

Achieved

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Question 1: How has consumerism impacted the fast fashion industry.

Consumerism is the main factor of fast fashion. A consumer is a person who purchases and uses goods and services for personal use. Consumerism is the desire to want a new model of something you already have that still works perfectly fine. It is also the idea of buying and owning items to keep up with specific trends. According to an article written by masterclass, consumer spending is the key to individual wellbeing. However, there is such a thing as a negative consumer impact. This is where people believe they have to stay on top of trends which creates a cycle of buying and disposing products. Strategies like this that brands use, force you to realise that trends change often which then makes you unsatisfied with the wardrobe you have, making you want to purchase more to up your style. Fast fashion is low priced clothing that gets produced and retailed continuously at a fast rate. These items have been purposely designed to be produced incredibly cheap, and low quality so that consumers will dispose of them quickly and then right after, purchase new ones. Fast fashion industries aim to mass produce clothing, the rise of demand throughout the industry is caused by social media and influencers. An example is a celebrity posting a photo onto instagram showing off a new outfit, and their followers want one too, so fast fashion brands rush to be the first ones to provide it.

Question 2: How does the fast fashion industry abuse human rights?

The fast fashion industry abuses the human right of working conditions. Fast fashion industries are known for their poor working conditions, such as low wages, and terrible working environments. Workers in the fast fashion industry have to work 14-16 hours seven days a week. Many workers don't receive their pay, and many even work overtime, however, they do not get paid extra wages for the effort they put in. Poor work environment conditions include workers being exposed to harmful and toxic substances, and working in unhygienic stations. Accidents, fires and injuries are a common occurrence in fast fashion industries, making it even more unsafe for all of the workers. Fast fashion factories have very low maintenance, buildings



Image 1 showing fast fashion workers in their work environment.

which are falling to pieces. Women and other workers are exposed to health hazards such as loud noise right in their eardrums and high temperatures causing many of these workers to faint. The fast fashion industry treats their workers poorly, as seen in image 1 where they are working in a very cramped and messy environment. Many workers in the fast fashion industry have complained about the way they have been treated, they endure verbal and physical abuse daily. Fast fashion industry workers tend to be women, and not only do these women get

physically abused, but they also get sexually abused. Workers who fail to meet the daily target get verbally abused and even denied access to water. One worker gave a report which stated that when she had not reached her production target for that day, she was dragged out of her chair and pushed onto the floor where she was repeatedly hit and kicked. This shows that through the abuse the workers endure, the factories and owners only care about making a profit. Evidence of this was provided through the traid.org.uk website where the garment industry in china has been operating on huge profits, while the working conditions are still incredibly poor.

Question 3: What are the consequences fast fashion has on the environment?

Fast fashion has caused extreme air pollution. Due to fast fashion, clothing trends are increasing meaning consumers feel the need to purchase newer items and the items that have been barely worn get sent away to a landfill. Significant amounts of clothing tend to be thrown into a landfill rather than being donated. Clothes that end up in the landfill take longer to decompose as they are filled with tiny micro plastic fibres, some clothing decomposes faster however some take over 100 years. During the decomposition stage, chemicals from the clothing release into the air and soil which has a negative impact on the environment. As there is limited space many people burn the excess clothing which then releases these chemicals and micro plastics into the air, creating air pollution. Washing and wearing brand new clothing items also release these microfibrils into the air. Fast fashion is damaging the ecosystem. The synthetic fibres used in clothing not only pollute the air, but also the water.



Washing machines are one of the main reasons for these microplastics entering the waterways. Washing machines don't have filters to catch these specific particles and they end up travelling through the drain, where they then enter the waterways. Water pollution shown in image 2 caused by industries dumping clothing items. Another form of water pollution caused by fast fashion is the dye that they use to colour fabrics. Chemicals like pesticides which kill off

living organisms runoff into nearby water streams which can then be led into the use of irrigating crops, therefore also contaminating food supplies. Fast fashion industries use low-cost dyes which then require chemical treatments after the dye process to make sure the treatment won't fade. These dyes travel through waterways and stain the water, making it no longer safe to drink from. From this information, we can gather that not only do these fast fashion industries disregard their workers, but they also take advantage of the environment.

Throughout the sample, the student used basic footnoting to reference ideas, evidence and quotes from their primary and secondary sources.