

# **Fashion designers' attitude-behaviour inconsistencies towards a sustainable business model: a neutralisation theory perspective**

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## **Abstract**

### **Purpose**

Fashion designers in South Africa remain ambivalent in embracing sustainable fashion. This study examines the role of neutralisation techniques on attitude towards sustainable fashion. The study was conducted in South Africa, an emerging market known for water scarcity and pollution emanating from the textile industry.

### **Design/methodology/approach**

A structured questionnaire was used to collect cross-sectional data from a sample of 590 fashion designers using a web-based online survey. Study constructs were drawn from the neutralisation theory and theory of planned behaviour.

### **Findings**

Standard multiple regression analysis results identified denial of injury, appeal to higher loyalties and external locus of control as the major rationalisation techniques influencing South African designers' negative attitudes towards sustainable fashion.

### **Research limitations/implications**

Research was conducted in South Africa where the concept of sustainable fashion is still at developmental stages. The generalisation of the study findings may be enhanced by extending the study to other markets with a fully developed market for sustainable fashion.

### **Practical implications**

The study results underscore the necessity of reducing social, structural and institutional barriers associated with the adoption of sustainable fashion. This study provides input towards efforts to develop attitude change strategies to stimulate designers to embrace sustainable fashion.

### **Originality/value**

The research study contributes to theory, practice and future research.