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Corporate Image in the Era of Ultra-Fast Fashion: A Case Study of the Boohoo Brand Crisis

Zuzanna Gmyrek

Student at the University of
Economics in Katowice
E-mail:
zuzanna.gmyrek@edu.uekat.pl

Anna Adamus-Matuszyńska

Department of Market and Marketing Research, University
of Economics in Katowice, Katowice, Poland
E-mail: anna.adamus-matuszynska@ue.katowice.pl
ORCID: 0000-0003-3234-4599

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Abstract

The article analyses the consequences of the phenomenon known as "ultra-fast fashion" focusing on its impact on corporate image and image crisis management, using the British brand Boohoo as an example. Ultra-fast fashion is a business model based on the rapid production and distribution of clothing, responding to changing trends and consumer needs. However, its growth is associated with numerous controversies, such as labour exploitation, low product quality, greenwashing, and negative environmental impacts. Consequently, brands in this sector are particularly vulnerable to image crises.

The aim of the study was to analyse the causes, course, and effects of Boohoo's 2020 image crisis resulting from its participation in the ultra-fast fashion phenomenon. The research method involved content analysis of the company's website, social media, press releases, and press articles related to the specific case. Key allegations against Boohoo included unethical working conditions, wages below the minimum rate, lack of worker protection during the pandemic, and falsifying product origins. These accusations led to a drop in share value, boycotts from customers and influencers, and the termination of partnerships.

The company's reactions to the 2020 crisis included an audit, the implementation of remedial programs, reducing the number of suppliers, actions toward transparency and improved working conditions, and the publication of a sustainability strategy

and subsequent report. However, reports from independent organizations and the media showed that these remedial actions were often superficial, and systemic problems persisted. In 2021, Boohoo purchased part of the Debenhams Group in an attempt to rebuild its reputation and change its business model, leading to a rebranding toward the Debenhams name in 2025. Nevertheless, the Boohoo brand remains unchanged after this process.

Conclusions from the Boohoo case study emphasize the necessity of authenticity, transparency, and long-term commitment to business ethics and social responsibility in an era where sustainability is expected. The Boohoo case serves as a warning to other ultra-fast fashion brands, showing that effective crisis management requires not just PR activities, but real systemic changes.

Keywords: ultra-fast fashion, corporate image, crisis management, ethics in fashion, social responsibility, sustainability, Boohoo

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1. Introduction

The rapid pace of changing fashion, the sheer number of clothes available to consumers, and their unquestionable diversity have led to the 21st century phenomenon of "fast fashion" being replaced by "ultra-fast fashion" (Uchańska-Bieniusiewicz, Obłój, 2023). Ultra-fast fashion differs from fast fashion in many ways, including avoiding excess inventory, focusing on on-demand production, and shorter lead times ranging from a few days to a week, utilizing a combination of flexible, cost-effective, and responsive supply chain strategies (Camargo, Pereira, Scarpin, 2020). This model addresses the needs of potential customers and aligns with the dominant lifestyle in contemporary society. It is focused on pluralism, resulting from the weakening of traditional patterns and the growing number of available options, as well as widespread consumerism (Thomas, 2019).

At the same time, this means that the ultra-fast fashion industry generates negative phenomena, such as exploitation of the workforce (Gunawan, Matahariza, Putri, 2023), pollution in the form of a significant carbon footprint, and the promotion of consumerism (EEA, 2025).

The growing commitment of the environment to actively promoting pro-environmental and ecological initiatives is impacting brand perception, especially among consumers aware of the harmful impacts of the apparel industry. In pursuit of trends, clothing brands often engage in unethical practices, not only in terms of neglecting the planet but also related to the exploitation and overload of workers in the production process and supply chain. Moreover, the pace of new product production is so rapid that it directly impacts the quality of materials used and the overall service life, which is also gradually decreasing (Bick, Halsey, Ekenga, 2018; Zajączkowska, 2022). All these arguments justify the hypothesis that the growing number of perceived disadvantages and

harms resulting from this industry may soon become the "beginning of the end" of the popularity and interest in ultra-fast fashion.

However, it should be emphasized that the EKObarmetr report reveals that Polish society is becoming increasingly indifferent to these issues (EKObarmetr, 2025).

Fashion brands are facing serious image crises. A case in point is the British clothing giant Boohoo, one of the producers contributing to the ultra-fast fashion market, which has struggled throughout its existence with unacceptable working conditions and unethical business practices (Legal Opinion, 2020).

The following discussion aims to analyse the crises experienced by the studied company and answer the following research questions:

1. What were the main causes of the Boohoo brand's image crisis in the era of ultra-fast fashion?
2. How did the crisis impact the perception of the Boohoo brand by consumers and the media?
3. What crisis management strategies did Boohoo employ, and with what results?
4. What lessons can be drawn from the Boohoo case for other companies operating in the ultra-fast fashion model?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Foundations of Corporate Image

Image is an integral element of every enterprise's operation, yet researchers disagree on its specific nature (Thøger Christensen, Askegaard, 2001). Summarizing numerous discussions on this topic, it should be emphasized that an organization's image is the perception of the company's activities by its environment, or more precisely, the general impressions of the organization held by its stakeholders (Thøger Christensen, Askegaard, 2001). It consists of a set of beliefs and impressions held by recipients that characterize a specific organization. Image does not reflect reality because it is shaped based on the subjectivity of the evaluator, which may be either their personal perception or the repeated opinion of others (Gray, Balmer, 1998).

Factors that influence the perception of a company include its identity, i.e., its inherent characteristics that distinguish it from other organizations, such as values, traditions, history, and mission (Albert, Whetten, 1985)¹, owner involvement, communication with the social environment, and social initiatives (Alam, Islam, 2021; Golestaneh, Guerreiro, Pinto, Mosaddad, 2022; Marrucci, Daddi, Iraldo, 2023). The image-shaping process is based on the company's daily activities and its collaboration with both customers and employees, its external and internal communication, and the transmission of values.

1. It should be emphasized, however, that since the first definition of organizational identity, there has been an ongoing discussion among researchers on the scientific and practical meaning of this term (Whetten 2006; Knorr, Hein-Pensel, 2024).

It is posited that the deliberate and appropriate management of corporate image leads to heightened stakeholder trust in the organization (Flavián,

Guinalíu, & Torres, 2005), as well as to an enhanced reputation, greater customer loyalty, and the attainment of competitive advantage (Gioia, Hamilton, Patvardhan, 2014).

Corporate identity is likewise differentiated as a distinct construct, whose fundamental components comprise a set of characteristics, values, and norms that collectively distinguish a given enterprise from other entities operating within the market environment (Dewalska-Opitek, 2010). It comprises tangible aspects such as the logo and communication style, but also the values and mission represented, which constitute an intangible element of the company's activity in the environment. In this case, coherence and consistency are key to perception. Identity is a clear declaration of the brand's values and priorities (Wheeler, Meyerson, 2024).

Corporate reputation, in turn, is the overall opinion of stakeholders about a company (Dewalska-Opitek, 2010). It is a result of an organization's activities, experience, and communication strategy. Trust, which constitutes a key determinant in corporate image formation, should likewise be taken into account. The sustained cultivation of a brand's relationships with its external environment forms the basis for its favourable perception among customers and ensures a higher level of understanding and support in crisis situations (Keh, Xie, 2009).

2.2 Managing an Image Crisis

An image crisis is defined as a sudden and violent event that significantly impacts a company's reputation and goodwill (Hajduk, 2017). It is characterized by high dynamics and rapid spread in the media and among a given brand's audience. It often becomes a turning point in an organization's operations. It requires immediate action to minimize potential losses and identify the underlying causes.

Crises constitute an inherent component of the functioning of any organization. Consequently, systematic preparedness for potential crisis situations and the development of an appropriate action plan are of fundamental importance. Crisis management can be conceptualized as a process comprising five principal phases, which may be classified as follows (Pearson & Mitroff, 1993):

- signal detection: monitoring and controlling the company to detect signals indicating an impending problem,
- preparation/prevention: development and ongoing updating of crisis plans, risk analysis, and training of the crisis management team,
- containment/damage limitation: responding as quickly as possible and taking actions to limit the escalation of the crisis and its broader effects. Transparent communication with the environment, including stakeholders and contractors,
- recovery: restoring the company's operations as close as possible to the previous mode of operation and drawing conclusions for the future,

- learning: continuous analysis and assessment of the situation and the effectiveness of the actions taken.

Timothy Coombs developed the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), which emphasizes that effective crisis communication depends primarily on the appropriate matching of communication strategy to the type and severity of the crisis (Coombs, 2010). Situational Crisis Communication Theory is a crisis communication management model that tailors communication strategy to the type of crisis and the degree of responsibility attributed to a given organization. It was developed to support effective action and response to various types of crises, considering public perception and the psychological mechanisms of blame assignment (Coombs, 2015).

The key elements that the above theory focuses on are closely related to the general phases of crisis management (Coombs, 1998; Coombs, 2007):

- Crisis responsibility - determining the degree to which the organization is perceived as at fault for the situation (in principle, the greater the responsibility rests with the organization, the more defensive the communication strategy should be).
- Selection of communication strategies - adopting a strategy tailored to the type of crisis:
- Random accidents - victim cluster² - the organization as a victim of a crisis - low responsibility,
- Preventable/intentional crises - conscious and intentional actions of the organization that may harm its reputation - high responsibility,
- Accidental accidents - accidental cluster - unintentional events that damage its image - partial responsibility - apologies, acceptance of responsibility, denial, or minimization of damage.
- Reputation protection - in accordance with Coombs's framework, particular emphasis should be placed on safeguarding organizational reputation through a high degree of transparency, rapid and coordinated response, and the consistent fulfilment of stakeholders' expectations.

Moreover, the researcher noted a correlation not only between blame attribution and crisis type, but also the company's previous crisis history. If an organization has previously faced a crisis or negative public opinion, people are more likely to attribute blame, even when responsibility is not objectively clear. Coombs rejects the division of crisis situations into characteristic factors that depend on the organization's internal and external environment, which is typical of the Pearson and Mitroff model. The origin of the crisis is crucial, however. According to Coombs, this directly influences the level of responsibility assigned to the organization and the extent of the image-related consequences resulting from the crisis. SCCT, in its assumptions, links the effectiveness of actions taken to the degree of blame a given organization bears for the problem.

The researcher demonstrated that the lower the degree of blame resting with the company, the greater the likelihood of effectiveness of less demanding and engaging messages and public relations activities (Kaczmarek-Śliwińska, 2015).

2.3 Research Method

Content analysis was employed to address the research questions. This method constitutes a systematic and objective empirical technique for the examination of textual and visual materials, including but not limited to newspaper articles, social media posts, interview transcripts, television programs, and advertisements (Frankfort-Nachmias, Nachmias, 2001, pp. 341-347). Its primary purpose is to identify, quantify, and interpret the occurrence of specific words, concepts, themes, or symbols to provide an objective description of the content and structure of the communicated message.

The analysis was implemented in the following stages:

1. Problem and material definition: The research problem was delineated as an examination of the causes, dynamics, and consequences of the reputational crisis experienced by Boohoo in connection with its involvement in the ultra-fast fashion industry.
2. Development of the coding scheme: A coding key was constructed incorporating the following categories and lexical items: unethical practices, crisis management, consumer communication, corrective actions, reputational threat, peer trust, protests and boycotts, and image-related scandals.
3. Coding: Following the collection and review of materials related to the Boohoo crisis, the frequencies of occurrence of the coding categories were identified and quantified.
4. Analysis and interpretation of results: Based on the collected data, inferences were drawn regarding the character and principal trends of the analysed communication. The analysis encompassed the following materials:
 - a. Boohoo's official website
 - b. Press articles concerning the company published between 2020 and 2023
 - c. Social media content - Facebook and Instagram
 - d. Press materials prepared by Boohoo.

3. Case Study: The Case of Boohoo

3.1. Origin and Context of Boohoo's Image Crisis

Boohoo is considered one of the largest clothing companies in the ultra-fast fashion industry. The brand was founded in 2006 in Manchester by Mahmud Kamani and Carol Kane and initially operated solely as an online store, which supported the company's philosophy of quickly responding to changing customer demands. Boohoo's business model was based on mass-produced clothing and the rapid introduction of new collections that reflected current trends. Online sales gave the brand a global reach and allowed it to reach a wide audience, while maintaining relatively low operating costs, stemming from the lack of traditional brick-and-mortar stores and limiting distribution costs to domestic shipping costs.

In its initial years of operation in the United Kingdom, Boohoo underwent accelerated expansion, culminating in its flotation on the London Stock Exchange

in 2014 with an initial market valuation of approximately £560 million. In subsequent years, the company actively engaged in promotional activities through collaborations with influencers and celebrities from around the world. Building a strong social media presence was a strategy aimed at strengthening Boohoo's online presence, attracting new consumers and reaching a younger audience who value the "fashion giant's" low prices, affordable quality, and adherence to current trends.

Boohoo's image crises began in July 2020. An investigation by The Sunday Times revealed that workers in its Leicester factories, who produced for the British company, were paid below the national minimum wage of approximately £3.50 per hour, and that working conditions were unsafe, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among other things, there was a lack of personal protective equipment and social distancing was not observed. The media-publicized scandal sparked a violent public reaction (Nassar, Goddard, Freeman, 2023). This led, among other things, to a decline in share value, the immediate termination of partnerships with Boohoo by brands such as Zalando and Next, the resignation of its auditor, and a boycott of the brand by influencers and customers.

In the same year, The Guardian reported that workers employed in factories in Pakistan producing garments for the aforementioned brand received remuneration of less than 1 United States dollar per hour and, in some instances, were required to work for periods of up to 24 consecutive hours without interruption.

In 2021, allegations of modern slavery surfaced against the brand, leading to an investigation by US Customs and a threat to ban the import of Boohoo products into the US. In 2023, a BBC Panorama investigation revealed that Boohoo pressured suppliers to cut prices and shorten order fulfilment times, leading to further deterioration of working conditions. The company's actions were completely unfounded, as it claimed.

In early 2024, instances were disclosed in which garments manufactured in Asia were repackaged and relabelled as "Made in the UK" at the so-called model factory in Leicester-practices that Boohoo subsequently ascribed to "human error". In 2025, the Google search engine reveals 430,000 results for the phrase 'Boohoo scandal' (the result for the English language) and 71,200 for the phrase 'Boohoo scandal' (the result for the Polish language). Such a large number of search results regarding Boohoo scandals - both in English and Polish - indicates the enormous public interest in this topic and the scale of recognition of the company's image crises on the international stage.

The popularity of these phrases in search engines reflects that the scandal has not only become a subject of widespread media discussion but has also influenced the awareness of consumers, industry experts, investors, and the fashion industry. It can therefore be concluded that Boohoo's ethical issues and scandals are having a real, long-term impact on the brand's reputation - both in English-speaking markets and in Poland - and are shaping the overall perception of the ultra-fast fashion sector globally.

3.2 A crisis management and classification framework for the "British giant" based on Timothy Coombs' model

Boohoo has been operating in the clothing market since 2006. Over the course of nearly two decades, the company has faced numerous image crises, confirming the problematic operation of ultra-fast fashion brands in the clothing market. The experience and skills acquired over this time make the "British giant" a rich source for analysing the effectiveness of crisis management, examining the diverse causes of problems and the actions taken in response. The selected case study also allows for an assessment of the effectiveness of the SCCT method from both the entrepreneurial and consumer perspectives.

In the context of Coombs's model, an analysis of Boohoo's operations reveals significant interdependencies and crisis management mechanisms that determine the company's functioning in the face of crisis situations. The crises encountered by the British clothing brand can be categorized as intentional and preventable. Moreover, the organization's elevated degree of responsibility did not provide adequate impetus to sustain transparency or safeguard its corporate reputation. The management's corrective actions were repeatedly denied by websites such as BCC, which has been closely monitoring Boohoo's operations for several years (BBC, 2). Moreover, the British broadcasting corporation even conducted individual investigations, revealing inaccuracies in the information it provided to the public. A lack of transparency and clarity are just a few of the mistakes made by Boohoo.

However, they are crucial to the response, as consumers and their opinions have a decisive influence on the market position of clothing companies. The erosion of their trust and the lack of care taken to rebuild it can certainly be seen as the beginning of the end for the brand, as evidenced by Boohoo's ongoing rebranding. The revealed irregularities and the controversy surrounding the company have led some influencers to publicly distance themselves from their partnerships with Boohoo and call for a boycott of the brand. British TV personality Vas J. Morgan wrote in a comment on the scandal on Instagram: There is no "modern day" twist on this; Slavery is slavery and my heart hurts for the families that have suffered at the hands of companies that fail to do due diligence like this.

Companies that make billions off the back of hard-working people trying to feed their family (Dosani, 2020). Customers have widely expressed their dissatisfaction in the media, with many identifying with the celebrity's opinion. According to YouGov research conducted in 2020, following the revelations of the „modern slavery" scandal in Leicester, Boohoo's buzz and reputation scores plummeted, particularly among women and young consumers - the brand's key target groups.

When examining and evaluating the strategic and operational decisions undertaken by Boohoo, the following relationships and patterns of association can be identified:

- Initial adoption of a denial strategy - denial and hesitant acceptance of responsibility to reduce it. These actions proved insufficient due to the amount

of evidence, but also the significant degree of reputational risk.

- Publication of an independent report - Recovery strategy - Admission of guilt and mistakes, transparent declaration of intent and corrective actions taken to mitigate the crisis and prevent its further escalation.
- Lack of communication coherence - information was conveyed ineffectively, leading to inconsistencies and criticism from consumers, weakening the adopted recovery strategy. Furthermore, mixing strategies leads to mutual exclusion, and therefore reduced effectiveness.
- Taking corrective action - Attempt to rebuild trust among consumers and stakeholders.

3.3 Boohoo's Response to the Crisis: Analysis of Management and Communication Actions

While the implementation of the crisis management model appears to consistently follow the steps outlined in SCCT theory, a chronological synthesis of the issues allows for the identification of the causes of failure and recurring scandals that have become an integral part of the Boohoo brand's existence (Boohoo, 2022).

Following the initial publication of the events in July 2020, the company decided to conduct an independent audit (Whelan, 2020). This was intended to prove that the allegations were unfounded and that the working conditions described in the articles did not reflect the actual conditions of the workplace. Boohoo also declared a reduction in the number of suppliers and increased control over its supply chain. It committed to investing in improving quality and working conditions and paying outstanding wages to ensure employees' salaries were compliant with minimum wage regulations. To ensure customer satisfaction, a public apology and branding campaigns were issued. A Supply Chain Compliance Committee was also established and an independent overseer, Judge Brian Leveson, was hired to monitor and implement changes (fashionunited.uk).

An audit and an independent report by Alison Levitt found that Boohoo management had been aware of the problems since December 2019 and had failed to take sufficient action (Business and Human Rights Center, 2020). In response, the company introduced the "Agenda for Change" (A4C) program. Its goal was to fundamentally reform its business practices, increase transparency, and rebuild trust following the scandal over sub-minimum wage and lack of COVID-19 protection. The implementation of A4C included both structural changes and collaboration with independent experts, making it one of the most comprehensive turnaround programs in the fast fashion industry.

However, reports from NGOs such as Labour Behind the Label and Share Action, as well as other journalistic investigations, have revealed that, despite public declarations, the company has failed to address its supply chain issues, and workers continue to be exploited and underpaid.

Following the emergence of new controversies in 2021, Boohoo published a list of 78 approved suppliers (previously there were around 500), emphasizing the

transparency of the supply chain (Fashion Capital, 20210). In addition, the company implemented a sustainability strategy "Up.Front Fashion Ready for the Future", including, among others, better conditions for suppliers and a reduced carbon footprint. Boohoo was also a member of organizations like the SFA for three years before the misconduct data was disclosed. In 2021-2022, this cooperation intensified - the SFA conducted a comprehensive gap analysis of Boohoo's risk management system, identifying issues such as a lack of mechanisms for tracking subcontractors and insufficient age verification procedures for workers in factories in Bangladesh.

In response to the recommendations, Boohoo implemented in 2023 "A Responsible Disengagement Policy", which takes into account the impact of contract breaches on local communities, a reporting system called Unseen Portal - an anonymous platform for supplier employees that integrates data from SFA and Bureau Veritas audits, and monthly monitoring meetings between Boohoo's Sustainability Director and the SFA team. Since May 2021, Boohoo has been a member of this UK labour standards improvement programme, and in October of the same year, an agreement was signed extending building safety and workers' rights standards to Pakistan, which resulted in fire safety inspections of 80 factories in Bangladesh, and labour rights training for 12,000 workers in Dhaka and Karachi.

Boohoo also funded research at the University of Bath on dignity in the workplace (University of Bath, 2024). This collaboration resulted in the introduction of a mentoring program for migrant workers in Leicester and the creation of a legal aid fund for victims of supply chain exploitation. Despite the claimed progress, a 2023 University of Bath report (Rogerson, 2023) points to the superficial nature of the changes, supported by the following arguments: 15% of Boohoo's orders are still fulfilled by unaffiliated suppliers who avoid SFA audits; persistent price pressure on suppliers hinders the full implementation of NGO recommendations; and only 12% of Boohoo's suppliers in Pakistan have received International Accord training by 2024. According to experts, this collaboration is part of an image-building strategy but does not address the systemic problems of fast fashion.

The 2024 situation regarding the fabrication of clothing shows that Boohoo's production still bears the hallmarks of past crises, as evidenced by the closure of the Leicester factory. In response to the mislabelling, CEO John Lyttle wrote a letter to the Parliamentary Environment Committee, assuring that Boohoo "has absolutely not reneged on its previous commitments" (Environmental Audit Committee, 2024) and is taking urgent corrective action (Just Style, 2024).

4. Comparative Analysis of LPP. A Polish Clothing Brand Facing Crisis

A comparative analysis of the crisis management actions of several leading clothing companies in different countries allows for a better understanding of how various crisis management strategies impact the image, reputation, operations of companies, and their long-term market position. Therefore, the next stage of the analysis will compare the actions of Boohoo with those of the Polish clothing company LPP S.A., which in recent years has also been forced to take steps to protect its reputation and the image it has built over decades.

The recurring crises may suggest that Boohoo is failing to learn from its mistakes (the fifth stage of crisis management). The analysis to date shows that despite implementing crisis management frameworks such as the SCCT model, the British manufacturer is only partially effective in implementing corrective actions. This stems from a lack of authenticity and genuine accountability, as described by Coombs (2007). Nevertheless, the company maintains its market position.

The crisis LPP faced was attributed to the scandal of March 2024. The American company Hindenburg Research published a report accusing LPP of continuing its operations in Russia by supplying goods to the country via Kazakhstan (Hindenburg Research). This report caused a decline in the value of LPP shares and sparked controversy in the media and among investors, particularly given the ongoing war in Ukraine, which was perpetrated by the Russian state. However, the institute's actions misled its audience, and it ceased operations in January 2025 (Bankier, 2025). After the outbreak of war in 2022, LPP decided to withdraw from the Russian market (Money, 2024). This process included closing all stores and selling its Russian subsidiary. Allegations suggesting that LPP continued to operate in Russia, despite earlier declarations of withdrawal, undermined trust in the company.

In the context of war, continuing sales in Russia could be perceived as unethical and contrary to social values.

LPP responded to the allegations and the published report the same day, describing them as baseless allegations. It attempted to be transparent in the media and calm the media storm. Among its first actions in this situation were: informing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Revenue Administration, filing a report with the prosecutor's office about suspected manipulation of financial instruments, and organizing an online press conference with key management board members. Furthermore, it's worth noting that, unlike Boohoo, the Polish brand published a number of official reports and statements, placing great importance on clear and transparent public communications.

Despite a sudden drop in stock prices on the day of publication, resulting from false and, in LPP's opinion, completely unjustified allegations, and a deterioration in its reputation among its clients, the organization efficiently and effectively restored its image, minimizing potential losses.

As with the British clothing brand, this wasn't the only time the company faced scandal. The first occurred in April 2013. Following the catastrophic collapse of a production building in Bangladesh, Clean Clothes Polska, a coalition of organizations working to improve working conditions in the global clothing industry, reported the discovery of the Bangladeshi Cropp label factory in the ruins. Furthermore, the Czech news portal iDNES.cz disseminated photographic documentation of the debris (TVN24). LPP, the manufacturer of brands such as Cropp, Reserved, House, Mohito, and Sinsay, admitted in an official statement posted on its website that some of the clothing distributed for the Cropp brand was indeed produced in the factory located in the Rana Plaza building where the dramatic events took place.

It also stated that LPP does not operate its own production facilities and that clothing production is outsourced to independent manufacturers.

The allegations against LPP didn't end with the disclosure of clear evidence of clothing production at Rana Plaza. According to Clean Clothes Poland, unlike its Western competitors, it hasn't taken visible steps to promote social responsibility for working conditions in its supply chains. This opinion is supported by a statement from coordinator of the Clean Clothes Poland Maria Huma: This terrible disaster should be the final impetus for LPP S.A. to finally take responsibility for the health and lives of workers in countries like Bangladesh. The fact that LPP S.A. doesn't know, or doesn't want to know, which factories it outsources production to may demonstrate a lack of accountability and transparency at this company. (Polskie Radio 24).

In its statement, LPP cited the country's uncertain geopolitical situation for the difficulties in conducting inspections, but it proactively addressed the situation and the allegations. In October 2013, LPP was the only Polish company to join the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (ACCORD), an agreement aimed at improving safety in garment factories in Bangladesh. In February 2014, a voluntary donation was made to the Rana Plaza Multilateral Coordinating Committee to support the families of the victims and survivors of the disaster.

5. Conclusions and Discussion

An analysis of press coverage and user-generated content on social media indicates that Boohoo constitutes a case study of a clothing brand which, despite multiple scandals related to alleged labour exploitation, unethical business practices, and greenwashing, has continued to operate largely due to its previously consolidated market position, itself shaped by effective public relations strategies. Subsequent investigations suggest that official declarations regarding organisational improvements frequently do not translate into substantive structural change, and the recurrence of crises may indicate a limited capacity for organisational learning from prior misconduct as well as deficiencies in managerial effectiveness.

This assertion is corroborated by the corporate development that, in March 2025, Boohoo announced a strategic rebranding and now conducts its operations under the designation Debenhams Group. This reconfiguration forms part of a

comprehensive turnaround strategy designed to restore the firm's competitive position and to recalibrate its business model in response to evolving market conditions and intensified competitive pressures. A central component of this transformation is the transition away from a conventional, vertically integrated own-brand fast-fashion model toward the establishment of a marketplace-based platform, inspired by and structurally aligned with the business model of the previously acquired Debenhams.

The rebranding initiative constitutes a strategic effort to distance the company from its prior association with the ultra-fast fashion segment, an image that has exposed the Boohoo brand to multiple controversies and reputational crises in recent years. These organizational changes have been implemented under a newly appointed management board, with Dan Finley serving as Chief Executive Officer since October 2024, and are oriented toward enhancing operational efficiency and achieving cost reductions.

By examining Boohoo's reputational crises as an exemplary case study in corporate crisis management, it can be inferred that the brand constitutes a significant benchmark for other firms operating within the sector.

Research based on media content analysis allows for several conclusions, both theoretical and practical. Central among these requirements are the adoption of a proactive approach to crisis management - formally integrated into the crisis management framework - the systematic consideration of corporate culture transformation, and the establishment of a long-term commitment to genuine, structural change. Accordingly, the Coombs model underscores the critical importance of investing in advanced supply chain monitoring systems augmented by contemporary technological solutions, as well as in the development and institutionalization of rapid yet transparent crisis communication capabilities.

Equally important is the broadly construed concept of corporate responsibility, which affects not only to an organization's direct employees but also extends to the wider business ecosystem in which it operates. Ultimately, the Boohoo case illustrates that, in an era characterized by highly advanced social and mass media with global reach, enterprises cannot afford to rely on reactive crisis management strategies and must instead adopt proactive, strategically oriented approaches. Long-term organizational success can be grounded in proactive strategic initiatives, a systemic and integrated approach to business ethics, and a sustained commitment to developing corporate responsibility across all hierarchical levels of the organization. The analysis also provides empirical support for Combs's theoretical framework.

Clear, transparent organizational communication and continuous interaction with external stakeholders are essential for maintaining stable relationships with customers, whereas any attempts to manipulate or misrepresent reality tend to generate adverse outcomes.

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