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# Awareness of the Environmental Impact of Clothing Production and Consumption among Slovenian Female Customers

*Zavedanje glede okoljskih vplivov proizvodnje in potrošnje oblačil*

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## Abstract

The textile industry, where clothing industry accounts for an important share, is one of the most polluting industries in the world. As a result, clothing consumption has a significant impact on the environment. The consumption of clothing has been increasing rapidly in line with growth in the middle classes in developing nations and the fast-fashion business model. At the same time, consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of sustainability, and have been changing their behaviour accordingly. In this study, we focused our attention on awareness of the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption from the point of view of consumer knowledge, as it relates to different generations, marital statuses, living environments, household income and type of purchasing store. The study reveals a high-level of consumer-evaluated knowledge regarding the effects of clothing production and consumption, as well as the purchasing preference in fast-fashion stores.

Keywords: clothing consumption, customer behaviour, sustainability, contemporary environment, waste pollution logistics

## Izvleček

Industrija tekstila, kjer predstavlja industrija oblačil pomemben delež, je izmed najbolj onesnažujočih industrij na svetu, posledično pa ima potrošnja oblačil pomemben vpliv na okolje. Z naraščanjem srednjega razreda v državah razvojem in vzpon modela hitra mode, potrošnja oblačil raste izjemno hitro. Hkrati se potrošniki vse bolj zavedajo pomena trajnosti in temu primerno spreminjajo svoje potrošniško vedenje. V raziskavi smo se osredotočili na zavedanje vplivov proizvodnje in potrošnje oblačil na okolje z vidika znanja oz. poznavanja v povezavi z različnimi generacijami, zakonskim statusom, življenjskim okoljem in družinskim dohodkom. Raziskava razkriva oceno visoke ravni potrošnikovega znanja o vplivih proizvodnje in potrošnje oblačil, a sočasno tudi visokoi naklonjenost nakupom v trgovinah z modelom hitre mode. Ključne besede: potrošnja oblačil, vedenje potrošnikov, trajnost, sodobno okolje, logistika odpadkov



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# 1 Introduction

The amount of clothes bought in the European Union per person has increased by approximately 40% in just a few decades. The main reasons are low prices and the increased rates at which fashion is delivered to consumers [1]. In this regard, fast fashion is an applied business model that is based on the rapid production of cheap clothing following the latest fashion trends. Consequently, the lifespan of clothing has shortened significantly in recent years as rapidly changing fashion guidelines encourage customers to change clothes more often than ever before.

The rapid rise of brands selling cheap and trendy clothing has led to major changes in consumer behaviour. Many consumers consciously buy clothes that quickly become outdated, both physically and aesthetically. Nevertheless, others still prefer clothes that are characterised as sustainable. The number of those has been also increasing.

Moreover, less than half of used clothes are collected for reuse or recycling when they are no longer needed, and only approximately 1% are recycled into new clothes, since technologies that would enable the recycling of clothes into virgin fibres are only starting to emerge [1].

The greatest cost of mass clothing consumption is increased waste and environmental pollution. In Slovenia, every resident threw away 12.3 kilograms of clothes, on average, in 2019. The European average is lower, at 11 kilograms per inhabitant, although that figure also takes into account other separately collected textile waste [2].

This article aims to improve general understanding about the impact of clothing production and consumption, as well as consumer clothing behaviour related to sustainability, with a focus on awareness and knowledge, as it relates to different generations, marital statuses, living environments, household income and store preferences.

## 1.1 Consumer behaviour

Many authors have written about consumer behaviour [3–11]. In contrast to contemporary theories, which are based on empirical data, traditional theories are based on economic concepts or marketers' experiences [10].

Consumer behaviour is the process through which people or groups choose, acquire, utilize and discard goods, services, concepts or experiences in or-

der to meet their needs and desires [5]. On the other hand, there are authors who define it as a study. In this manner, consumer behaviour is the study of people and the activities they undertake to satisfy their realized needs [3].

Some authors strongly believe consumer behaviour should be defined more broadly in accordance with contemporary trends, as it involves a wide range of consumer activities. Consumer behaviour entails all consumer activities associated with the purchase, use and disposal of goods and services, including the consumer's emotional, mental and behavioural responses that precede, determine or follow these activities [4]. By understanding how consumers behave and what affects them, businesses can better manage their marketing mix, brand management and customer communication [7].

Consumer behaviour is an interdisciplinary concept that derives from four disciplines: psychology as a study of the human mind and the mental factors that affect it, sociology as a study of the development, structure, functioning and the problems of human society, anthropology as human societies' culture and development, and communication as the process of imparting or exchanging information personally or through media channels and of using persuasive strategies [6].

Consumer behaviour can help companies of all sizes to understand consumption patterns more clearly, as well as the internal and external influences that have effect on customers [3]. It is essential that companies comprehensively understand consumer behaviour in order to develop the best possible business strategy.

Nevertheless, some believe studying consumer behaviour can also have a dark, negative side. Experts who criticize it are concerned that an in-depth understanding of consumer behaviour can enable unethical marketers to exploit human vulnerabilities in the marketplace and engage in other unethical marketing practices to achieve business goals [6].

## 1.2 Sustainable consumer behaviour in the clothing industry

The consumer behaviour related to sustainability in the clothing industry has been the research subject of many distinguished authors in recent years [12–20]. The term sustainability in consumer clothing behaviour describes the capacity to satisfy current needs without compromising the quality of living for future generations.

Clothing business models have gone through an immense transformation in recent decades. Instead of waiting for the conventional fashion seasons, companies now continuously offer new designs at lower prices. It is becoming more common for people to wear clothing just a few times before discarding it [21]. Fashion leaders are becoming more receptive to overconsumption. Nevertheless, they are also perceptive of new trends. One of them is certainly sustainability, which they incorporate into their strategy and influence others through their tastes and preferences [15].

Some studies partly explore certain areas of sustainable clothing consumption. One of the studies researched young adult consumers and the main reasons participants engage or do not engage in sustainable clothing consumption [22]. Another emphasizes a gap between consumers' awareness, their positive attitude toward sustainable fashion and a lack of action in that direction when making purchasing decisions [19]. That study revealed a significant change in students' knowledge of social and environmental issues relevant to the clothing and textile industry. On the other hand, the study found no significant adjustments in clothing purchasing behaviour and no significant relationship between students' knowledge and their reported purchasing behaviour [13]. The next study pointed out that it was clear among fashion-oriented participants that disposable fashion is a prevailing custom that is tied to emotional satisfaction, symbolism, etc. [23].

Customers' purchasing behaviour is not necessarily consistent with their principles [21]. One of the reasons is that sustainable clothing consumption is perceived as expensive [23]. Nevertheless, an increase in awareness can be noted regarding the negative effects of mindless fashion production and consumption [14].

The fact is that the topic of consumer behaviour in the clothing industry related to sustainability has become an important discussion in the academic and business environment.

### *1.3 Impact of the clothing industry on the environment*

The clothing industry has an immense impact on the environment. The fast-fashion business model has fuelled growth in the multi-trillion-dollar clothing sector [24].

It is estimated that the global textile industry produces 150 billion pieces of clothing and generates

93 million tons of waste annually. However, only 1% of all the fabric used for clothing is recycled [2]. Between 2000 and 2015, the average consumer increased the purchase of clothing by more than 60% [24]. The number of times an article of clothing is worn has declined by 36 per cent in the last 15 years [25]. Moreover, data shows that European households consume huge amounts of clothing. In 2018 and 2019, Europeans spent an average of 600 euros per year on clothing, 150 euros on footwear, and 70 euros on household textiles [26–27]. The greatest cost of this unlimited increase in consumption comes in waste and environmental pollution.

The clothing industry uses immense amounts of water, energy and chemicals in all process phases, from production and the processing of raw materials to disposal. Because the quantities of produced and purchased clothing have been constantly growing, the problem of textile waste and the logistics of its disposal have become increasingly more burdensome [2].

Water use and pollution are important factors during clothing production. Approximately 20% of industrial water pollution is caused by the manufacture of clothing. Numbers show that the world uses 5 trillion litres of water each year for fabric dyeing alone [24]. Moreover, the UNEP estimates that the clothing industry produces between 2 to 8% of global carbon emissions. If changes are not made, the fashion industry will use up a quarter of the world's carbon budget by 2050 [25].

Global environmental concern also addresses the production of waste and its proper disposal. The challenge of optimizing marketing channels, including the disposal of the clothing, is immense. Consequently, this has become an important issue in all phases of marketing channels [28]. The main opportunities lie in readjusting the disposal of clothing waste through the reuse and commercialization of the waste generated by the companies in the cluster [29].

### *1.4 Impact of the clothing industry on the environment in Slovenia*

Consumers have been becoming more environmentally conscious in Slovenia, as well. The trend of wearing environmentally friendly clothing has evolved as a result of our culture's evolving consciousness [30]. Various methods of addressing these issues have been proposed, including the development of new business models, designing prod-

ucts in a way that would make re-use and recycling easier (circular fashion), convincing consumers to buy fewer clothes of better quality (slow fashion), and generally steering consumer behaviour towards choosing more sustainable options [31].

The latest Slovenian study shows that Slovenians throw away clothing mostly due to long-term wear and tear. One of the main reasons that clothes become threadbare or change their shape faster than in the past is the poor quality of materials used to make the clothing sold by fast-fashion stores. The number of fast-fashion stores has been increasing in Slovenia, as well [2].

In 2019, Slovenia imported the most clothing from European nations, such as Germany, Austria and Italy, and from non-European nations, most notably from China and Bangladesh. The average price per kilogram of imported clothing was 25 euros, while the average price of exported clothing was 45 euros. The numbers indicate that Slovenia exports high-quality clothing products and imports lower-quality products [2].

In reality, however, consumers still rarely choose options that are defined as sustainable. Consumers may have high level of environmental awareness, but they rarely take environmental impacts into account when purchasing clothing. Slovenian consumers prioritize, when purchasing clothing, factors such as fashion trends and place of origin, while they still place less value on factors such as environmental sustainability [31]. The share of used, second-hand clothing sales compared to the purchase of new clothes was only 0.62% in Slovenia in 2019, while the share of clothing rental was even lower. On the other hand, a positive trend has been noticed [2]. Purchasing used clothing is still not a typical practice in Slovenia [31]. One of the studies in Slovenia suggest that overall positive attitudes toward environmentally friendly clothing products should be reinforced, as consumers can be influenced through advertising [32].

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Methods

The main objective of this study, conducted in 2022, was to examine women's decision-making in the selection and purchase of sustainable clothing. Among other things, we addressed their level of knowledge as it relates to sustainable clothing and

their preferred clothing store options. An in-depth analysis of collected data was carried out, using selected demographic characteristics.

The survey was performed on convenience samples of female clothing customers born between 1945 and 2005. They were classified into four age groups: Baby Boomers (1945–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Generation Y (1981–1994) and Generation Z (1995–2005). Our research focused solely on women, as one of the studies found out that women consider their own awareness to be higher than men's [19].

### 2.2 Questionnaire and hypotheses

The study was conducted using a web-based structured questionnaire, which was pilot-tested in advance. The number of respondents participated in pilot testing was 24 (six respondents from each generation). The pilot testing confirmed that the questions were clearly articulated and the response options are relevant.

The questionnaire tackled: awareness and preferences related to clothing consumption, the effect of the clothing industry on the environment, and sustainable consumer behaviour in the past and future. We noted many possibilities for further research on consumer behaviour related to sustainability. Based on a theoretical review, limitations and suggestions from previously conducted research, we defined three hypotheses.

Many studies partly tackle consumer behaviour awareness and sustainability [13, 19–22]. One of the studies confirmed a generally low awareness about environmental issues and attitudes [21]. Another study discussed positive awareness and attitude toward sustainable fashion [19]. Based on different research results, we aimed to verify whether Slovenian female consumers consider themselves as well-informed, and if they feel they know a lot about the issue and feel that they are experts in the field.

#### Hypothesis 1

We assumed that those who consider themselves as well-informed also feel that they know a lot about the topic and are experts in the field.

One recently conducted research regarding consumer behaviour found that a lack of knowledge and skills is one of the reasons young adults are not engaged in purchasing sustainable clothing [22]. Taking into account the research results, we defined a hypothesis to explore the difference in knowledge

between generations of Slovenian women (baby boomers, X, Y and Z).

### Hypothesis 2

We assumed that members of the older generations are more confident in their knowledge and expertise than members of the younger generations.

One research project that emphasised clothing purchasing behaviour in the area of sustainable behaviour focused on the analysis of demographic data, such as age, education and status [31]. In this way, we defined a broader hypothesis to analyse the clothing purchasing behaviour of Slovenian women consumers using other demographic data to ensure comprehensive understanding.

### Hypothesis 3

We assumed that clothing purchasing behaviour differs according to demographic data, such as age, marital status, living environment and household income.

### 2.3 Representativity of the sample

Our plan was to collect 400 completed questionnaires, with at least 100 responses from each generation (Baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z).

The study was conducted during the first half of 2022. Our objective was achieved and exceeded, as we collected 505 fully completed questionnaires (100 Baby boomers, 129 Generation X, 133 Generation Y and 143 Generation Z). In this way, we obtained some perspective on the research subject for all four generations.

## 3 Results

The aim of the survey was to gather data about the respondents' awareness about the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption. We asked them three questions to find out how

informed they are about the topic, how they rate themselves in terms of knowledge about the topic and whether they consider themselves novices or experts. Respondents answered on a scale of 1 to 7. First, they rated how informed they are about the topic, ranging from "I am not informed" to "I am well-informed". In the next step, they rated their knowledge of the topic from "I know very little" to "I know a lot". Then they rated their belief on whether they know a lot or a little about the topic. In the third option they rated themselves on a scale from "I am a novice" to "I am an expert".

Table 1 shows that respondents evaluated themselves the highest on a scale from 1 to 7 when these extremes correlated to "I know very little" and "I know very much", respectively. The mean score was 4.53. However, respondents were less confident when choosing between "I am a novice" and "I am an expert". The mean score was 4.22.

In the next step, we took a closer look at the consistency of the answers and compared whether respondents' ratings of how much they know were logically related to their ratings of how well-informed they are. Those who rated themselves as being poorly informed would not be expected to rate themselves as knowing a lot about the topic in question, and vice versa. Those who are well-informed are also expected to know a lot about the topic.

In most cases, we see that respondents who consider themselves well-informed also feel that they know a lot about the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption.

However, cross-tabulating how much they know and how informed they are can reveal some discrepancies. As many as 12.3% of respondents who consider themselves poorly informed claim to know a lot about this area. Moreover, as many as 35.7% of those who stated that they are only moderately well-informed think that they know a lot about the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption, as shown in Table 2. A statistically significant difference was found at Chi-Square 388.8 and  $p = 0.001$ .

*Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the question "What is your awareness of the impact of clothing production and consumption on the environment?" Answers were given on a scale of 1 to 7.*

	1. I know very little" to "I know very much"	2. "I am a novice" to "I am an expert"	3. "I am uninformed" to "I am well-informed"
Number	505	505	505
Mean score	4.53	4.22	4.34

Table 2: Cross-tabulations of respondents' scores of how much they know, linked to their scores of how well-informed they are

How well-informed are they?	How much do they know? (%)		
	Very little	Intermediate amount	Very much
Poorly informed (%)	71.6	16.1	12.3
Moderately well-informed (%)	10.2	54.1	35.7
Well-informed (%)	2	7.9	90.1

Even when showing how the variables cross-tabulate (i.e. how informed the respondents are and their opinions on their level of expertise in this field), the result is similar. Those who stated that they were poorly informed are slightly less likely to be considered experts. However, in the group of respondents who stated that they were moderately well-informed, as many as 20% consider themselves to be experts in the field. The results are shown in Table 3. A statistically significant difference was found at Chi-Square 405.7 and  $p = 0.001$ .

We also examined how much each generation knows about the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption. The results presented in Table 4 show that the youngest group of respondents, Generation Z, are more reserved in their statements about their knowledge of the topic. They are more likely than the other generations to say that they know a moderate amount. A statistically significant difference was found at a Chi-square of 16.8 and  $p = 0.01$ .

Table 3: Cross-tabulation of the variables of how informed they are and what kind of experts they are in the field

How well-informed are they?	What kind of experts they are in the field? (%)		
	Inexperienced	Has some experience	Is an expert
Poorly informed (%)	81.3	12.3	6.5
Moderately well-informed (%)	20.4	59.2	20.4
Well-informed (%)	5.6	10.7	83.7

Table 4: Cross-tabulation of variables of age groups with respect to knowledge about the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption

Generation	Knowledge about the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption (%)		
	Knows very little	Knows a moderate amount	Knows very much
Baby boomers (%)	30	12	58
Generation X (%)	20.2	16.3	63.5
Generation Y (%)	20.3	21.1	58.6
Generation Z (%)	30.1	25.8	44.1

Table 5: Comparison of experience concerning the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption between different age groups

Generation	Is inexperienced (%)	Has some experience (%)	Is an expert (%)
Baby boomers (%)	37.0	13.0	50.0
Generation X (%)	24.0	21.7	54.3
Generation Y (%)	23.3	23.3	53.4
Generation Z (%)	42.6	22.4	35.0



We also checked which option best describes their preferences when it comes to the purchase of clothes. The respondents had five options to choose from:

• **Option 1**

The latest fashion trends, as offered by large clothing chains, which often change their store assortments (daily, weekly). Design is important, quality is diverse and the origin of the material is not a key factor. Women who shop there often leave a store with many pieces that they wear only a few times or even never (e.g., H&M, Zara, Reserved, C&A, Orsay and Takko).

• **Option 2**

Clothes offered in smaller shops and boutiques located near the customer's place of residence or employment, or in smaller e-shops that are not widely known. They have a relatively stable and sufficient selection of goods that does not change too frequently. They offer reasonable quality (e.g., Icona, Anna and Broadway).

• **Option 3**

Clothes in second-hand shops, bazaars and/or online platforms. The clothes are of basic quality; have previously been worn by someone else or the clothes on offer are completely new and unworn but belong to previous years' collections. The clothes are offered at a lower price (e.g., Humana, Dajadaja, Krama and Moja tvoja omara).

• **Option 4**

Clothes designed and/or made by local designers or manufacturers. The pieces are timeless and classic, and do not go out of fashion quickly. The quality and origin of the material are very important in this case (e.g., BooPacks, Wearelena, Goodwill, Ihavenofocus, Oblak and By Andraž).

• **Options 5**

Second-hand and/or upcycled clothes that are exceptional, authentic, original and made of natural and ecological materials. The clothes were previously worn, but nevertheless are and appear in very good condition. Not only can those clothes be bought, they can also be rented (e.g., Krinolina, Sanjska obleka, Maja's closet, Naturaland, Terrasleep and Bombažek).

Analysis shows that most respondents (55.6%) still purchase clothes in large fashion clothing chains, where fashion trends change rapidly. In second place (30.3%), respondents placed smaller shops and boutiques located near their place of residence or employment. The other three options combined account for less than 15% (second-hand shops, local stores with classic clothes, rental stores, etc.).

We cross-tabulated the data to determine whether there were significant differences in shopping behaviour between groups of respondents who thought they knew a lot about the environmental impact of clothing and those who knew little or nothing about it.

As evident from Table 7, no one from the groups that know nothing or little about the environmental impact of clothing in the Option 5 group buys second-hand clothing or clothing made from organic materials. Only those who know a lot about the impact buy such clothing. A statistically significant difference was found at a Chi-square of 29.1 and  $p = 0.01$  (the zeros in the table have been treated with some caution in the statistical calculation).

Similarly, the purchasing behaviour of groups who identify themselves as experts regarding the environmental impact of clothing is only slightly less pronounced. Those who deem themselves as novices do not buy clothes in the way described in Option 5. Experts, however, stand out again, as can be seen in Table 8.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics on respondents' preferences on where to purchase clothes

Options		Frequency	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)
Valid	Option 1	281	55.6	55.6
	Option 2	153	30.3	85.9
	Option 3	35	6.9	92.8
	Option 4	21	4.2	97
	Option 5	15	3	100
	Total	505	100	

Table 7: Chi-Square tests on the question “Which one of the following options best describes your preferences when it comes to the purchase of clothes?”

Knowledge about the environmental impact of clothing production and consumption	Option that best describes preference (%)				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Knows very little (%)	29.9	21.6	20	9.5	0
Knows a moderate amount (%)	22.8	18.3	8.6	14.3	0
Knows very much (%)	47.3	60.1	71.4	76.2	100

Table 8: Cross-tabulation on the question “Which one of the following options best describes your preferences when it comes to the purchase of clothes?” (the second option from “I am a novice” to “I am an expert”)

How identify themselves as experts on the environmental impact of clothing	Option that best describes preference (%)				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Is a novice (%)	37.4	28.8	20.0	19.0	0.0
Has some experience (%)	21.4	22.2	11.4	19.0	13.3
Is an expert (%)	41.3	49.0	68.6	61.9	86.7

A statistically significant difference was found at a Chi-square of 24.0 and  $p = 0.01$  (the zeros in the table have been treated with some caution in the statistical calculation).

We also tested the hypothesis of whether demographic characteristics influence purchase behaviour. In the first case, we crossed age groups data with purchasing behaviour.

Second-hand and/or recycled clothing is increasingly popular among baby boomers. The data shown in Table 9 give us statistically significant differences at a Chi-square of 29.2 and  $p = 0.01$ . We can confirm thus our hypothesis about various age groups' purchasing behaviour.

However, in the case of crosses between single and married people, there is no difference in purchasing habits, as shown in Table 10, so we must reject the hypothesis.

Similarly, there is no statistically significant difference between urban and rural residents, as shown in Table 11.

We also checked whether purchasing behaviour differs according to household income. We took a threshold of 2,000 euros per month and divided the respondents into those who have an income below this threshold and those who have an income above this threshold. In this case, as shown in Table 12, we conclude that there are no statistically significant differences, so we must reject the hypothesis.

Table 9: Preferences of different age groups and purchasing clothing options

Generation	Option that best describes preference (%)				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Baby boomers (%)	40	42	8	3	7
Generation X (%)	47.3	35.7	7	7.8	2.3
Generation Y (%)	58.6	25.6	8.3	4.5	3
Generation Z (%)	71.3	21.7	4.9	1.4	0.7

Table 10: Comparison of marital status in relation to consumers' purchasing behaviour

Status	Option that best describes preference (%)				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Single (%)	2.4	29.3	56.6	3.9	7.8
Married (%)	5.3	31	55	2.3	6.3



Table 11: Comparison of purchasing behaviour of residents

Residence	Option that best describes preference (%)				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Rural (%)	5.1	26.4	59.1	3.7	5.7
Urban (%)	2.9	35.9	50.7	1.9	8.6

Table 12: Purchasing behaviour in relation to household income

Household income (EUR)	Option that best describes preference (%)				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
2,000 or less (%)	3.6	32.5	52.6	3.2	8
more than 2,000 (%)	4.9	27.3	56.6	3.5	7.7
N/A (%)	4.4	29.2	61.1	1.8	3.5

## 4 Discussion

Consumer behaviour explains why people choose to spend their money, time and effort on the products that companies are trying to sell them [6]. In our contemporary environment, such decisions are increasingly influenced by product sustainability. Consumer behaviour and environmental protection are closely related [31].

However, there has been noted a rise in public awareness of the harmful consequences of senseless clothing production and consumption [14]. Our study clearly highlighted, *inter alia*, the issue of awareness and knowledge about sustainability, which is necessary to change consumer behaviour. The issue has not yet been addressed in this dimension in Slovenia. The results show that respondents generally believe they are knowledgeable about the impact of clothing production and consumption. Moreover, they assessed that they are mostly well-informed and mostly consider themselves experts. Nevertheless, respondents gave themselves the highest scores when assessing their options on a scale from “I know very little” to “I know very much”, and the lowest when assessing themselves as “I am a novice” and “I am an expert. The results were at a relatively high level for both formulations. Additionally, we examined preferences in terms of purchasing clothes. The number of fast-fashion stores has been increasing in Slovenia [2]. Our study clearly shows that women’s consumption behaviour in Slovenia is based on short-term decision making. Slovenian women prefer to buy a large amount of cheap clothes in large clothing chains,

which has long-term negative consequences on the environment.

Furthermore, more detailed analyses were conducted for a more in-depth understanding of clothing purchasing preferences as they relate to knowledge, generations, material status, living environment and household income. In short, below are a few of the main findings. The group that buys second-hand clothing or clothing made with organic materials assessed themselves as knowing a lot about environmental impacts. Second-hand and/or recycled clothing stores are the most popular among baby boomers. In the case of crosses between single and married people, and rural and urban respondents, there is no difference in purchasing behaviour.

## 5 Conclusion

During the 21st century, we have witnessed an increase in discussions regarding the importance of sustainable growth. The clothing industry has a significant and detrimental impact on the environment. Globalization has widened the industry’s boundaries. Sustainability is undoubtedly one of the factors that influences consumer behaviour. This study investigated customers’ awareness and knowledge concerning the purchasing of clothing in Slovenia. Despite widespread knowledge, there is an urgent need for more education and information-sharing regarding the importance of sustainability in daily life. There are numerous opportunities today to promote sustainability. One is certainly through education [18], another through advertising [31]. The

study also examined the contemporary consumption of clothing as it relates to different store types, generations, material statuses, living environments, and household income levels.

Overall, the results of these studies provide a better understanding of Slovenian women's perception of awareness of clothing sustainability and various related factors, as well as difference and similarities related to different demographics.

Despite the fact that this study has made contributions to understanding the issue in question, there are many opportunities for future research. In the study, we limited ourselves to studying Slovenian women's behaviour in purchasing clothing. Moreover, we analysed knowledge and customer preferences using selected demographic segmentation. Future studies should pay greater attention to the motivational elements that influence clothing consumption and gauge how to change behaviour toward more environmentally friendly clothing purchasing and consumption.

It is nevertheless evident that the trend of sustainable fashion is here to stay, despite the powerful and lingering fast-fashion trend. We strongly believe that more studies should be conducted on consumer sustainability behaviour in terms of consumer awareness linked to fostering attitudes and the willingness to buy sustainable clothes.

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