



**Research Trend Analysis of Clothing and Textiles Research Journal from the
Global Supply Chain Management Perspective**

Jung Ha-Brookshire and Jana Hawley, University of Missouri, USA

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Recently, Ha-Brookshire and Hawley (2013) presented new visions for the domain of Clothing and Textiles (C&T) as an academic discipline in the 21st century. The authors laid out the scientific nature and domain of C&T, reflecting today's and future market environments that are industry-driven yet focused on satisfying all humans' clothing needs and wants. Following Hunt's (2002) explanation on the nature of science, the authors define *C&T as the science of investigating satisfaction processes of humans' clothing needs and wants*, and its domain is consist of three main dimensions: (a) humans' clothing needs and wants; (b) clothing and textile supply chain; and (c) human satisfaction. The authors' model of the domain of C&T shows, first, that humans have different needs and wants for clothing and textiles, including biological, psychological, social, and cultural. All of these needs and wants are influenced by our macro-level environments—political, social, economic, technological, and natural. Second, the model illustrates that the C&T supply chain consists of fiber producers, ultimate consumers, and everyone in between in the areas of history, forecasting, product development, merchandising, sourcing, production, and retailing/distribution. These supply chain functions are managed through inter-functional coordination within an organization (Menzter, 2004), as well as, inter-organizational coordination, through creative problem solving, leadership, and education. Finally, the model shows the objective of clothing and textile SCM is to satisfy humans' clothing needs and wants, including financial gains, social improvement, and environment preservation.

Ha-Brookshire and Hawley (2013) provided a clear and interesting picture of the domain of C&T in the global supply chain of clothing and textiles at a macro level. Yet, this model is limited to show specific research agendas and research programs that C&T scholars may pursue at a micro level. Therefore, the authors' position still brings many critical questions, such as, what would specific research manuscripts look like if one adopts this model as a domain of C&T? What types of inquiries would be made? What type of implications and conclusions would they provide? What types of specific contributions could C&T research make on the discipline, industry, and society? To begin to answer such questions, we reviewed research agendas and programs investigated by C&T scholars in the past twenty years (1993-2012). A total of 477 research manuscripts published by *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* (CTRJ) in the past two decades were reviewed, interpreted, and coded into 29 themes and each theme was classified into 8 major theme categories within Ha-Brookshire & Hawley's (2013) global supply chain model of C&T's domain. The inter-raters' agreement was achieved at 100% through iterative processes of repetitive interpretation and coding.

The results showed several interesting patterns of research activities found among C&T scholars. First, in terms of clothing needs and wants, most manuscripts published in *CTRJ* focused on

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consumers' social (33.8%) and psychological (25.4%), influenced by social (60.2%) and technological (23.9%) environments. These wants and needs of consumers were investigated with the objectives of increase in textile and apparel firms' economic gains (34.8%), environmental improvement (27.5%), or pure human satisfaction (23.7%). Overall, the most popular supply chain function investigated by CTRJ authors was history/forecasting (23.9%) and consumer research (17.0%), followed by product development (17.0%), and retailing/distribution (14.3%). Inter-functional coordination (30.8%) and leadership/education (30.0%) were the most frequently investigated in the past 20 years, in order to achieve better performance within the supply chain. Most research provided conclusions and implications for policy changes (54.3%), while the rest suggested changes in new demand as the result of comprehensive supply chain activities. Only 20.1% of research was engaged in investigating C&T supply chain activities in the true global setting, not just one-country-centered outcomes. Finally, the five-year incremental trends showed an increase in investigating consumers' psychological wants and needs and the impact of economic environment on consumers. The trends also suggested merchandising and inter-functional coordination have been the most popular research agendas in the last five years.

The study has important implications. The trends of research by CTRJ authors show where the concentrated research efforts have been made in the past two decades, such as consumer research. The results also show the areas of the C&T domain that are lack comprehensive investigations, such as sourcing/production and the way to satisfy consumers' biological wants and needs. Perhaps, the main paradigm within C&T has been the focus on consumer- and firms'-economic- gain. According to Kuhn (1962), paradigm shifts will occur only when a new paradigm could help solve the problems better and more efficiently. The recent increase in merchandising and inter-functional research within the supply chain may suggest that a paradigm shift is on the way. The more effectively we solve contemporary problems, the more contributions we would be able to make to society. The more diverse research efforts we make, the more services we will be able to provide to our future. That will, in turn, help make C&T a more relevant and valuable academic and research discipline in years to come. We believe the findings show an important snap shot of where we, as the C&T research community, are at the dawn of the new century.

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