

A cognitive and social psychological perspective on the demand for fashion

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The fashion industry is an important global industry. In Britain it generates more than £21 billion annually and employs more than 816,000 people. Whether or not we consider ourselves fashionable or interested in fashion, we all clothe ourselves in items we have bought and have chosen to wear. Individuals in developed countries tend to buy more fashion items than they need and many have bought items that remain unworn. The fashion industry depends on demand for new ideas and products which allow individuals to perceive themselves as socially or economically superior or simply different. From a psychological perspective, this is in conflict with the well understood desire to conform. The psychological underpinnings of the demand for fashion are complex and have been neglected in research. This paper considers the cognitive and social psychological roles of decision making in the demand for fashion.

Keywords: Psychology, fashion,