

Understanding the Motivation and Challenges of Fashion Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Literature Review

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Introduction and Research Purpose: The fashion market is expected to report US \$665.40bn in 2024, experiencing a projected growth rate of 9.03% till 2029 (Statista, 2024). With increased market value and consumers in this industry, fashion entrepreneurs and enthusiasts can invest their creativity to establish themselves as successful business entrepreneurs, overcoming the newer challenges (Todeschini et al., 2017). Fashion entrepreneurship involves individuals establishing businesses within the fashion industry, combining creativity with business acumen to drive innovation and sustainability (Todeschini et al., 2017). Motivations for fashion entrepreneurship stem from various factors, such as personal fulfillment with professional achievement, passion for creativity, and the desire to establish oneself as a successful business entrepreneur (Horridge & Craig, 2001). Fashion entrepreneurs face issues related to financing, market competition, and operational hurdles (Hofmann et al., 2022). Fashion Entrepreneurship has become a buzzword for enthusiasts in the fashion industry who want to invest their time, energy, education, and creativity to establish themselves as successful business entrepreneurs (Su et al., 2021). The Fashion Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Framework, nevertheless, lacks consistency in the literature. A comprehensive understanding of fashion entrepreneurship challenges and motivations is crucial in fostering innovation, sustainability, and growth within the fashion industry. By addressing these factors, stakeholders can create a supportive ecosystem that nurtures entrepreneurial talent, drives industry development, and contributes to the overall vibrancy of the fashion sector (Zhao et al., 2018; Su et al., 2021). Therefore, this study aims to summarize the existing literature to tie up a bridge between the challenges and motivations fashion entrepreneurs face through a systematic literature review.

Methodology: This study employed a five-step systematic literature review approach of Khan et al. (2003) where initially (1) the research goal was established, then (2) relevant literature was searched using different sources, (3) select the key studies where peer-reviewed articles are accepted, non-peer reviewed and non-English articles were excluded, followed by (4) summarizing the literature evidence systematically, (5) developing themes and mapping the themes and its interrelationship based on literature evidence. Figure 1 illustrates the five-step approach. A total of 29 articles related to the motivation and challenges of fashion entrepreneurship were selected for inclusion in this review. After an in-depth screening of the articles, themes were generated, and a framework was proposed (Figure 2).

Result and Discussion: This article provides a conceptual framework that maps out the key themes and the relationship of the themes addressed in the literature (Figure 2). The framework depicts the interconnectedness of fashion entrepreneurs' motivations and challenges, with

sustainability and technology as central drivers bridging these factors. It illustrates how entrepreneurs should strategically leverage these drivers to navigate the complex interplay between their motivations and challenges.

Findings suggest that the motivations of fashion entrepreneurs are their passion, desire for independence, drive to innovate, and goals for personal and financial fulfillment (Aakko & Niinimäki, 2018; Lang & Liu, 2019; Skinner, 2006; Wigley & Provelengiou, 2011). The main challenges of fashion entrepreneurs are identified as financial constraints, competitive market, changes in consumer mindset, ensuring an efficient and responsive supply chain, and personal and family obligations (Hodges et al., 2015; Lang & Liu, 2019; Su et al., 2022). However, existing literature suggests that most of the motivations and challenges are interlinked with the forces of sustainability and technology (Aakko & Niinimäki, 2018; Lang & Liu, 2019; Skinner, 2006; Wigley & Provelengiou, 2011). Fashion entrepreneurs' aspirations are closely tied to leveraging sustainable practices and technological advancements in their ventures (Hofmann et al., 2022). Sustainability and technology can enable them to differentiate their offerings, streamline operations, and align with evolving consumer expectations, thereby supporting the realization of their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Shi et al., 2012; Su et al., 2021; Todeschini et al., 2017). Fashion entrepreneurs should navigate a complex landscape of multifaceted challenges intricately intertwined with sustainability and technology (Iqbal & Su, 2023; Todeschini et al., 2017). The extremely competitive market environment makes it exceedingly difficult for fashion entrepreneurs to differentiate their fashion products based on their sole dedication to technological advancement and sustainability commitment (Hansen & Schaltegger, 2013; Hofmann et al., 2022). A shift in consumer mentality increasingly demands unparalleled transparency and accountability concerning sustainability initiatives (Donnell, 2012). As sourcing is the key to any business operations, maintaining an efficient and responsive supply chain is another challenge. The execution of sustainable sourcing strategies and the effective leveraging of technology necessitates the development of efficient and responsive supply chains, which can be a great challenge for fashion entrepreneurs to establish and sustain (Gurova & Morozova, 2018; Hansen & Schaltegger, 2013; Sung, 2020).

Conclusion and Implication: This article sheds light on the complex interplay between the motivations and challenges fashion entrepreneurs encounter. Within this framework, sustainability and technology have emerged as indispensable bridging drivers. As the framework is a comprehensive overview of motivation and challenges interplay, it emphasizes the strategic necessity of investing in these realms to foster innovation, differentiation, and competitive advantages. The outcome of the research contributes to the literature on fashion entrepreneurship and offers insights for potential fashion entrepreneurs, industry stakeholders, and policymakers to create a nurturing ecosystem that cultivates entrepreneurial talent toward a sustainable fashion industry.

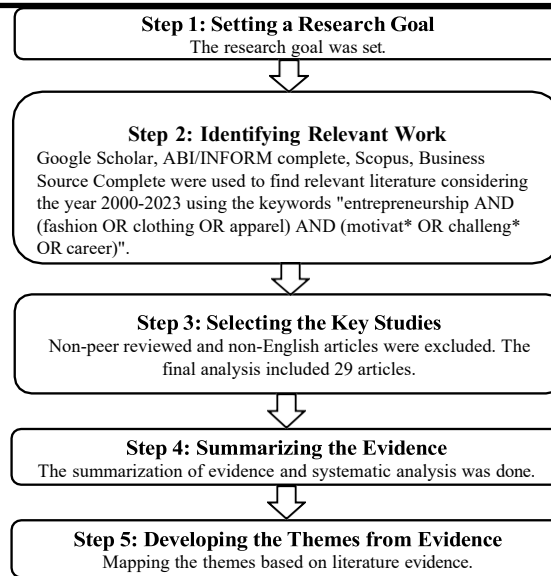


Figure 1: Five-step Systematic Literature Review Approach

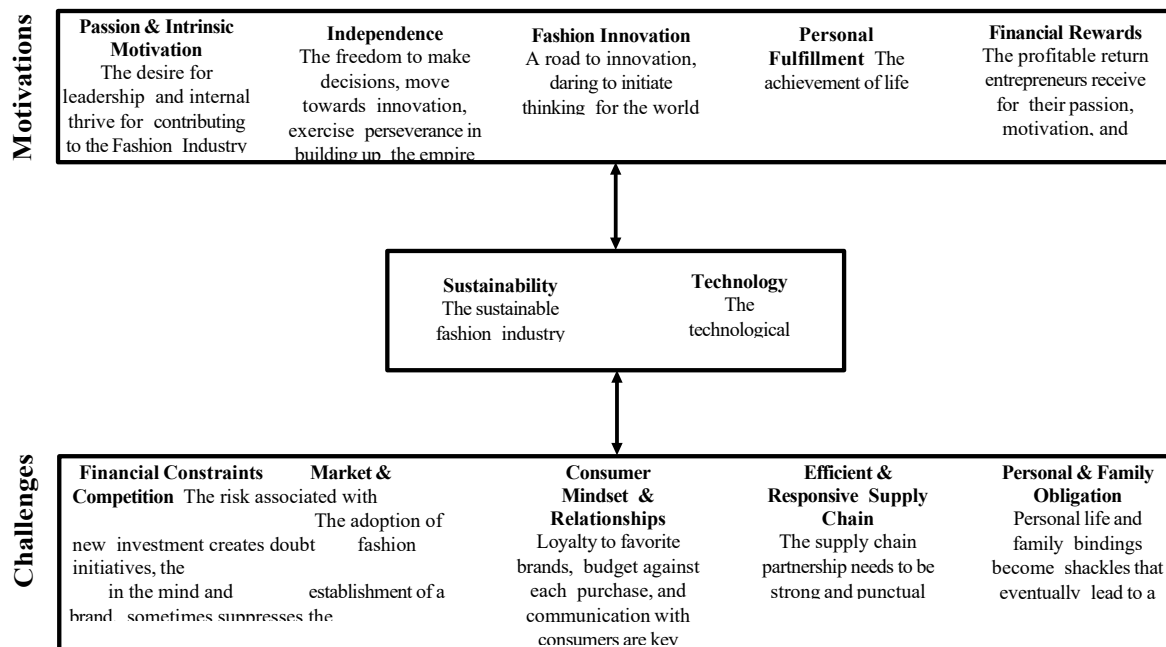


Figure 2: Framework Generated from the Findings of Systematic Literature Review

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