) to better understand in depth the main research pertaining to Slow Fashion.

2. Materials and Methods

A systematic literature review was carried out on Slow Fashion following a qualitative methodology based on an in-depth literature review.

On 2 March 2021, research was carried out on all the papers published to date on recognized databases, namely, Scopus and Web of Science.

On Scopus, we searched using the keyword "Slow Fashion", limiting the research areas to "business", "social science" and "environmental" and obtaining a total of 49 research documents.

In the Web of Science database, we replicated the survey using "Slow Fashion" as the keyword and defining the following research areas: "business", "green sustainable science technology", "environmental", "management", "environmental studies" and "interdisciplinary social sciences". We found a total of 24 research documents. The chosen areas

were intended to limit the results to slow fashion consumer behavior and its impact on sustainability both as a whole and from a management perspective.

The decision to set a limit on the search was due to our intention to focus as much as possible on the industry under analysis.

A total of 73 articles were obtained, of which 16 were excluded because they appeared in duplicate in both databases; in all, 57 documents were considered (see also supplementary material).

The collected documents were placed in an Excel sheet and sorted by year of publication. The data collected included author(s), title, type of document, the journal where the publication was made, keywords, abstract, objectives, research questions, variables, hypotheses, context, theories addressed, sample, methodology, achieved results, and recommendations for future studies. In several articles it was not possible to complete all fields for reasons of consistency, document context, or access. Through this choice and compilation of data it was possible to create a comprehensive screening of all the considered research papers.

After synthesizing all the information collected from the final 57 papers in Excel, one was excluded for not being in Portuguese or English and 13 were excluded for not allowing full access. We then read the 43 documents that could be fully accessed; it was possible to separate them into “+/- relevant” (13 articles), “relevant” (12 articles) or “not relevant” (18 articles). The 18 articles that were not relevant were excluded for not being related to consumer behavior in the context of Slow Fashion. We carried out a thorough analysis of the 25 documents considered relevant for the study in order to better understand their respective alignment with the topic under analysis. PRISMA Article was used for the analysis and exclusion of the articles [15], as shown in Figure 1.

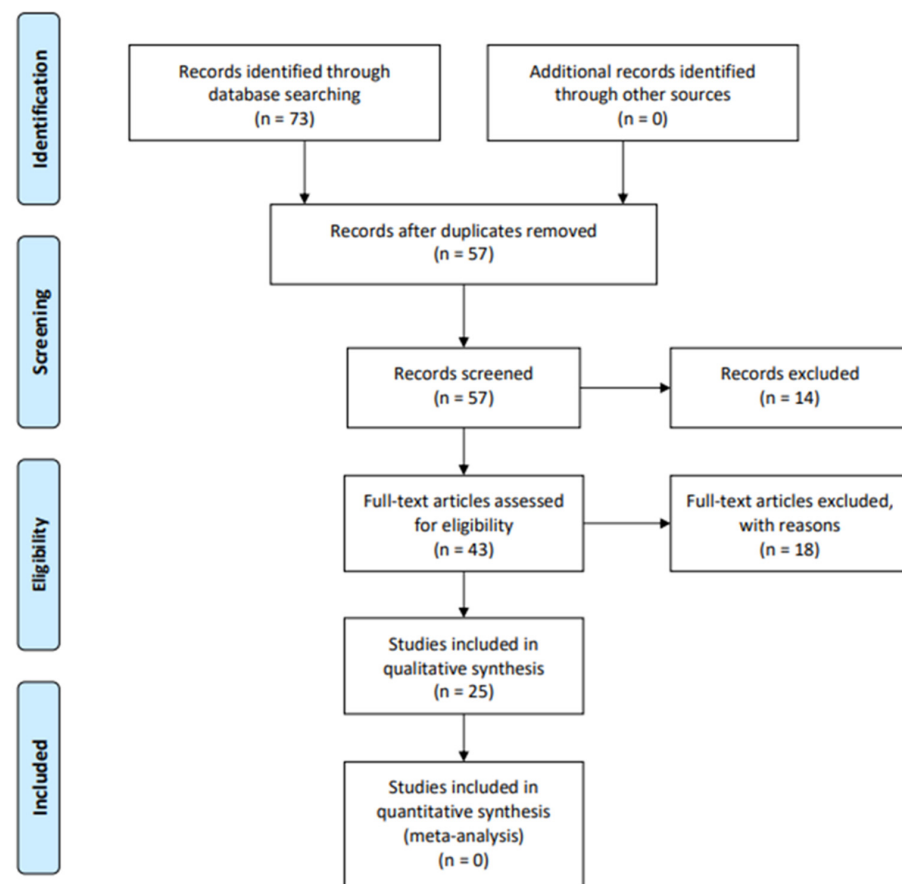


Figure 1. Slow Fashion PRISMA (Source [15]).

Data collected from the papers were descriptively analyzed by year of publication, number of papers per journal, and content. In the content analysis the theories presented in the papers, research methodologies used, recommendations for future research, keywords, and relevance were studied. A bibliometric analysis in VowViewer allowed for keyword analysis and the creation of a word cloud.

3. Results

3.1. Brief Descriptive Analysis

2017 was the year with the highest number of documents published in databases (11). Of the eleven documents, four were excluded for not allowing full access; 2019 turned out to be the year with the highest number of publications (7).

Slow Fashion is a relatively recent topic in academic studies, and in fact the first article to address the concept dates back to 2008, only twelve years ago. Figure 2 describes the number of articles per year.

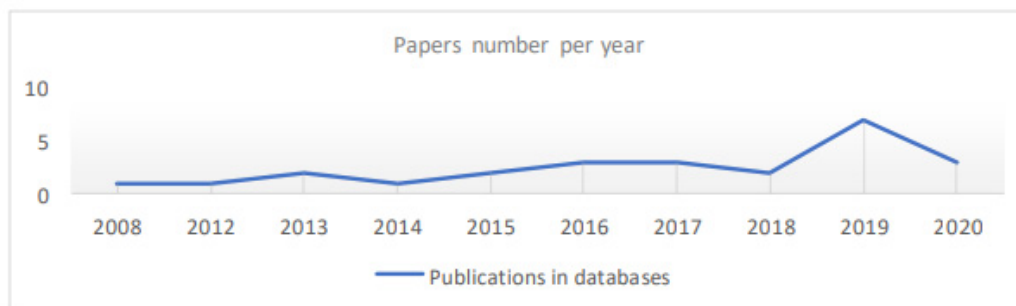


Figure 2. Papers: number per year.

Sustainability (Switzerland) was the journal with the highest number of papers (4). Two of the papers found did not clearly identify the journal. Figure 3 summarizes the number of papers per journal that we were able to find and use for content analysis.

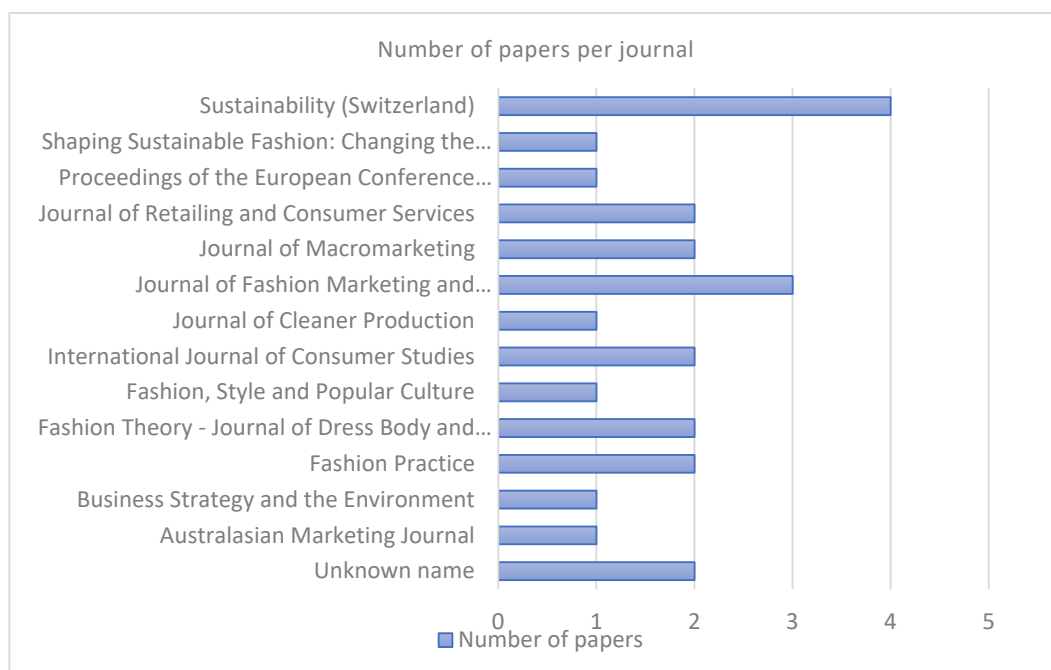


Figure 3. Number of papers per journal.

3.2. Content Analysis

The content analysis of the final 25 documents used in this study provides an overview of the literature supporting the concept of “Slow Fashion”. The theories presented throughout the papers were divided into seven groups, as they are associated with the same theoretical environment. Table 1 presents the groups of theories and corresponding authors.

Table 1. Theory groups.

Theory Groups	Theories
Sustainability	Approach to contribute to sustainable development [1]; Eco design [16]; Life cycle assessment [16]; Green and sustainability marketing [17]; Sustainable design theory [18]; Five dimensions of Slow Fashion [7,10]; Consumer Orientation to Slow Fashion [9,10]; Slow theory [8]; Rubbish theory [8].
Marketing	Marketing Theory [11,19]; Green and sustainability marketing [17]; Churchill’s paradigm [9].
Culture	Fashion Cultures [1]; Cultural theory [20]; Attributes of classic design [21].
Fashion	Fashion theory [7,8,19,22–28]; Differences in patterns of dressing in modern and postmodern fashion [23]; Five dimensions of Slow Fashion [7,10]; The fashion business theory [8]; Attributes of classic design [21]; Eco design ([16]; Consumer Orientation to Slow Fashion [9,10]; Slow theory [8].
Human behavior	Theory Perspective on Consumer Quests for Greater Choice in Mainstream Markets [19]; Attitude-behavior relation [29,30]; Theory of planned behavior [29]; Consumer Orientation to Slow Fashion [9,10]; Consumption Theory [19]; Modern Social Theory [23]; Age ordering [23]; Sociological theory [18]; Feminist theory [8]; Balance theory [31]; Theory of Reasoned Action [29,32]; Schwartz values [9]; Institutional theory [18].
Methods	Grounding grounded theory [30]; Grounded theory [28].
Business	Theory of the relational view [33]; The fashion business theory [8]; Trickle-down theory [18]; Churchill’s paradigm [9]; Rubbish theory [8].

The seven groups were assigned the following designations: sustainability, marketing, culture, fashion, human behavior, methods, and business. The name of each group is related to the main topic analysed. However, there are theories that are present in more than one group and that approach other topics as well.

The groups with the highest representation of theories were Human Behavior and Sustainability. Fashion and Business bring together a considerable number of theories as well.

The published papers considered in this research used different methodologies, which are summarized in Table 2.

Two types of methodological analysis were used: qualitative research and quantitative research. In quantitative analyses, surveys were the most used methodology. As for qualitative studies, the most used methodologies were mainly semi-structured interviews along with literature reviews and case studies.

For suggestions for future research, Table 3 summarizes the main recommendations.

People make up organizations, whether customers in general or other stakeholders. Therefore, research needs to be linked to consumer behavior, attitudes, ethics, and demographic characteristics.

When the Slow Fashion movement emerged, a main concern was to understand what should be done from a business perspective to embrace the concept and rethink business models. Initial papers focused on the production of Slow Fashion clothes such as yarn, yarn producers, and craftsmen. These studies attempted to help craftsmen/producers to develop their work, increase their activity, rethink their business models, gain recognition from consumers, and at the same time to understand and properly communicate the growing importance of adopting sustainable fashion practices.

Table 2. Methodologies.

Methodologies	Authors of the Articles
Content analysis of promotional materials used in sustainable fashion	Hammond, C. [22].
Interviews	Hammond, C. [22]; Henninger, C.E. [17]; Barnes, L., Lea-Greenwood, G., Zarley Watson, M. and Yan, R.-N. [27].
Literature review	Freudenreich, B. and Schaltegger, S. [1]; McNeill, L.S. and Snowden, J. [34]; Da Costa, A.G., Soares, I.M., Pinto, B.F., Au-Yong-Oliveira, M., Szczygiel, N.; Amorim M.P.C., Costa C., Au-Yong-Oliveira M. and Amorim M.P.C. [35]; Štefko, R. and Steffek, V. [24]; Ozdamar Ertekin, Z. and Atik, D. [18]; Gwilt, A. and Rissanen, T. [36]; Clark, H. [8].
Survey	Pencarelli, T., Taha, V.A., Škerháková, V., Valentiny, T. and Fedorko, R. [31]; Casto, M.A. and DeLong, M. [21]; DeLong, M.R., Bang, H. and Gibson, L. [23]; Gupta, S., Gwozdz, W. and Gentry, J. [19]; Şener, T., Bişkin, F. and Kılınç, N. [7]; Sung, J. and Woo, H. [29]; Magnuson, B., Reimers, V. and Chao, F. [25]; Jung, S. and Jin, B. [10]; Reimers, V., Magnuson, B. and Chao, F. [32]; Henninger, C.E. [17].
Case studies and case profiles	Clark, H. [8]; McNeill, L.S. and Snowden, J. [34]; Cimatti, B., Campana, G. and Carluccio, L. [16]; Matheny, R. and Hernandez, A. [37].
Lab testing	Henninger, C.E. [17].
Use of social networks for research and study (YouTube, Facebook)	Da Costa, A.G., Soares, I.M., Pinto, B.F., Au-Yong-Oliveira, M., Szczygiel, N.; Amorim M.P.C., Costa C., Au-Yong-Oliveira M. and Amorim M.P.C. [35].
Focus groups	Pookulangara, S. and Shephard, A. [28].

Figure 4 shows a word cloud concerning the first keyword of each paper used in this study. The size of the words varies according to the relative frequency of their appearance, which allows us to identify fields directly related to Slow Fashion such as Ethics, Sustainability, and Design.

Considering the 25 documents used, 23 keywords were identified with more than one mention: “Slow Fashion” (7), “sustainability” (3), “design” (2), and “ethics” (2). All other keywords appeared only once. Researchers usually place the central themes of their studies in descending order according to their relevance to the paper.

A bibliometric analysis was performed to map the relationships between keywords. First, the keyword network was examined to identify all possible research fields and associated concepts (Figure 5). A co-occurrence analysis was performed with a minimum of one occurrence per word for a total of 79 keywords from the 25 papers. The size of the circles represents the frequency of keyword appearance; the larger the circle, the greater the occurrence, while the color of an item is related to the cluster where that keyword belongs. The lines between the circles show which keywords were mentioned together in a paper. In Figure 5, the keywords with most prominence are “Slow Fashion”, “sustainability”, and “fast fashion”. The most prominent term, “Slow Fashion”, is at the center of this paper as well and is linked to almost all of the other words.

Table 3. Future research field.

Authors of the Articles	Future Research Field
Freudenreich, B. and Schaltegger, S. [1]	Consumer's acceptance of the proposals.
Pencarelli, T., Taha, V.A., Škerháková, V., Valentiny, T. and Fedorko, R. [31]	Larger sample; do a comparative analysis between consumers.
Casto, M.A. and DeLong, M. [21]	Potential for extended wear; comparison of attributes with classic design; influence over <i>Slow Fashion</i> design.
DeLong, M.R., Bang, H. and Gibson, L. [23]	Implications of dress patterns on sustainable practices; motivation to dress every day; ways of dressing from other populations.
Gupta, S., Gwozdz, W. and Gentry, J. [19]	Style versus fashion.
McNeill, L.S. and Snowdon, J. [34]	Larger sample; <i>Slow Fashion</i> selling strategies.
Şener, T., Bişkin, F. and Kılınc, N. [7]	Different dimensions.
Sung, J. and Woo, H. [29]	Test the model in various consumer markets; consumer behavior against excessive consumption.
Cimatti, B., Campana, G. and Carluccio, L. [16]	Sustainable fashion production.
Magnuson, B., Reimers, V. and Chao, F. [25]	Different attitude contexts.
Jung, S. and Jin, B. [10]	Cross-cultural research; attributes of <i>Slow Fashion</i> ; consumer profile.
Reimers, V., Magnuson, B. and Chao, F. [32]	Consumer perceptions.
Henninger, C.E. [17]	Larger sample.
Ozdamar Ertekin, Z. and Atik, D. [18]	Different factors in the fashion field; market change.
Barnes, L., Lea-Greenwood, G., Zarley Watson, M. and Yan, R.-N. [27]	<i>Slow Fashion</i> consumers; fast fashion consumers.
Pookulangara, S. and Shephard, A. [28]	The power and impact from the <i>Slow Fashion</i> movement.
Clark, H. [8]	Redefinition of fashion.

The VOSviewer software allows for joining keywords into groups called “clusters” based on affinity and/or proximity. The VOSviewer program presented 18 clusters for the 79 items.

The two clusters with the higher number of items are shown in red and green. The red cluster presents eight items: clothing, clothing industry, ethic, social responsibility, sufficiency, sustainable consumption, sustainable management, and sustainable production. The green cluster has eight items as well: classic design, consumer perception, eco design, esthetic, green fashion, recycling, *Slow Fashion*, and sustainability. All other unnamed items were divided into clusters grouping from six to two items each. This analysis allowed us to understand how the keywords in different papers are interconnected. VOSviewer made it possible to identify which keywords were most prominent as well as to create clusters of related items.

The red cluster shows a higher interconnectedness between words; however, the expressions are not the ones that appear most often, such as “*Slow Fashion*” or “sustainability”. These results seem to reveal that at the time of the database research there were still few articles that named these items as keywords, and/or that these two concepts have not yet been related to *Slow Fashion*.



Figure 4. Word Cloud.

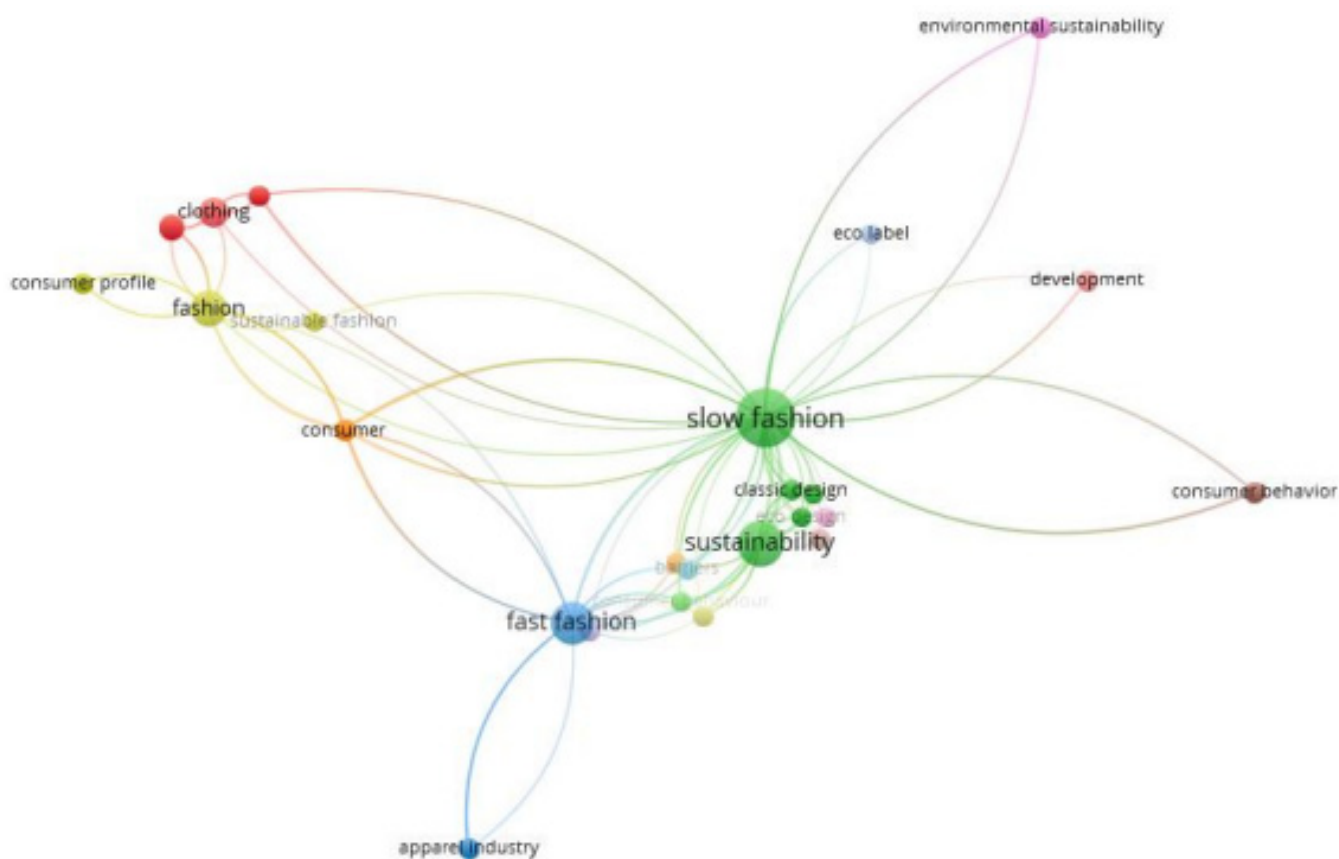


Figure 5. Bibliometric analysis.

This analysis made it possible to understand how the keywords of different papers are interconnected.

4. Discussion

Nowadays, consumers are increasingly looking for unique products and designs and willing to pay more if they feel that their needs and preferences are met [24]. This search for exclusivity is related to any human being's need to be perceived as different from others, enhance self-esteem and social image, mark a position, and consequently to avoid mass consumption [38–40]. In fashion, this search for uniqueness seems to be related to the style aspect; people prefer to reorient the quality of the products they use bearing in mind certain integral aspects, not only appearance. Clothes that are customized and made of recycled materials reveal a high concern for sustainability. In other words, sustainable consumption is positively associated with environment and social responsibility [19].

Several studies have revealed that the more classic a piece of clothing is, the lesser its temporality, and therefore its alignment with a sustainable perspective. A simple and discreet classical design is usually considered an expression of maturity and sophistication [21], revealing a specific social image in which self-image seems to impact an individual's clothing choice. Self-image may act as a variable leading to the choice of slow or fast fashion [27,41], as slow fashion consumers have a non-modern self-image. They follow their individual style and bet on more classic and simple clothes [24,27]. Promoting the idea that a sustainable consumption leads to a very positive and effective image could be a potential solution for achieving an increase in Slow Fashion.

The Slow Fashion movement shows the importance of sustainability to the fashion industry players along with a change in peoples' values [1,6]; it is important to understand which values have changed, the reasons for this, and which reasons currently guide consumer purchasing decisions.

According to the papers used in this research, two specific generations have been studied, namely, Generation Y and Generation Z. Data show that both generations are currently looking for more mature and timeless clothing, especially females. In different contexts, both generations have similarities in their dressing practice and are moving in the direction of timeless clothing; however, they feel the need to be up to date as well. This arises from an external influence resulting from a location with an eco-conscious culture that leads to the involvement in more sustainable shopping [23].

Environmental sustainability has increasingly emerged as an important issue in the fashion industry. On one hand, the chemicals used in the production and finishing of the goods are recognized as capable of harming humans and the environment; on the other hand, there are a lot of products that end up not being consumed, therefore becoming wasted and or being destroyed by brands. Slow Fashion promotes a change in the consumer mindset that encourages a preference for quality over quantity [42].

The Slow Fashion consumer cares about all the participants in the value chain, bearing in mind both producers and society itself. They care about sustainable companies in sustainable markets [28,42].

Based on the existing literature it is possible to state that culture is crucial to consider when developing a marketing strategy. Cultural values influence how consumers evaluate and respond to marketing strategies and how they decide to buy products and services [43]. In other words, human beings are influenced by the community where they were born and grew up. This impacts their personality traits, beliefs, values, thoughts, and concerns, which result in motivations and later actions. In order to better understand how consumers perceive slow fashion, a mind map was developed (Figure 6).

This mind-map tries to present the top five expressions related to Slow Fashion consumer behavior. Five groups, in pink, reveal the key concepts associated with Slow Fashion: "ethical values", "sustainable consumption", "consumer motivations", "consumer attitudes", and "awareness of sustainability". Each group highlights certain questions that need to be properly answered in order to understand who the Slow Fashion consumer is and create a possible profile.

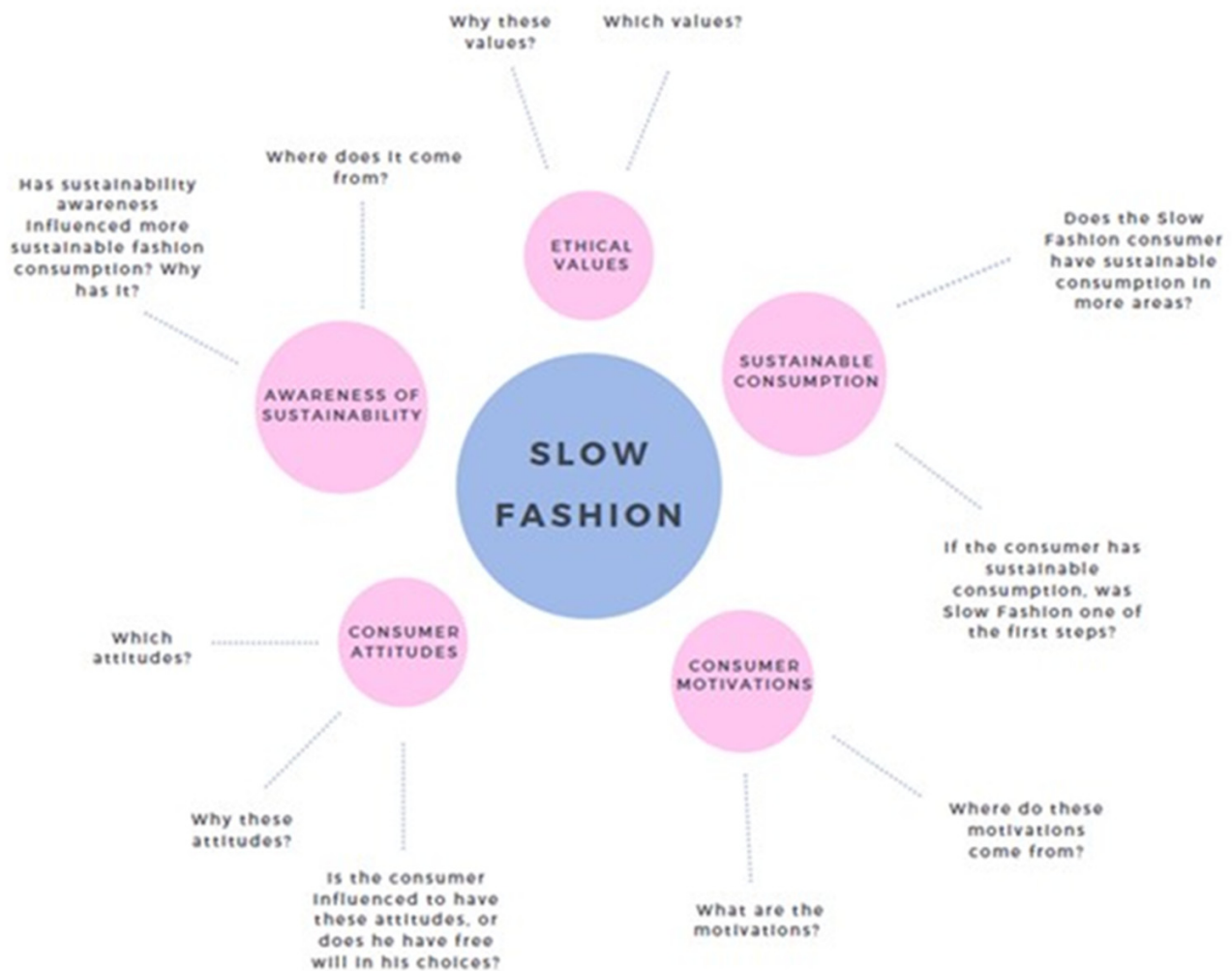


Figure 6. Slow Fashion Mind-Map.

Thus far, in considering consumer attitudes studies have looked at various attributes impacting buying decisions: environmental responsibility, employee welfare, animal welfare, Slow Fashion, costs, and physical and extrinsic attributes. Four of these were found to be important dimensions for ethical fashion perception: fashion employee welfare, Slow Fashion attributes, animal welfare, and environmental responsibility, with only the first two appearing to influence consumer attitudes [25,32].

Employee wellbeing has become a fundamental aspect for society, mainly due to news reporting on unfair earnings and working conditions, child labor, and social inequalities. Consumers are increasingly paying attention to these issues, enjoying brands that adopt working policies that value their employees and respect their rights. Being more concerned with socially responsible practices, consumers express it by preferring to make ethical purchases [42,44–46].

However, consumers do not need to associate Slow Fashion with environmental and employee welfare good practices to perceive ethical clothing; the durability of the goods and the materials used in their production is enough for this consumer perception [32], as well as for animal welfare and environmental responsibility.

A study that looked at 221 consumers in the US revealed that delivering an exclusive product affects the Slow Fashion customer's perception of value creation. Slow fashion and customized products increase perceived value, which in turn positively affects Slow Fashion purchasing intentions and the acceptance of premium prices [10].

When adopting sustainable consumption habits, the consumer tends to pay attention to transparency in terms of the way brands communicate and support local communities [31].

Regarding Slow Fashion consumer values, several studies have been found. A study developed in Turkey showed that main perceived values in Turkish Slow Fashion consumers are authenticity, locality, and exclusivity, while in Kazakhstan the main values are equity, functionality, locality, and exclusivity. Perceived values in both groups positively affect the intention to buy Slow Fashion products and predispose consumers to pay higher prices [7,24]. Based on US consumer orientation, four target groups of consumers have been identified: (1) a group highly involved in the movement; (2) a conventional group; (3) an exclusivity-oriented group; and (4) a group little-involved in the movement. These groups have been created based on values, purchasing behaviors and demographic aspects [9]. For each group, a distinct marketing strategy should be implemented.

In other research, certain values have been clearly identified: (1) quality versus emotionality; (2) price; and (3) social values. Consumers of Slow Fashion products perceive them as having a higher quality standard, which encourages individuals to consume these types of products, feel good about doing it, and invest in more durable goods [29].

Table 4 shows the information presented in this discussion regarding consumer behavior around Slow Fashion and synthesizes and relates it to the five groups identified in the mind map. These five key concepts seem to be somehow related to the information collected from the articles analyzed. However, further data are needed in order to assertively define the Slow Fashion consumer profile.

Table 4. Five categories and outcomes.

5 Categories	Slow Fashion Consumer Behaviour	Outcomes of Articles Analysed
Consumer motivations	Unique and classic designs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Feeling of sophistication and maturity; – A taste for exclusivity that leads to a willingness to pay extra for it.
Ethical values	Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Functionality, exclusivity, equity, locality and authenticity.
Awareness of sustainability, consumer motivation and sustainable consumption	Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Impact of fashion industry on workers and society; – Where the product is produced; – Be less and less driven by fashions and wear your clothes for longer; – Fair trade; – Organic products; – Sustainable production.
Awareness of sustainability, consumer attitudes	Style orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Style orientation seems to be interconnected with the purchase decision, buyers think more and more about recycling and reuse, they try to make more sustainable purchases, they worry about corporate responsibility, about the transparency of brands' communication and about how they support local communities.
Consumer motivations	Self-image and social Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This consumer likes to distinguish himself from others and pays attention to his social image and self-image. Self-image refers to the search for their own style and non-trendy, but always paying attention to the style factor, which increases their self-esteem.

5. Conclusions

According to Freudenreich et al. [1], one way to reduce clothing consumption is to create a structure to offer potential businesses. By developing these offerings, the clothing sector could modernize itself and move away from high-speed and low-price production towards a slower, more responsible, more sustainable business approach [1].

The consequences of the environmental and ethical impacts of this industry are now a concern for brands that encourage their consumers to prioritize longevity and ethical consumption over price and novelty [34].

This paper, after a careful analysis of the current existing bibliography on the topic and considering the gaps that still exist, highlights possible paths for future and complementary work. The focus must be on gathering data that allow a deep understanding of who the Slow Fashion consumer is and which factors influence their adoption of this new global tendency.

Highlighting specific research results, Štefko, R. and Steffek, V. [24], complemented by the studies of Santos [38], Giglio, E.M. [39], Vigneron, F., and Johnson, L.W. [40] show that Slow Fashion consumers look for unique designs which are associated with a taste for exclusivity, which in turn influences the probability of being willing to pay more for a Slow Fashion product and a future purchase.

Several authors, such as Štefko, R. and Steffek, V. [24], Barnes, L. et al. [27], and Yoo, B. and Lee, S.H. [41] argue that such consumers seek to distinguish themselves from others, and pay attention to their social and self-image. Self-image is related to creating a unique style instead of merely being trendy; a different and very-own style seems to increase self-esteem. Classic clothes with a simple and discreet design and longer durability due to the materials used expresses maturity and sophistication. Style orientation seems to be interconnected with purchasing decisions and the individual's main concerns and values. Buyers think more and more about recycling and reuse; they try to make more sustainable purchases, as they are worried about corporate responsibility, the transparency of brands' communication, good environmental practices, and how they support local communities. When buying, the Slow Fashion consumer considers the place where the product is produced and whether it is fair trade, sustainably produced, and organic. Increasingly, Slow Fashion consumers are concerned with buying items that are less driven by fashion trends, and with wearing them for longer. In addition, they care about the impact of the fashion industry on workers and society [19].

The current literature allows us to conclude that there are already identified values; these values plus individual ethics have a positive influence on sustainable consumption. The five values identified by Şener, T. et al. [7], and Stefko, R. and Steffek, V. [24] allow a first characterization of this consumer: (1) authenticity; (2) locality; (3) exclusivity; (4) equity; and (5) functionality. It should be noted that these authors pointed out that their samples should be extended and more research topics should be added.

We recommend that future research use a qualitative and quantitative approach gathering data through questionnaires applied to final consumers, focus groups, or Delphi interviews with well-recognized fashion experts.

The main limitations of this paper are the existence of few published papers on Slow Fashion and even fewer on Slow Fashion consumer behavior.

This paper presents a theoretical contribution, being the first literature review focusing on Slow Fashion Consumer behavior. In the context of sustainability, this paper relates Slow Fashion to companies' need to adopt a sustainable internal and external policy. It provides insights into the associations, values, and key motivations that drive sustainability-conscious consumers.

From a management perspective, it is important to highlight that understanding Slow Fashion consumer behavior is important for any brand; therefore, being able to understand the motivations, attitudes, beliefs, and values of these consumers, which have already been presented in this study, becomes a high-value asset and should be a priority for companies acting in the fashion industry.

Slow Fashion is a concept that consumers and brands are now beginning to pay attention to. Brands want to understand whether consumers are willing to pay more if they adopt a new business model moving from fast to slow fashion. Brands such as H&M and Mango have created new brands with timeless products, higher quality raw materials, and more responsible supply chains, and Zara is now implementing classical and durable products at their stores, which carry a higher price. How this will be accepted by customers and how to properly communicate demands for more detailed information about Slow Fashion adopters is as yet unknown. It demands further market studies to support such strategic decisions as whether to prioritize new brands, new product lines, prices levels, and policies. The number of consumers who are concerned about sustainability and consider Slow Fashion as a way to achieve sustainable businesses is increasing, especially among young individuals, and the challenge is for companies to answer promptly.

Supplementary Materials: The following are available online at <https://www.mdpi.com/article/10.3390/su14052860/s1>, CONSORT 2010 Checklist. Table S1—Theory groups. Table S2—Methodologies. Table S3—Future research field. Table S4—5 categories and outcomes.

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