

Features of building a modern business in the textile and clothing industry

Yurii Teselko *

Founder & Owner of Murmur Studio LLC Orlando, Florida, USA.

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Abstract

The article deals with the theoretical definition and analysis of features of the development of commercial activities within the textile and apparel industry, with a special focus on the effects of technological innovation quality in business sustainable development practice and changes in consumer preferences. The topic of the description is caused by the great value of this industry in the global economy and the rapid requirement of companies towards adaptation regarding both environmental concerns, technological advancement, and growth in the sustainability of consumer behavior. The research is new because it covers wide coverage involving digitalization, automation, and sustainability in practice within the same industry and how all this drives the market dynamics of the very force of social media and fast fashion trend activities. The paper outlines major business strategies by exploring the possibilities of reshoring plus outsourcing investments and that of production supply chains plus sustainable materials. It is, therefore, a research paper on evolving determinants of the textile industry and shall be considered by many stakeholders in the business sector, policymakers, and stakeholders to use the insights for the pursuit of strategies that ensure growth and sustainability in the medium to long term.

Keywords: Textile Industry; Clothing Industry; Sustainable Development; Technological Innovation; Consumer Preferences; Digitalization

1. Introduction

Textile and clothing are placed in a very core position of the global economy; it is a very important part of the whole global GDP with millions of job opportunities around the whole world [1]. More than ever before, it has become one of the brightest areas not only because it satisfies the basic need of consumers in clothing and textiles but because this industry influences two problems of International Trade. However, there are great challenges to be met as the industry is to respond to sustainable development leading by environmental concerns of pollution and waste as well as technological advancement to remain competitive amidst changing preferences of consumers.

The goal of the present paper is to carry out the examination of the essential features of up-to-date business development within the textile and clothing industry in place challenges and prospects in this emergent sector. To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been set:

To make an analysis of the present economic situation of the textile and clothing industry with reference to basic economic indicators and global market trends.

Maintaining the original tone, the purposes are:

- Assessing the influence of technological advancements-Oautomation, integration, and e-commerce-on strategic approaches pursued by firms in the respective sector.

* Corresponding author: Yurii Teselko

- Exploring the impact of sustainable development practices and consumer preference for environmentally friendly products on the future direction of the industry.
- Assessing Outsourcing and Reshoring Impacts, On Manufacturing Costs and Global Supply Chains.

Novelty of the work can be found in the integrative application to comprehend the complex interaction of the economic, technological, and environmental factors shaping the textile and clothing industry today.

2. Materials and methodology

It is primarily based on previous research papers and statistical reports of the textile and garment industry as well as related aspects of technological innovation and sustainability. More precisely, in the study of Global Apparel Industry Statistics [1], the main goal was to review the trends of the production of textiles all over the world and the economic influence of the very sector. [4], identified the increased role of sustainability in customer preferences and also their willingness to pay more for sustainable fashion items. [14], discussed how the global health crisis has influenced consumers to alter their behavior towards more sustainable purchasing practices in the fashion industry. Meer [6], considered the effect of social media on fashion, along with letting it be realized how Instagram, TikTok, and similar platforms expedite various trends while influencing consumer choices.

The wage issue was further looked at by the Fair Labor study. The work of the Adidas Speedfactory further points to the role of technological innovation and, in particular, automation in changing styles of production in the fashion industry. Re:So, increasing sustainable shopping trends and their impact on both consumer goods and retail sectors, was the other variation.

The study combines the methodology of comparative strategies and innovations in the industry, wherein it will focus primarily on a comparison of different strategies and innovations that have been made in this industry, and source analysis, through which common patterns will be identified in developing the industry. It presents, inter alia, recommendations to stakeholders who wish to enhance their strategic orientations in view of the changing challenges and opportunities in the textile and clothing industry for the long-term improvement of their competitiveness.

3. Results and discussion

The global textile and clothing market is a significant sector of the world economy, demonstrating steady growth and significant volume. In 2025, it is estimated at \$1.84 trillion, which is about 1.6% of global GDP [1]. The market growth dynamics are shown in Figure 1.

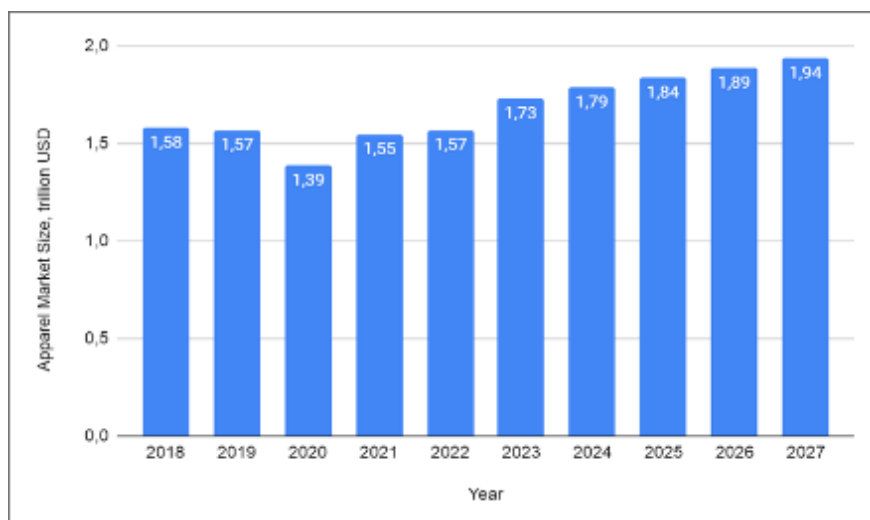


Figure 1 Dynamics of growth of the global apparel market [1]

The leaders are the USA (\$365.70 billion), China (\$313.82 billion) and India (\$101.39 billion). The market is segmented by gender: women's clothing is \$930 billion, men's - \$587.61 billion, children's - \$274.25 billion [1]. Data on the gender distribution of the market is presented in Figure 2.

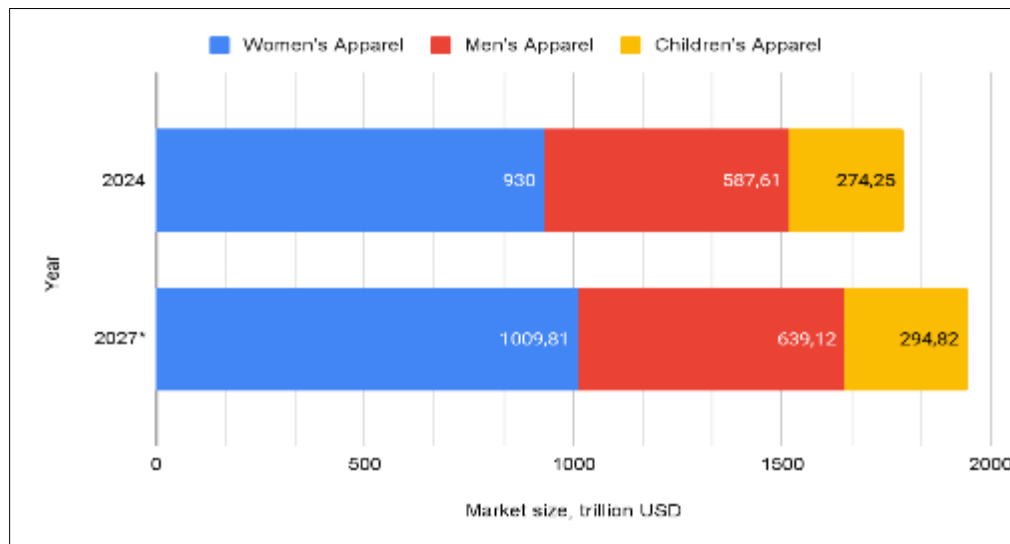


Figure 2 Market distribution by gender [1]

Consumer spending amounted to \$2.4 trillion, projected to reach \$2.88 trillion by 2029. The sector also provides jobs to 430 million people or 11.9 percent of the world's labor force [1].

One of the major shifts in the global market for textiles and apparel is due to the upsurge in technological advances, subsequently crafting consumer evolution. The most notable change is the exponential increment in online shopping. This has completely transformed the landscape of the high street. The process was exacerbated by the pandemic, which saw the levels of online apparel and textile sales reach unprecedented heights. According to the Global E-Commerce Sales and Sales Forecast, 2023, the global retail e-commerce sale was valued at US\$5.8 trillion with expectations of a 39% rise in the years following leading to over US\$ 8 trillion by 2027 [2]. Leading this growth is ease of access on online platforms, rampant mobile shopping apps, and easy access to a plethora of products across different international markets. Because of this, the emerging traditional shops, being bricks and mortar, are forced to adapt to the new strategies in digital ways. They can apply omnichannel strategies, which unify the online and offline experiences in terms of shopping.

The lingerie market is defined at the US\$102.83 billion mark in 2025 and will hit US\$154.55 billion by 2030. This happens at an 8.49% CAGR for the period under consideration. The forecast period.

The lingerie industry is changing quite a bit, mainly reflecting consumer response to an increased awareness of the need for appropriate fitting and comfort. An updated study places the ignorance of bra fit in Indian women at about 80%; clearly, there is substantial room for education and product customization in developing countries.[16] This burgeoning awareness has ushered manufacturers into major investments of technology in fitting and size inclusivity; in fact, most brands are extending their size ranges while introducing innovative solutions to fitting. Body positivity and inclusivity is now en vogue in this industry trend with more brands pushing the spectrum of body types in their marketing campaigns and product offers. There have been dramatic shifts in retail as well with brands now pushing the boundaries with customer experiences and reach through omnichannel touchpoints.

In the industry, a major player is Victoria's Secret having more than 890 stores strewn across the world whilst in the race to build up a strong digital presence incorporating advanced e-commerce platforms and virtual try-on solutions. The implementation of technology in retail operations, on the other hand, is done on a higher level; brands have therefore adopted AI-powered sizing tools, virtual try-on experiences, and personalized shopping experiences as channels through which an online to an offline channel can be bridged.

Product innovation, and sustainability in the lingerie market are two main concepts that in this case should go hand in hand since producers are trying to use eco-friendly materials as well as the method of production. The trend was shown

in January 2024 by Glamorise Foundations Inc. as they launched an innovative plus-size lingerie line with three new styles that had taken years to develop and iterate in their New York design center.[16]

Celebrity endorsements are a key psychological factor in creating that bridge, enhancing trust and pumping an element of emotion, especially in the age group 18-24, which gets strongly influenced by public personalities as part of their identity formation. Another entrant in this trend of enlisting the appeal of actors is Zivame, which works with leading Bollywood actor Kriti Sanon to endorse their marketing campaigns. While all this takes companies many notches up the ladder on different types of marketing approaches done through various digital forums and customer service and presence in social media, companies like Zivame continue to ride the wave by launching a campaign in 2023 that targets perhaps the much-needed gap in India, public knowledge on correct bra size.

Over the years, there has been a great change in preference in respect of consumer preferences. Especially in the sports bra and activewear sections, increasing numbers of consumers want products for comfort and function. Wireless bras, as well as sports bras gaining ground in the recent trends of the market, continue to support the shift in preference towards comfort by consumers. In addition to global initiatives that promote physical activities, say the National Sports Policy in Ireland seeking more female participation in sports, the more emphasis has been channeled towards the development of sports bras. Financial initiatives between brands and biomechanics and breast health researchers developing novel and durable products have since been registered. Parade is also complementing high-performance standards in their activewear line with recycled fabrics that are creating a sustainable brand image. The new approach is now in addition to performance enhancing the product, and suits a more conscious consumer base both in health and environment issues.

The development of online retail has been accompanied by the formation of strong consumer preferences, tracking social change and the influence of the digital environment. In recent years, there has been strong growth in demand for casual, comfortable wear, largely due to remote work and other restrictions related to the pandemic. Offerings like activewear and loungewear have been created to check both practical and fashionable boxes. Additionally, consumers are increasingly more demanding of personal, unique products, thus presupposing an interest in their bid for self-expression and individualism. This tendency drives the movement of services for customization and the appearance of the channel, niche brands oriented to this or that particular individualistic lifestyle.

In the present day, friendliness with the environment has grown to dominate the decisions of the consumer. The increasing awareness of environmental concerns and ethical processes of production tend to push the customers to choose products made out of sustainable and responsible manufacturing materials with very clear supply chains. More than two thousand consumers from the UK and Germany also support the above statement [3]. Only 67% of them associate the factor mentioned above with choosing the type of material, while just about 63% responded to the point that the brand actively promotes sustainability principles. Such a dramatic change leads to claims of that country as the aggregate of all the production costs being lower compared to environmentally friendly materials. An innovation effort comes through some new materials, organic cotton and recycled polyester among many biodegradable ones, and then the waste and energy-saving technology race. And then brands start feeling the pressure of making a more transparent business, applying the rules to any stage of the production process, which implies some certifications and initiatives to cut carbon footprints and long with fair labor condition support. This sustainability turn is claimed in binary output on the previously outlined total conditions of the market whereby environmental initiatives turn into a competitive advantage, permitting companies to come to be positioned much better inside the raising individual mind. The authors of the research [4] executed a survey, including several problems related to sustainable fashion, for which data is usually found in Table 1, with a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree).

Table 1 Results of the survey of respondents on sustainable fashion [4]

Position	What Sustainable Fashion Means to Consumers	Mean
1	Sustainable fashion is manufactured with a reduced environmental impact	6.06
2	Sustainable fashion encompasses the consumption of second-hand fashion products	5.88
3	Sustainable fashion is manufactured in an environmentally friendly way	5.88
4	Sustainable fashion encompasses the reuse of fashion products	5.86
5	Sustainable fashion is made to last longer than conventional fashion	5.77
6	Sustainable fashion is manufactured according to fair trade principles	5.72

7	Sustainable fashion employs recycled materials	5.63
8	Sustainable fashion is made from organic materials	5.43
9	Sustainable fashion advocates reducing the consumption of fashion products	4.81

One of the significant innovation areas is the biodegradable fabrics which help reduce environmental pollution [4]. Fabrics come from pulp wood such as lyocell, or some are hemp-based, decomposing in natural conditions and not making any toxic substances.

Fashion influences productivity very largely, mainly due to fast fashion accelerated by social media. World clothing output has since 2000 doubled and the average shopper now buys 60% more clothing but keeps things for about half as long as they did before 2000. This then fosters more production, which often comes at the price of environmental and social standards-increasing CO2 emissions and waste. Trends quickly spread via Instagram and TikTok. The time to market has shrunk to mere weeks. For example, Shein is currently up by 60% in sales due to the popularity of the brand during the Pandemic and sells very cheap clothes [6].

Effective marketing strategies involve the collaboration of styling work with some large and popular influencers such as Chiara Ferragni and Kim Kardashian who can work to promote the brands via Instagram and TikTok [7]. Social media can be used for creating versions; blogs and video content could be focused more on claiming brand expertise. Fashion shows and pop-up stores use experiential marketing and further improve customer bonding. The current market valuation of the global influencer market stands at \$1.5 billion with a forecasted CAGR of 35.7% until 2027 [8]. Apart from that, 3D printing technology is an innovative approach for producing less wasteful clothing that can decrease mass production for a mass market and lower the waste of materials [4].

The fashion industry is extremely competitive and very fastened to trends. Marketing strategies have become important in the construction of a strong brand and its consumer appeal. Techniques such as influencer, social media, and experiential marketing further enhance the brand visibility and customer loyalty glare of the market. These do not only market the product but also create emotional attachments to the market that prove very important especially in the demanding saturated fashion industry.

Globalization also had a major influence on the textile and garment industries. The first was the production outsourcing of the garment or textile industry to low-labor cost countries. The major cause for outsourcing being the lower wages in countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam as compared to developed countries; a Minimum Wages Board in Bangladesh, for instance, fixing new minimum wage levels at 12,500 Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) or US\$ 113[9] dated December 2023 while it was only 8,000 Bangladeshi Taka since 2018, which is less than the World Bank poverty line for two-three-member households in 2022. Such conditions allow a company to inflate its profit margins and remain competitive in a market where the consumer is extraordinarily price-sensitive. Moreover, outsourcing unlocks new market entrances as well as increasing capacity to produce to help meet increasing global demand. Yet these advantages are not without some major implications. Leading to job losses in the manufacturing sector in developed countries mainly raises economic inequality and social tensions. Workers in host countries face exploitation with such appalling conditions at work, long hours, and pay well below the minimum wage. Among these factories is the Rana Plaza, whose disaster happened in 2013, and claimed at least 1,100 lives in Bangladesh.

The problems of worker rights and environmental compliance in the Global Supply Chain is a multi-faceted one. The workers in the Outsourcing countries work in such conditions which are completely unacceptable like unsafe working conditions, low wages, and very few rights as workers.

The increase in these challenges has been driving a steady wind back hike of production to developed countries for sustainability, and control. Such reshoring comes fundamentally amidst regular corporate visions aimed at abating the risks that mount with long chains of global productions, risks that have been shockingly unveiled in the COVID-19 pandemic. A compensation mechanism for high labor prices would be real investment by corporations in automation and advanced manufacturing technologies. The "Speedfactories" of Adidas located in Germany and the United States produce shoes most efficiently by using robotics [11]. Its promotion will be seen in government stimuli such as tax holidays and subsidies, the U.S., for instance, has its "made in America" initiative that attaches some financial benefits to come with production back home [12]. This will further enhance supply chain resilience, quality, and quick response to the changes in the market.

An area with considerable potential for investment in the textile sector, mainly due to government programs and incentives that help to upgrade the production process overall as well as support improved sustainability. Many countries have introduced financial support measures to attract investment in the industry. In particular, the Indian government launched a Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme [13] to push domestic production and exports of technical textiles and man-made fiber-based garments through an incentive mechanism in a bid to improve production capacities.

Market research has become the answer to deciphering fickle consumer preferences and reacting to emergent demands. A case in point is the COVID-19 pandemic that revealed extreme upticks in demand for comfy loungewear; Nike and Lululemon seized the opportunities, respectively extending active-wear collections that led both brands to record 15% and 20% increases in sales during 2020, plus Data analytics for social media and online sales drastically slash lead time from developing a product to rolling it out which suits fast fashion very much [15]. Ultra-modern technologies, consisting of virtual fitting rooms and artificial intelligence, can multiply even the already high flexibility and general level of acumen of the business more.

These innovations enhance improvements in customer experiences because brands move toward online trials of products and slashing return rates. Thus, it improves operational efficiency due to optimization of logistics as well as manufacturing processes. In a wider spectrum, the textile and apparel market on the global scale is transiting through lots of changes more driven by technological advancement and upsurge of e-commerce. Consumers demand sustainability, comfort, and personalized offerings. Optimum mixing of market intelligence with such solutions puts companies at better places, tapping sustainability in the long run.

4. Conclusion

Conclusions can be drawn from the research conducted as follows.

- The textile and clothing business is one of the major players in the world economy. It contributes a lot to the GDP of the world itself and is as well responsible for millions of jobs across the globe. Above all, regarding the context under discussion, sustainability is imperative which becomes largely effective due to environmental factors i.e. water and air pollution, and high quantities of waste pollution. Furthermore, it seeks to further adopt the newest technologies like automation and digitization into its industry for any competitive advantage. Along with all these important decisions, rapidly emerging consumer preferences and market trends around things such as fast fashion can be difficult for businesses to adapt to.
- The lingerie market is thus greatly realigning due to this wave of consumer insights as regards fit and comfort. Many consumers, more so in the emerging markets, do not really even know their correct size and this offers room for size education and product customization. Brands are responding with investment in technology and inclusivity and positivity in fits and bodies through fit technology, sizing inclusivity, and body positivity hence the campaigns to increasingly show all the different types of bodies. Marketing campaigns tell the story of increasing retail strategies with integration of online and offline experiences, all though sophisticated e-commerce platforms and virtual fitting rooms. Sustainability and product innovation are other areas of focus, with brands having opted for eco-friendly materials and processes in productions. This has been geared up by celebrity endorsements that can build brand trust, especially with the younger consumers, by associating their identities and behaviors with influential figures.
- Brands can choose green practices, for example, through the use of eco-products and supply chain control in their technological improvements, using 3D printing and virtual fitting rooms, all leading to factors well considered for both addressing environmental issues and demands for personalization and sustainability of products. The increasing demand for sustainability is more than a reaction to challenges. It, indeed, means a competitive edge for brands to be more resilient in the market.
- Outsourcing and reshoring have recently become critical strategies in the industry. While outsourcing to low-wage countries kept profitability up, reshoring is gradually gaining momentum, since companies need to bear much higher supply chain risks while having insufficient quality control. Such alterations in manufacturing strategies urge businesses to keep adaptive and responsive to global variability.

The final part of this study has proven in essence that technological innovation, sustainable practices, and market research had significant potential in the long-run development and competitiveness of the textile and clothing industry. The results of the study will be applied by stakeholders of the industry to design strategies adopted toward fostering growth, sustainability, and market resilience under changes.

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