

# Decoding Nonconscious Effects on the Conscious Consumer, a Fast Fashion Paradox

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## Abstract

Despite the rise of conscious consumerism and growing awareness of fast fashion's detrimental environmental and social impacts, its popularity persists. This research delves into the paradox of ethically-minded consumers continuing to purchase fast fashion garments and investigates the nonconscious factors that undermine conscious intentions. Specifically, it explores the influence of Country-of-Origin (COO) information and Just-Noticeable Difference (JND) thresholds in sustainable material content on product evaluations and purchase decisions of conscious consumers within the fast fashion context. Utilizing Approach-Avoidance and Cognitive Dissonance theories, the study aims to understand the psychological mechanisms rationalizing this behavior. Employing a survey methodology, the research tests hypotheses related to how conscious consumers respond to COO ethics and JND in recycled materials. Expected findings will provide empirical evidence on these nonconscious cues and offer actionable insights for sustainable fashion brands and policymakers. By bringing to light these subconscious influences, this research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the consumer's mind.

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