

# Social Media Usage, Perceptions of Fast Fashion, Green Purchase Intention, and Political Consumerism

In this project, I asked the questions:

What is the relationship between social media usage and perception of fast fashion brands?

How does social media usage relate to green purchase intention, and political consumerism?

What types of social media activities are related to each?

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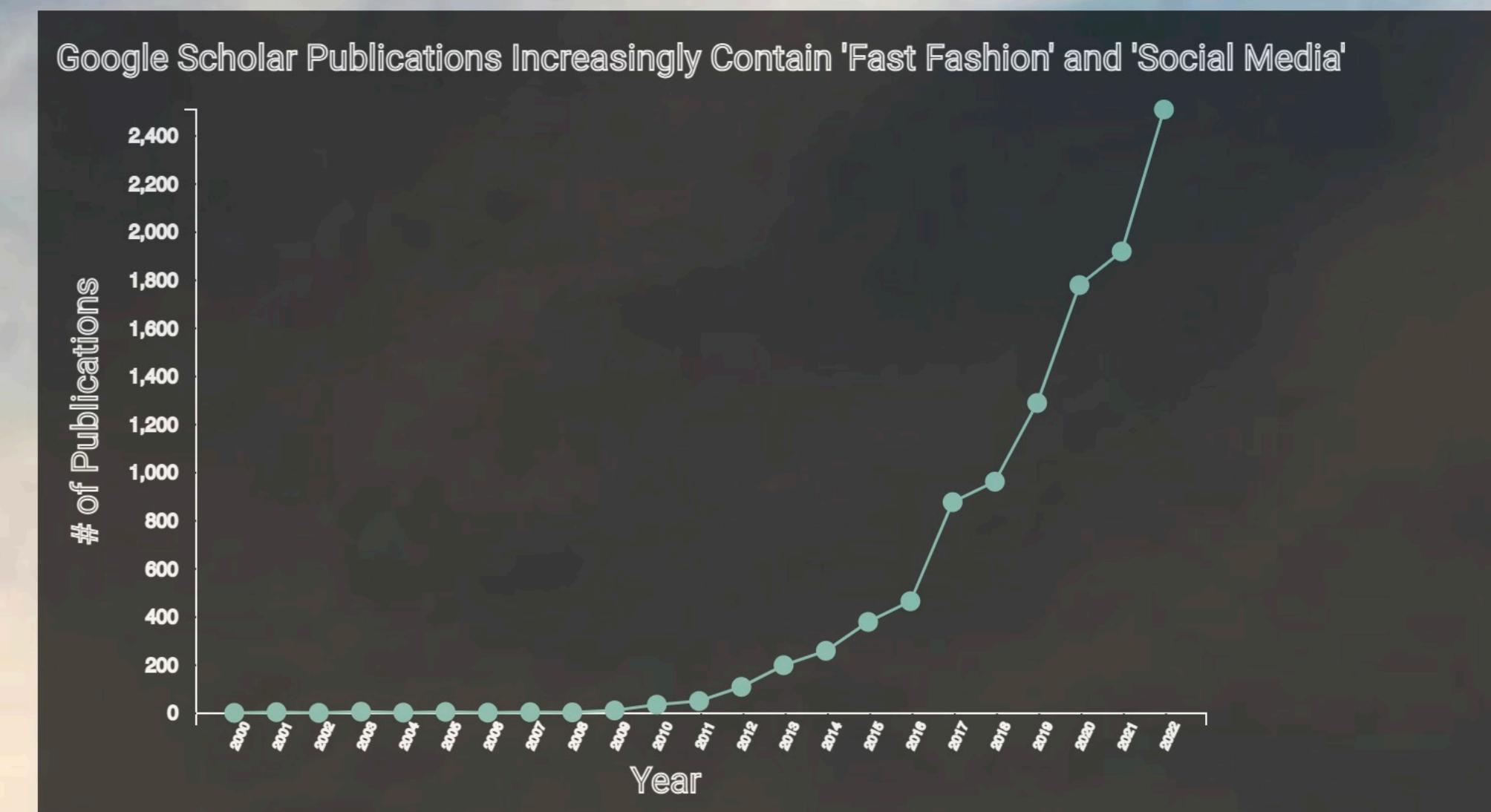
# What is Fast Fashion?

Fast fashion can be characterized by fast production of clothing and quick turnaround for new clothes in order to keep up with demands and trends (Buzzo, A., Abreu, M.J. 2019). As a result, the clothes are cheaper and more affordable/accessible.

However, this is enabled by exploitative labor practices in factories, low salaries, and child labor (an estimated 170 million children are part of the textile labor force according to UNICEF). In terms of environmental impact, many of the clothes are made with synthetic materials and plastics that are not biodegradable. Due to the lack of durability in these clothes, they are then sent to landfills after a short period of time.

## Social Media

Some of the most prominent brands in the fast fashion industry have been found to have ties to social media companies like Facebook and Instagram. This is because these companies often use their platforms to promote their products and encourage users to purchase them.

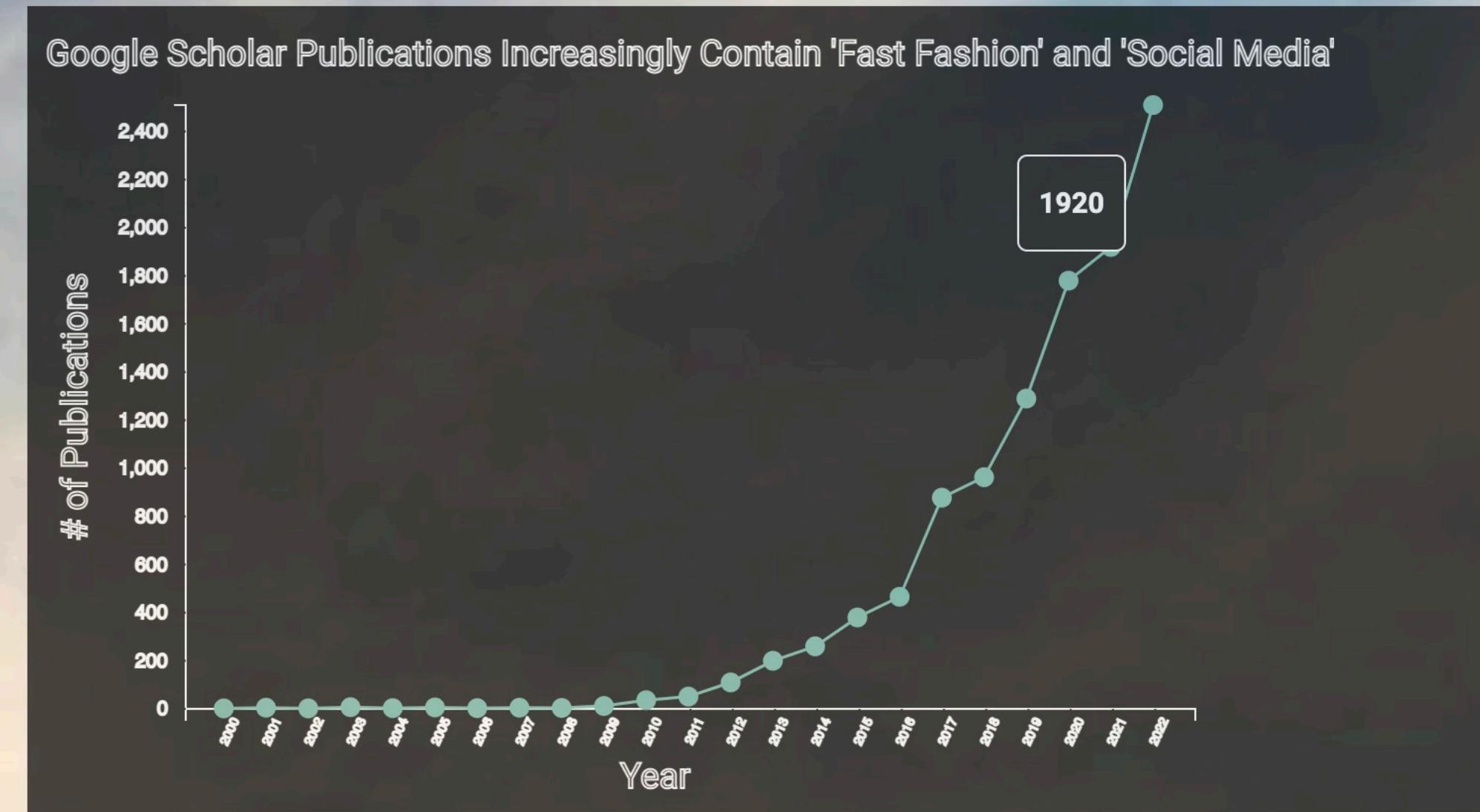


Description: connected scatterplot from year 2000 to 2022 showing an increase in Google Scholar publications containing the words 'social media' and 'fast fashion' starting at 0 publications and ending at 2,400 publications.

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## Social Media

Some of the most prominent brands that follow this marketing model are Zara, H&M, and Shein, which has taken advantage of social media platforms such as Instagram and Tik Tok to boost itself to the position of having the highest market share in fast fashion (Perri, Janine 2023). The conversation on fast fashion and social media usage is becoming more and more prevalent.



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## Prevalence

There were over 500 H&M stores in the United States in 2022.



Description: map of the United States showing more than 500 H&M stores dispersed across the country in the year 2022

## Consumers

With fast fashion brands use of marketing strategies on social media, the appeal of cheap, accessible clothing that stays up to date with the rapidly changing fashion trends, and the growing conversation on fair labor practices and sustainable fashion, I am interested to know how consumers of clothing and fashion products end up making purchase decisions. I am also interested in social media users participation in political consumerism, “purchasing decisions based on ethical or political considerations (Stolle et al., 2005)” (de Zúñiga, H. G., Copeland, L., & Bimber, B. 2014).

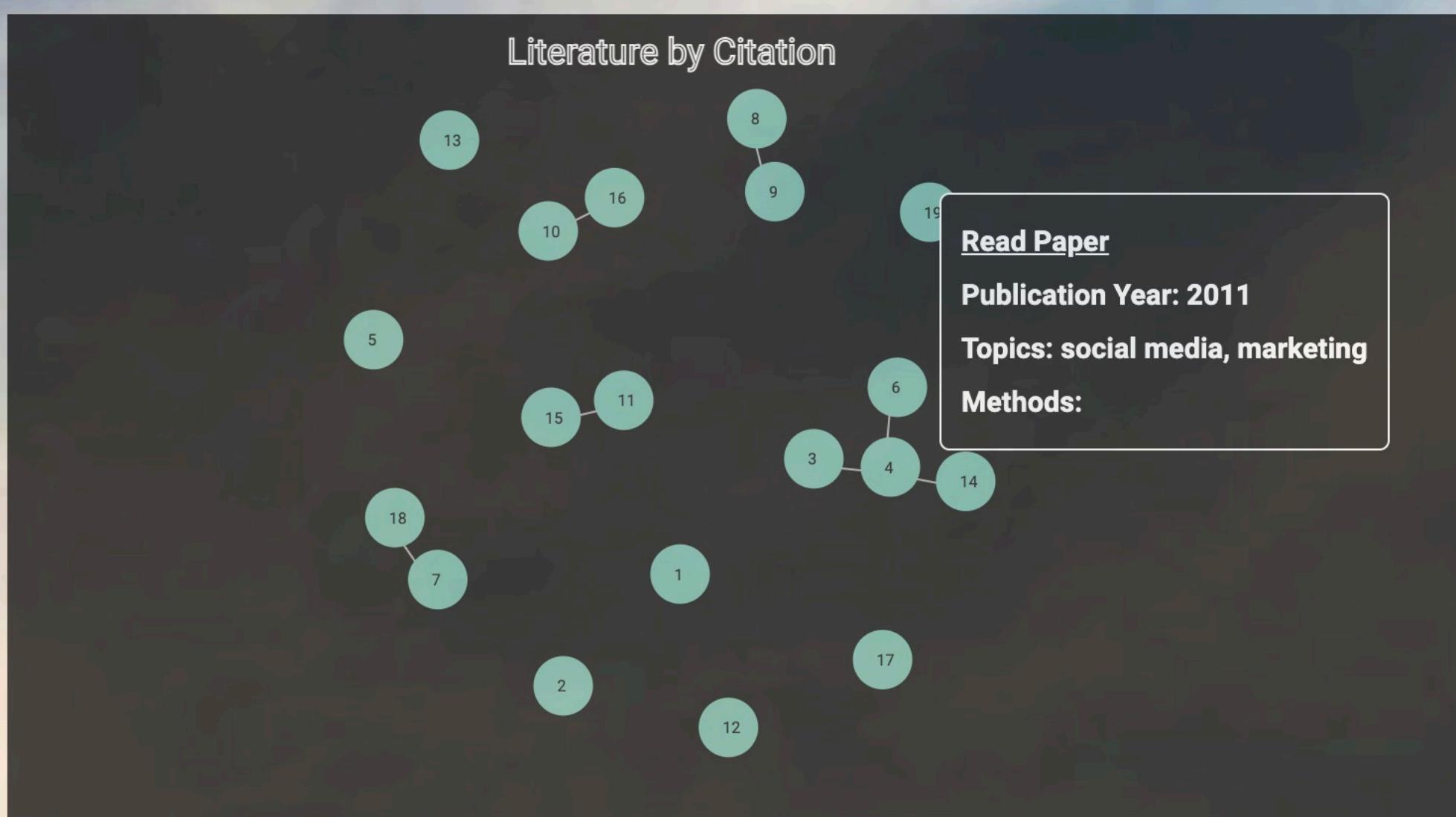


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political considerations (Stolle et al., 2005)" (de Zúñiga, H. G., Copeland, L., & Bimber, B. 2014).

## Literature

Prior research related to this topic considers subjects such as marketing, political consumerism, environmental sustainability, labor ethics, and consumer perception. Methods include surveys/questionnaires, data mining, focus groups, interviews, netnographies, and predictive modeling. The chart shows some relevant literature and how they are related by citation.



Description: node-link diagram showing how literature is related by citation; citations link references 10 and 16, 18 and 7, 15 and 11, 3, 4, 6, and 14.

## References

Past research has found that social media use mediates the increase in the likelihood of engaging in political consumerism. One aspect of this research to be further studied, is what specific types of social media content and activities are linked to political consumerism. Other research has examined "consumers' green product purchasing intentions and observed how social media marketing (SMM) and social media usage (SMU) actively influence consumers' sustainable consumption behavior", finding that social media marketing has a strong positive correlation with intention to purchase green products on social media (Nekmahmud, Md., Naz, F., Ramkissoon, H, Fekete-Farkas, M 2022).



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# Research

In this project, I built upon two of the research papers as suggested. Further analysis using my collected data would include grouping by demographic, exploring what types of social media content are related to each dependent variable, and conducting interviews to explore why certain correlations exist. Other suggested avenue for further research I did not get is to assess other constructs such as brand image, and the "role of social media influencers and celebrities in influencing the attitude of consumers toward green products".

[\*\*Questionnaire and Responses\*\*](#)

[\*\*Analysis\*\*](#)

[\*\*Github\*\*](#)

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[Github](#)

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By researching how social media affects consumers' perception of fast fashion brands, their intent to buy sustainable fashion products, and willingness to engage in political consumerism, this project contributes to the exploration of the efficacy of individual actions toward sustainability, and the need for more systemic regulations.

*Courtney Cheung*