



PARAMETERS FOR FRAMING LONGEVITY AS A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN FASHION

Nikhil Negi

Department of Fashion Design, Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India 248002

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to determine whether or not Vogue and Refinery29's sustainable fashion coverage differs in terms of framing, dominating frame, narrative emphasis, and tone following the advent of COVID-19. Since COVID-19 wasn't found in the United States until 2020, this research examines a sample of papers published throughout the summer months of 2019, 2020, and 2021 (May–August). A total of 206 articles were analyzed using content analysis in this research. Consumers and businesses alike are starting to worry about the environmental and social impacts of the garment industry, therefore studies like these are crucial. Despite claims from academics that the fashion industry is today one of the most polluting industries worldwide and claims that just one percent of apparel is produced in an ethical manner, the researcher found no indication that the coverage of sustainable fashion has evolved in its framing over time. As well as having practical ramifications for fashion journalists and theoretical implications for future researchers, this study reveals how fashion magazines cover fashion sustainability.

1244

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INTRODUCTION

Clothes have been much less durable over the last several centuries, but especially since the 1990s, when the 'throwaway' or fast fashion trend first emerged. Even until the middle of the twentieth century, people in industrialized societies valued textiles highly enough that they were sometimes exchanged for currency. However, in modern times, millions of tons of textiles are bought and discarded yearly; of the 55 kg of apparel and textiles the typical UK resident purchases annually, 30 kg will be sent to a landfill. Clothes have become much more affordable as a result of technical developments and the relocation of production to low-wage countries: Men's jeans from British discount store Primark cost just £7. Fast fashion's cheap clothes and rapid production rates may be good for business, but they're bad for the environment. The environmental and social costs of producing and disposing of textiles for disposable goods are not reflected in these prices. These costs include the fossil fuels burned to generate electricity for production, the toxic

chemicals flushed into waterways, the hours of underpaid labor, and the vast quantities of water used in the process.

For one t-shirt, for instance, the water requirements for growing and processing the cotton required might reach 2,700 liters. While it's important to reduce product waste generally, doing so isn't enough to stop rising rates of consumption and trash pickup. In 2006, while working as a women's wear designer for a worldwide sportswear company, the researcher was exposed to the disastrous repercussions of mainstream fashion manufacturing and consumption for the first time. Over the following years, she looked into more eco-friendly methods of clothing production, but found conflicting data. After tragedies like the 2013 Rana Plaza garment factory collapse in Bangladesh, where 1138 people were killed and many more were injured, it became clear that sustainability was a complex territory to navigate, yet one that offered more inspiring visions of fashion than those that leave death and destruction in their wake. Finding methods



to influence and encourage behaviors that respect people and planet from inside the fashion industry became more important from both a personal and professional standpoint.

The idea of lasting clothing design was investigated by the author as a technique to both limit the amount of fashion consumption and foster fulfilling connections between wearers and their items, making it more than just an antidote to rapid fashion. At the London College of Fashion, students pursuing a Master of Arts in Fashion and the Environment began thinking about how to create clothes to last longer by incorporating the wearer's memories into the fabric. The research presented in this thesis was undertaken as part of the MA program.

As time went on, it was evident that designing for several wears offered a promising but underutilized path toward fashion sustainability. When comparing the best practices of manufacturing and fiber choice, laundering, re-use, and recycling, garment longevity was determined to provide the biggest savings in all three categories. However, suggesting longevity as a fashion approach is not simple. To begin, novelty and constant renewal are two defining features of the fashion industry. Additionally, designers often do not think about the product once it has been sold. Long-lasting apparel runs counter to the prevailing business model of fast fashion, which promotes excessive material throughput; as a result, its economic feasibility might be called into doubt. To design for a longer product life cycle, fashion, the fashion designer's job, and the value systems associated with fashion must be rethought.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Fletcher and Klepp, (2017) The technique of producing case-specific design knowledge to address sustainability in fashion and other design disciplines may be used in different research contexts. The 3-stage study plan may be used by doctoral students and researchers doing comparable investigations, expanding our understanding of how to lengthen the usefulness of products. This thesis's audience may be expanded by presentation at academic conferences and publishing in peer-reviewed journals. In addition, the author's chapter in *Opening the Wardrobe: A Methods Book* details

the research techniques used throughout the user study.

Stahel (2016) thinks the CE can help them create local employment in addition to reducing their carbon footprint. Two basic categories of circular business models are outlined by the author: those that encourage product reuse and prolong service life via repair, upgrades, and the like, and those that make new goods from recycled components. Despite this, Stahel (2016) urges a shift in consumer-facing services, the provision of academic and vocational training in CE, the adoption of government policies that promote CE, the development of new technologies, the dissemination of information about CE, and the conduct of additional research into effective methods of implementing CE.

Kristen Mohammadi (2021) To further understand if and how Vogue and Refinery29 frame their coverage of sustainable fashion before and after the development of COVID-19, this research examines the framing, dominating frame, narrative emphasis, and tone of sustainable fashion coverage in these two influential fashion magazines. This research examines a sample of articles published throughout the summer months of 2019, 2020, and 2021, because COVID-19 was first found in the United States in 2020. In this research, 206 articles were analyzed using content analysis. Consumers and businesses alike are becoming more concerned about environmental and social concerns related to the fashion sector, making this sort of study crucial. According to experts, barely one percent of clothing is produced in an ethical manner, making the fashion industry one of the world's most polluting systems. The researcher's interest in studying how fashion media structure their sustainable fashion coverage was sparked by the literature's suggestion of an attitude-behavior gap in which consumers' knowledge of environmental concerns does not influence their buying behavior. The findings indicate that the two publications present sustainable fashion in different ways. There was also a difference in the coverage's tone and focus depending on the outlet. The study did not uncover any indication that the coverage of sustainable fashion evolved in terms of how it was framed. Practical consequences for fashion journalists and

theoretical implications for future researchers are provided by this study, which details how fashion magazines cover fashion sustainability.

Christian Nägele (2017) The topic of how to address the exponential increase in social and environmental concerns arises in an age of excessive consumption of fashion. Social marketers should focus on perceivably closer concerns to the average customer than those linked to fashion if they want to spark action. In this dissertation, I analyze how various types of message framing affect various types of customer behavior. This is a three-way interaction study, with gender and materialism serving as moderators. The research presented here is an effort to contribute to the developing discipline of behavioral economics, and more specifically to the theory of loss aversion. The author also hopes to make a meaningful contribution to the fields of gender and materialism studies, and to provide social marketers with a valuable tool to encourage the adoption of more ethical practices in the fashion industry. The results imply that message framing does not have significant main impacts on consumer attitudes unless powerful moderators such as gender and materialism are incorporated into the research design. Then, there are clear variations in how men and women with a high materialism score behave. Women who are very materialistic respond better to loss-framed communications, whereas men who are highly materialistic respond better to gain-framed ones. The results, however, also imply that the two sexes are attracted for distinct reasons. The results demonstrate the power of effective message framing in conjunction with research on gender and consumerism.

Lee, E.; (2021) Sustainable fashion ideas like slow fashion have emerged in response to the serious environmental damage caused by the global fashion industry. Sustainable fashion, on the other hand, is mostly argued from a marketing and consumer standpoint, whereas sustainability as a concept is generally established in corporate communication and reporting. This research addresses a knowledge gap by investigating the representation of slow fashion in an Australian Instagram setting. The hashtag #slow fashion

australia was used to conduct an exploratory content analysis, and three thematic frames—"slow fashion as Business 2.0: An eco-marketplace," "slow fashion as an authentic experience of self-expression," and "slow fashion as a community value"—emerged from the data. The framing process of slow fashion on Instagram, which mostly represents women's empowerment, was uncovered via further examination of the highlighted motifs. Research gaps and opportunities in the field of sustainability communication are discussed.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a content analysis to compare how Refinery29 and Vogue framed their respective sustainable fashion coverage, as well as how their framing evolved before and after the introduction of COVID-19.

Vogue's article sample tally was higher than that of Refinery29's. However, the researcher did not include 28 Vogue articles and 1 Refinery29 item in the final analysis since they lacked a frame during the coding procedure. Less than four percent ($n=8$) of the whole sample consisted of such coverage. The study's author concluded that cutting out such pieces was mandatory because (a) eco-chic couldn't exist if media coverage couldn't promote buying clothes that didn't exist, and (b) triple bottom line couldn't exist if students didn't have the means to create a comprehensive strategy for addressing sustainability. As a result, 170 out of the total $n=36$ respondents were from Refinery29 and 83 were from Vogue. SPSS was used for the data analysis.

Statistical significance is shown when the p-value is less than 0.05. Since the existence of several frames is accommodated during initial encoding, the total percentage is more than 100%. The results show that eco-chic ($x = 4.267$, $p=0.039$) and triple bottom line ($=3.736$, $p=0.053$) are framed differently depending on the kind of publication they appear in. Two-by-two eco-chic appeared in 89.4 percent of Vogue articles ($n=152$), whereas the triple-bottom line appeared in 58.1 percent of the time ($n=100$). The terms "eco-chic" and "triple bottom line" both appeared in Refinery29 a total of 76.5 percent of the time ($n=26$).

1246

DATA ANALYSIS

TABLE 1 FRAMES USED BY EACH PUBLICATION

Publication	Vogue	Refinery29	Total
Eco-chic*	89.4% (n=152)	76.5% (n=26)	87.3% (n=178)
Triple Bottom Line**	58.8% (n=100)	76.5% (n=26)	61.8% (n=126)

* $\chi = 4.267, p = 0.039$; ** $\chi = 3.736, p = 0.053$ 2 x 2

Furthermore, Table displays that there is a statistically significant difference in the dominant framing of the two articles ($\chi = 6.662, p = 0.010$). Vogue featured an eco-chic dominant frame 70% (n=119) of the time, whereas the triple bottom

line dominant frame only appeared 30% (n=51) of the time. In contrast, 52.9% (n=18) of the time, the triple bottom line was the dominating frame in Refinery29. In Refinery 29, the eco-chic aesthetic was the most popular (47.1%, n=16).

TABLE 2 DOMINANT FRAMING IN VOGUE AND REFINERY29

Frames	Vogue	Refinery29	Total
Eco-chic	70% (n=119)	47.1 (n=16)	66.2% (n=135)
Triple Bottom Line	30% (n=51)	52.9% (n=18)	33.8% (n=69)

In addition, a chi-square test was performed to determine whether or not the sustainable fashion frameworks had changed before to and after the introduction of COVID-19 in 2020. The sample was divided into three time periods, each representing one summer (May–August) from 2019, 2020, and 2021. The first time period, 2019, accounted for 15.1% (n=31) of the sample, the second time period, 2020, accounted for

46.1% (n=94), and the third time period, 2021, accounted for 38.7% (n=82). According to the data in Table , it seems that the framing did not change much over time. The most often used coding frame throughout all three eras was "eco-chic" ($\chi = 4,000, p = 0.135$). Triple bottom line did not change substantially ($\chi = 0.783, p = 0.676$) among time periods, as shown by the chi-square test.

TABLE 3 FRAMING OVER TIME

1247



Frame	2019	2020	2021	Total
Eco-chic*	13.7% (n=24)	39.2% (n=80)	34.3% (n=70)	87.3% (n=178)
Triple Bottom Line**	9.8% (n=20)	29.9% (n=61)	22.1% (n=45)	61.8% (n=126)

$\chi^2 = 4.000, p = 0.135$; $\chi^2 = 0.783, p = 0.676$ 2×2
 However, it is fair to say that the visibility of both formats increased dramatically from 2019 to 2020. Possible explanations for this include a lack of articles published in 2019 included in the sample (as in the case of Vogue) or a dearth of articles on sustainable fashion from that year (as in the case of Refinery29). When comparing 2019 and 2020, a sample of Refinery29's coverage of sustainable fashion shows a threefold increase, from six stories to eighteen. So, it would seem that after 2019, Refinery29 gave greater attention to sustainable fashion. Since the researcher did not have access to the whole sample from 2019, the same study cannot be used for Vogue.

Using a chi-square test, we compared the tonal ranges of Vogue and Refinery29. Results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between Vogue and Refinery29 in terms of tone ($\chi^2 = 1.662; p = 0.463$). The tone of both Vogue and Refinery29 tended to be optimistic more often than pessimistic or neutral. The overall tone of articles posted on Vogue was upbeat 83.5% of the time (n=142), whereas on Refinery29 it was upbeat 82.4% of the time (n=28). As can be seen in Table the frequency with which articles in Vogue had a negative tone was 3.5% (n=6), whereas articles in Refinery29 only had a negative tone 0% (n=0) of the time. Thus, the second hypothesis cannot be correct.

1248

TABLE 4 COMPARISON OF TONE BY PUBLICATION

Tone	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Total
Vogue	3.5% (n=6)	12.9% (n=22)	83.5% (n=142)	83.3% (n=170)
Refinery29	0% (n=0)	17.6% (n=6)	82.4% (n=28)	16.7% (n=36)

TABLE 5 FREQUENCY OF STORY FOCUS BY PUBLICATION

Story Foci	Environment	Worker	Economic	Celebrity	Luxury	Wellness	Other	Total
Vogue	21.2% (n=36)	2.9% (n=5)	1.2% (n=2)	15.9% (n=27)	25.9% (n=44)	4.1% (n=7)	28.8% (n=49)	100% (n=170)
Refinery29	52.9% (n=18)	2.9% (n=1)	8.8% (n=3)	5.9% (n=2)	5.9% (n=2)	8.8% (n=3)	14.7% (n=5)	100% (n=36)

$\chi^2 = 27.993, p = 0.001$

Vogue was more likely than Refinery29 to cover fashion sustainability, and when they did, they tended to focus on sustainable luxury and celebrity purchases. Five-two percent of Refinery29's coverage (n=18) was devoted to environmental protection. On the other hand, Vogue's coverage of the news focused on environmental welfare 21.2% (n=36) of the time.

This means that Refinery29 focused more on environmental welfare than any other story emphasis, and that Vogue focused less on environmental welfare than any other story focus.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to compare and contrast the sustainable fashion material



presented by Vogue and Refinery29, and to determine whether or not the two magazines' presentation of this topic differs and whether or not this has altered with the introduction of COVID-19. Since the fashion business has such a negative effect on the environment and society, studying how the media presents sustainable fashion was a priority. According to research the fashion sector is among the most polluting in the world. According to the literature, the fashion business is worth a trillion dollars, and only one percent of all clothing produced is manufactured in an ethical manner.

It has been estimated that just 1% of all clothing produced is created in an ethical manner despite the fact that the fashion business is estimated to be worth a trillion dollars. Over a thousand people were killed in the 2013 collapse of the Rana Plaza retail and textile manufacturing complex because the fashion business lacked compassion for its garment employees. The interest in studying how sustainable fashion is represented in fashion magazines stems from the fact that experts indicate there is an attitude-behavior gap, wherein a consumer's understanding of fashion related concerns does not influence their purchase behavior.

In many aspects, our research closes a gap in the existing literature. First, the study's author couldn't find any studies that compared Refinery29 and Vogue, two fashion magazines that target similar audiences yet have managed to survive the emergence of fashion influencers on social media. The most important thing this research did to fill the void in the literature was to quantify the potential shift in coverage of sustainable fashion as COVID-19 developed.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to better understand the framing of sustainable fashion in two of the most widely read fashion magazines, Refinery29 and Vogue, and whether or not this framing differs between the two magazines and whether or not it has evolved over time, particularly with the advent of COVID-19. By making the triple bottom line as a frame for communication scholarship and the eco-chic frame, a newer framework that hasn't received much attention from previous researchers, more concrete, this study contributes to the growing body of work on framing. It seems from the data that Vogue and

Refinery29 approach the topic of fashion sustainability differently, but the findings also show that this approach has not changed over time in light of the introduction of COVID-19. Both newspapers gave sustainable fashion a mostly good review. That is to say, rather than critically assessing the ways in which the fashion business has contributed to environmental and societal challenges, the journals mostly applauded fashion firms for their efforts in the sustainable movement. Scholars in the future might use this outline as a starting point for further investigation into the impact that social class, as well as gender, play in one's perspective on eco-friendly clothing.

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