

UNDERCONSUMPTION AS A MODERN TREND IN WORLD ECONOMY

For recent decades, the problem with overconsumption has been becoming more and more obvious. Nowadays, almost everyone is aware of the fact that society is consuming too much and hurts our planet.

Well known, it's the fault of big factories, companies, and corporations and, in general, mass production that created these huge marketing campaigns and trends and convinced people that they need everything they offer. We can see countries are trying to fix that by imposing laws and increasing taxes on pollution but the problem remains. So, people decided to start this journey by themselves. That's how the movement named "underconsumption" appeared.

The purpose of this paper is to draw attention to overconsumption and to encourage people and companies to join this movement.

The idea of underconsumption spread widely in the middle of 2024 by becoming a TikTok trend named "underconsumption core", where users were posting videos showing thrift store purchases, modest wardrobes and practical, well-used everyday items instead of showing large hauls of clothing, makeup or over-flowing wardrobe and fridge shelves, the content which was so normalized that we've been watching it everywhere for a decade or even more.

Views of posts with the hashtag "deinfluencing" increased from 208 million in February 2023 to more than 1.3 billion in January 2024, according to eMarketer. The hashtag "underconsumption" has also attracted the attention of TikTok users. Over the past month, bloggers have posted about 7,000 videos related to normal consumption [1].

The rise of this trend can be linked to several challenges facing people today, including increasing economic pressures, environmental concerns and social pressures [2].

Underconsumption covers the issue from different angles. The main thing is buying clothes people don't need. The speed of the information spreading in internet and the ability to buy things at a very low price decrease the time when things are trendy. This fact has led to fast-changing trends and, in this case, fast fashion. Fast fashion can be defined as cheap, trendy clothing to meet consumer demand. Nowadays it is easy to purchase new things regularly. This habit often leads to wardrobes overflowing with barely-used items. Over time, people forget about the clothes and things they already own, creating unnecessary waste and spending. For example, in 2023 the Barbie film was released, and that boosted the pink color trend. But after a couple of months everybody forgot about the things they had bought during this time. Underconsumption offers

reusing clothes and using things properly. The main principle is to promote the idea that it is better to buy one quality item and wear it for a long time than to fill the wardrobe with hundreds of similar, but not very high-quality items. Followers of underconsumption core prefer not to throw away unnecessary clothes or shoes, but to give them to those in need. In recent years, thrift stores have become more popular. But this trend does not mean untidiness at all. It's about using things and resources as long as it is possible.

The next problem is plastic and other non-decomposable trash. People try to use recycled, reused and renewable materials and components. For example, their own coffee cups, not disposable ones, cloth bags named "tote bag" for buying products instead of using plastic bags in supermarkets etc.

Besides, underconsumption core promotes being mindful of energy use and switch to energy efficient appliances when possible, do not leave the charger plugged in etc. It touches the issue of wasting food through overshopping or throwing away leftovers, offering going to the grocery store with a list, do not buy more than we are able to eat to prevent food from being thrown in trash.

Companies are following this trend too by offering goods from recycled materials. For instance, the Nike Company creates shoes that contain at least 25% recycled materials. Such shoes look stylish and have less negative impact on our planet. Clothing brands Abercrombie & Fitch, Skins and Quince also participated in the trend, offering to create a capsule wardrobe which means many combinations of a little amount of clothes can be made [3].

Underconsumption is not merely an economic indicator but a critical issue that intertwines with social equity, environmental sustainability, and consumer behavior. Moving forward, we must prioritize strategies that empower consumers, promote sustainable practices, and encourage rational distribution of resources. By promoting an environment where consumption is not only adequate but also responsible, we can drive economic growth while ensuring a healthier and fair society.

REFERENCES:

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