Sustainability partnerships in the textiles industry

Textiles is the second most polluting industry (Ozdamar Ertekin, Atik, & Murray, 2020). In such industry, actors may rely on partnerships in addressing various sustainability issues through different mechanisms (Products, Processes, Policies, Awareness-raising campaigns, and Philanthropy), which could contribute towards change at different levels (Firm, Supply chain, Industry, and Society) (Beyers & Heinrichs, 2020; Stadtler & Lin, 2017). Therefore, we aim to answer the following questions: what mechanisms do sustainable textile partnerships utilise, and how do these mechanisms relate with the partnerships’ targeted level of change? Our theoretical framework draws on sustainability issues in the context of textiles and the literature on sustainability-oriented partnerships, specifically focusing on their motivations, issues, mechanisms, and the level of change they target (Beyers & Heinrichs, 2020; Stadtler & Lin, 2017).

We collected press releases from the Factiva database and gather information about the sustainability partnerships of the textiles actors. We identified 444 relevant partnerships by manually screening all the partnership announcements. To analyse the data, first, we conducted a qualitative content analysis based on the framework of Stadtler and Lin (2017) and coded all the partnerships’ mechanisms and targeted level of change (Figure 2).
Next, we conducted logistic regression and we identified notable patterns among the different levels of partnerships. Compared to partnerships targeting the Firm level, the broader partnerships targeting Industry, Supply-chain, and Society are all more focused on social sustainability issues. Partnerships targeting these broader levels are also more likely to use Awareness or Policy mechanisms. We further found that partnerships targeting Industry tend to be bigger, and partnerships targeting Society tend to involve cross-sector partners.

To conclude, we contribute to the scholarly conversation on sustainability issues within textiles industry (Mair, Druckman, & Jackson, 2016) and more specifically add to the ongoing literature regarding the motivations, mechanisms and levels of change of sustainable textile partnerships (Beyers & Heinrichs, 2020; Stadtler & Lin, 2017).

References

