

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY AS PERCEIVED BY CONSUMERS – A CASE STUDY OF CLOTHING BRANDS

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Purpose: Competing for a limited number of socially conscious consumers and the appearance of new generations on the market forces a continuous addition of knowledge concerning pro-environmental and pro-social consumer attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, the present study attempts to: - identify the type of actions taken within the framework of sustainable development by selected clothing brands, - assess the pro-environmental and pro-social attitudes of young consumers purchasing clothing, - determine whether environmental and social aspects are a criterion for clothing choice among young consumers.

Design/methodology/approach: Two approaches were used in the research. In the first stage of the research, messages posted on the websites of selected clothing brands were analysed. In the second, a quantitative study was conducted among young consumers (n = 218) by indirect online survey measurement, using a survey questionnaire embedded in a Google form.

Findings: Young consumers present positive pro-environmental and pro-social attitudes. According to the respondents, the social commitment of companies influences the positive image and popularity of their products. However, almost half of all consumers presented an ambivalent or negative attitude towards paying more for the purchase of goods whose producers are involved in philanthropic and pro-environmental activities. This suggests that, in the view of this segment of respondents, it is the traders who should take financial responsibility for their actions by not raising the prices of the products they sell. Concern for others by purchasing socially committed brands and the environmental friendliness of the product were shown to rank lower in the hierarchy of clothing choice factors.

Research limitations: The research was conducted on a narrow subject basis, so the results obtained cannot be generalised to the young consumer segment. The scope of the presented research is also limited. The results of the research should be regarded as a pilot study.

Practical implications: The findings are of relevance to managers in charge of sustainability campaigns for clothing brands. They point to the need for further education aimed at shaping altruistic and pro-environmental attitudes.

Originality/value: This study highlights that sustainability encompasses a range of activities with different ways of communicating values to consumers.

Keywords: sustainability, consumer, pro-environmental attitudes, pro-social attitudes, behavior.

Category of the paper: marketing research.

1. Introduction

The growing problem arising from environmental deterioration and social and economic progression has obliged companies to implement sustainable development. Its key issue is to increase environmental benefits while maintaining economic growth (Azizi et al., 2016; Nathaniel et al., 2021; Ruan et al., 2022). The manufacturing sector is most responsible for carbon emissions and climate change, among other things. Nowadays, contractors are paying more and more attention to environmental protection, which has made companies more aware of the benefits of applying green solutions to the organisation's internal management process (Dou et al., 2021; Ren et al., 2021; Farah et al., 2021; Ren et al., 2022). In addition, the deepening global financial crises in recent years, mainly as a result of pandemics, have meant that some business models and industries may struggle to survive. This has caused companies to reinvest in sustainability (Dhanda, Shroitryia, 2021).

A definition of sustainability was developed by the World Commission on Environmental Development, according to which it is development aimed at meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environmental Development, 1987, p. 41). This has given rise to many different concepts such as sustainability management, sustainable innovation, sustainable entrepreneurship or corporate sustainability at the organisational level (Dyllick, Hockerts, 2002; Schaltegger, Wagner, 2011). According to Bocken et al. (2014), eight standards can be used to develop a business model for sustainability. These include maximising material and energy efficiency, utilising waste, substituting renewable energy sources and natural processes, emphasising the functionality of products and services, taking a leadership role, encouraging sufficiency, repurposing business for society and the environment, and developing scaled solutions. Oskam et al. (2018) pointed out that the role of the manager has an important tide in the process of changing a business model to a sustainable one, and according to Kurucz et al. (2017), relational leadership processes help organisations to implement their sustainability ideas.

Companies often invest in sustainability for charitable reasons or to protect their income. In particular, corporate social responsibility (CSR) facilitates a company's competitive positioning (as a result of generating reputational capital that can be used as a bargaining chip to negotiate more favourable commercial agreements), increase customer satisfaction and thereby retain customers. In addition, CSR can facilitate access to new capital and financial

opportunities or cost-cutting options by mitigating risk and having a positive impact on employee productivity and morale. As a company's operations affect its counterparties, it needs to meet their needs in order to fulfil its obligations. For this to happen, CSR initiatives must be integrated into corporate decisions and resource allocation (Genedy, Sakr, 2017; Gamal et al. 2022). Due to constant technological change, companies need to make strategic decisions to maintain their competitive position and optimise investments in CSR as well as sustainability initiatives. This depends primarily on the availability of resources in the industry as well as the phase of the company's life cycle. Consequently, a company's actions must take into account the social and environmental background. This is required for long-term profitability, determined by the CSR activities and the life cycle phase of the company. Therefore, the life cycle of a company is characterised by a set of internal and external factors that must be taken into account at each stage (Elsayed 2015; Hasan et al., 2018; Wahba, Elsayed, 2015).

The area of CSR is of academic interest to many national and international academic centres. The literature emphasises that CSR improves corporate image, fosters positive brand attitudes and enhances customer loyalty therefore it is used by many brands across product categories. Competing for a limited number of socially conscious consumers and the emergence of new generations on the market necessitate the continuous addition of knowledge regarding consumers' perception of CSR activities. These findings are relevant for managers in charge of sustainability campaigns.

In the context of the issues presented, this paper attempts to:

- identify the type of sustainable development activities undertaken by selected clothing brands,
- assess the pro-environmental and pro-social attitudes of young consumers purchasing clothes,
- determine whether environmental and social aspects are a criterion for clothing choice among young consumers.

2. Subject and research methodology

The research was conducted in two stages. In the first stage of the research, messages posted on the websites of selected clothing brands (Zara, H&M, Reserved, Sinsay, Mohito, Cropp, House) were analysed from the point of view of their sustainability activities. In the second stage, a pilot study was conducted among young consumers purchasing the selected clothing brands (n = 218). A non-probabilistic sampling technique was used - convenience sampling. The research was conducted using an online indirect survey measurement method, using a survey questionnaire hosted on Google Form. The questionnaire consisted of two thematic blocks. The first part referred to the assessment of consumers' pro-environmental and pro-social

attitudes. The second part of the questionnaire referred to the selection criteria for clothing. The list of choice determinants used in the study was created on the basis of an analysis of the results of a previously conducted qualitative study, which used open-ended questions adapted from Green and Pelozo's (2011) study. In the research conducted, the respondent expressed their level of approval or disapproval, in relation to the statements posted using a 7-point Likert scale, with strong disagreement with the statement corresponding to a rating of 1 and strong agreement with it corresponding to a rating of 7.

The results were subjected to statistical analysis using Statistica 13.3 software. The following were used to interpret the results:

- central trend measures: arithmetic mean (\bar{x}), median (M), mode (Me),
- dispersion measure: standard deviation (SD),
- shape measure: skewness (S), kurtosis (K),
- percentage distribution of individual scores (% selected: N – negative, A – neutral/ambivalent, P – positive).

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Sustainability measures by selected clothing brands - case studies

In order to identify actions taken by clothing brands for sustainable development, the following brands were selected: Zara, H&M, LPP (Reserved, Sinsay, Mohito, Cropp, House).

It was found that the range of activities carried out by the selected brands as part of the implementation of their CSR strategy, is very broad. Brands build their positive image based on activities concerning consideration of social interests and environmental aspects.

The marketing communication of the Zara brand shows that it implements socially engaged marketing tools. It works to reduce the environmental impact of its products from the beginning of their life cycle. This is done through the successive monitoring of raw materials and the introduction of new sustainable production processes that guarantee safety for customers. The Join Life Standard created is based on the High Index, which helps to assess the social and environmental impact of the textile industry. Production is carried out through the use of technologies such as care for fibre, care for water and care for planet. The use of technologies from renewable energy sources enables the brand to introduce sustainable processes. Zara promotes the use of organic farming systems that protect the environment. The organic cotton used in the production of the clothes is obtained using sustainable cultivation techniques, which reduces water, gas emissions. The brand uses the Better Cotton label, which communicates the sustainability of cotton grown by farmers who have been certified by the

Better Cotton Initiative. Zara has implemented the Organic Content Standard (OCS) and the Global Content Standard (GOTS). This certification is issued by an organisation that teaches farmers to work with dignity, manage water and care for nature. Zara clothing is made from raw materials that come from sustainably managed forests (lyocell, viscose, modal). The production of lyocell is done in a closed loop, allowing water to be reused, while the production of viscose follows the EU BAT (Best Available Techniques) environmental standards set by the European Union, supporting the Roadmap Towards Responsible Viscose and Modal Fibre Manufacturing initiative implemented by Changing Markets. Zara collaborates in the textile sector with the organisation Conopy to jointly promote the production of artificial silk or viscose with respect for primary forests. Zara also uses recycled materials for its garments. It is a priority for Zara to use sustainable materials, to recycle them afterwards and to adopt practices that ensure animals live with dignity. Together with PETA, Zara has committed to not using angora wool, mohair. As members of the Fur Free Retailer programme implemented by the Fur Free Alliance, the brand does not use animal fur in its production. As part of its use of sustainable materials, the company uses recycled paper and cardboard for its packaging. The brand is committed to the safety and health of its customers. A list of Inditex-approved chemical products has been created to ensure the health safety of users. The idea of sustainable production is central to the company, which is why it is constantly training its teams and suppliers in raw materials and technology to minimise their environmental impact. In addition, the sustainable innovation hub initiative has been launched. This is a collaborative platform for identifying technological innovations in areas such as the re-use of raw materials, their traceability, their renewable origin and the development of new technologies to reduce water consumption, energy and the use of chemical products. In addition, the company is working with suppliers, employees, trade unions and international bodies to develop a supply chain in which human rights are respected and promoted, contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

An analysis of the information on H&M's website shows that the brand is committed to the idea of conscious, whereby products are made with respect for society and the planet. Conscious clothing is made up of at least half of environmentally friendly materials, such as organic cotton or recycled polyester. As part of the idea, customers can bring in unused clothes and exchange them for conscious points, which are exchanged for discounts on purchases made in the H&M shop. The cotton used by H&M is natural, renewable and biodegradable. Organic cotton requires 62% less energy and 91% less water than conventional cotton and is GMO-free. The use of recycled cotton reduces textile waste and the amount of virgin raw materials used. It also uses cotton sourced through the Better Cotton Initiative programme, which reduces the use of artificial fertilisers and cares for workers. H&M wants to help customers in the process of making informed purchasing choices by demonstrating the environmental impact of products and materials. The Higg Index Sustainability Profile programme has been launched. The brand is improving its work to develop more sustainable production, delivery and packaging methods.

The company provides training to employees on how to minimise water consumption. H&M uses Screened Chemistry, which allows the use of sustainable chemicals, thereby reducing harmful substances right from the design stage. The brand only uses biodegradable packaging. Sustainable environmental efforts also extend to transport. H&M has adopted the Maersk initiative, which is responsible for inventing a 'carbon-neutral ocean product', a biofuel blend to replace fossil fuel and reduce emissions from shipping.

The brand is keen to ensure that all workers involved in the production of clothing have safety, equal opportunities, decent working conditions. A supplier wishing to work with the brand must sign a Sustainability Commitment, according to which fair wages, decent working conditions, respect for animals are to be respected. Suppliers must adhere to strict rules prohibiting forced labour and child labour.

An analysis of the messages posted on the website of the Polish clothing manufacturer LPP, which manages brands such as Reserved, Mohito, House, Cropp and Sinsay, showed that the company meets the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030. The company implements new solutions from the collection design stage, through the selection of raw materials, cooperation with suppliers, logistics, to pro-environmental solutions in showrooms and e-commerce channels. In addition, it pursues pro-environmental goals regarding the management of daily office operations. LPP has developed a proprietary Eco Aware Production programme, focusing on supporting suppliers in implementing best practices to reduce the consumption of natural resources. LPP is the first Polish company to join the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) Agreement, which strives for chemical safety in clothing production. By 2025, LPP is to significantly reduce energy consumption in its stationary shops, and green energy is to be used to operate its online shops. The company is also taking action on social issues as part of its sustainable development. The company raises the qualifications of its employees and supports employee volunteering, takes care to respect human rights, employee rights and supplier safety. LPP implements the idea of sustainable development among consumers by promoting responsible consumption. The collection of second-hand clothing, which is donated to the needy, allows the company to fulfil its social mission and reduce its environmental impact.

The clothing industry is one of the sectors that has a significant negative impact on the environment and is the most challenging industry in terms of sustainability. Although sustainability requires companies to have a positive impact on the environment and society and not only focus on economic performance, the environmental aspect is usually the most analysed in the literature (Bernardi et al., 2022). According to available research, there is a strong link between sustainability and innovation. Sustainability requires new ways of thinking, new products, processes and business models aimed at achieving economic, social and environmental benefits while ensuring that meeting today's needs does not limit the range of economic, social and environmental opportunities available for future generations. When it comes to sustainable innovation, the textile industry is a good research context, as it is one of

the most complex and least researched sectors (Scuotto et al., 2020; Macchion et al., 2017). Although sustainability is mainly analysed by looking at the environmental performance generated by companies, it is a complex and multidimensional concept that includes social and economic aspects, as summarised in the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). This means that a sustainable enterprise makes choices to reduce the environmental impact of its production activities, to rationalise its production processes, to reduce waste, and to design and produce items that, due to the raw materials and production processes used, do not have an unduly negative impact on the environment. However, a sustainable company is one that also respects the health and rights of workers and consumers and creates transparent links with the communities concerned (Tartaglione et al., 2012). The need for more sustainable production in the garment industry emerged in the 1960s, when consumers began to be aware of the environmental impact of garment production (Jung, Jin, 2014), but became more important after the Rana Plaza factory accident. Its collapse in Bangladesh in 2013 led to the deaths of more than 1,000 people and heightened interest in sustainability and ethics in the garment textile industry, mainly focusing on increasing supply chain control and transparency throughout the production process (Jung, Jin, 2014). For the textile industry, characterised by outsourcing and relocation, the concept of sustainability should start with improving working conditions (Da Giau et al., 2016). The literature still lacks comprehensive research results on the implementation of sustainability concepts and CSR in the apparel industry (Bernardi et al., 2022; Pavione et al., 2016). Also, when it comes to developing sustainable innovations, the textile industry is among the most challenging and least addressed industries (Macchion et al., 2017). The clothing industry is characterised by high demand uncertainty and constant fluctuations in consumer expectations and trends. Consequently, process innovation is key to gaining a significant foothold in the industry by creating an agile supply chain capable of responding to changes in consumer needs (Jin et al., 2019).

3.2. Pro-environmental and pro-social attitudes and behavior – consumer research

Table 1 presents results relating to pro-environmental and pro-social attitudes of young consumers purchasing clothing brands, i.e. (Zara, H&M, Reserved, Sinsay, Mohito, Cropp, House). Analysis of the measures of the shapes of the distributions of the obtained results showed that in all cases the values of skewness and kurtosis were within the range from -1 to 1. This suggests that the distributions of the variables did not deviate significantly from the normal distribution. The distributions of the data were approximately symmetrical or moderately skewed. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations (in addition to the median) are therefore reasonably relevant for interpreting the data obtained. The study found that the vast majority of young consumers (approximately 75%) are sensitive to environmental and ethical issues (mean scores were at levels of respectively: 6.51, M = 6, Mo = 6 and 6.18, M = 6, Mo = 6). An overwhelming majority of respondents believed (c. 84%) that companies should engage pro-environmentally and socially (M = 6, Mo = 6). According to the majority of

respondents (c. 84%), the social involvement of companies influences the positive image and popularity of their products. Furthermore, in the opinion of respondents, companies should clearly communicate to consumers that they participate in social and environmental initiatives (mean score was 6.19, M = 6, Mo = 6). When analysing the pro-environmental behaviour of young consumers, it was noted that 79% of respondents try to choose environmentally friendly clothing. Approximately 76% of respondents, by buying products whose manufacturers support social initiatives, feel that they are socially responsible, care about the environment and contribute to helping others. In turn, about 57% of consumers take social information into account when buying clothes and about 60% buy fair trade products, the production of which ensures decent working and pay conditions. The research showed that just over half of the total respondents (53%) are willing to pay a higher price for clothing brands involved in philanthropic (mean score 5.92, M = 5, Mo = 5) and pro-environmental activities (mean score 5.76, M = 5, Mo = 6).

Table 1.

Pro environmental and prosocial attitudes of young consumers

Variables	X	SD	M	Mo	S	K	Percentage of responses		
							N	A	P
I am sensitive to environmental issues	6,51	1,62	6	6	0,52	-0,75	14,79	9,21	76,00
I think of myself as someone who is concerned about ethical issues	6,18	1,81	6	6	0,65	-0,89	12,46	12,44	75,10
The actions of environmentally committed businesses are important to me	6,25	1,79	5	5	0,65	-0,54	19,83	13,82	66,35
I value the products of brands that engage in social campaigns	6,12	1,59	6	6	-0,01	-0,96	11,07	12,90	76,03
I believe that businesses should engage in pro-environmental and philanthropic activities	6,51	1,44	6	6	0,55	-0,60	8,31	7,83	83,86
In my opinion, the involvement of brands in philanthropic and pro-environmental campaigns should be a more frequent phenomenon	6,69	1,90	6	6	0,99	0,69	7,84	11,06	81,10
I believe that social involvement of companies influences the positive image and popularity of their products	6,67	1,55	6	6	0,55	-0,60	8,77	6,91	84,32
I think that companies/brands should clearly communicate to consumers that they participate in social and environmental initiatives	6,19	1,88	6	6	0,10	-0,90	11,07	8,75	80,18
I try to choose clothes that are environmentally friendly	6,04	1,83	6	6	0,24	-0,90	12,46	8,75	78,79
When buying clothes, I take into account product information on social issues	5,41	1,79	5	5	0,15	-0,98	31,35	11,52	57,13

Cont. table 1.

By buying products whose producers support social initiatives, I feel socially responsible, care about the environment, and contribute to helping others	5,61	1,48	5	5	0,88	-0,36	14,22	9,67	76,02
I buy fair trade products, where fair working and pay conditions are guaranteed	5,03	1,68	5	5	0,73	-0,46	14,76	24,88	60,36
I am prepared to pay a premium price for goods whose producers are involved in philanthropic activities	5,92	1,92	5	5	0,88	-0,36	25,37	22,11	52,53
I am prepared to pay a premium price for goods whose producers are involved in environmental activities	5,76	1,98	5	5	0,21	-0,94	23,94	20,73	55,28

x – arithmetic mean, M – median, Mo – mode, SD – standard deviation, S – skewness, K – kurtosis, N – negative responses, A – neutral/ambivalent responses, P – positive responses.

Source: own research results.

Data published in the literature shows that CRM activities result in consumers having a more positive attitude towards a company, being more likely to purchase its products and, therefore, making the company more profitable (Robinson et al., 2012; Qamar 2013). A published report by Nielsen Global Research (2014) found that more than half (55%) of consumers surveyed worldwide were willing to pay extra for a company's products and services if it was socially and environmentally committed. As a result, 4900 companies located in 49 countries worldwide (KPMG, 2017) participate in corporate social responsibility, publishing reports that reveal their social responsibility activities towards society at large.

Research on the socially engaged consumer has shown the importance of psychographic characteristics in profiling CRM advocates. Consumer attitudes towards engagement marketing activities were found to be significantly related to feelings of personal and social responsibility (Youn, Kim, 2008). Furthermore, the literature suggests that a significant moderator of CRM effectiveness is consumers' altruistic attitudes (Vlachos, 2012). In the context of CRM, altruism is considered a key factor in encouraging consumers to support social causes and become socially responsible members of society (Adomaviciute et al., 2016). In studies, altruism has been proven to influence consumers' attitudes towards a socially engaged company and to strengthen emotional attachment to CRM campaigns. It has been found that when consumers have a positive attitude towards a brand that implements CRM, they show a high intention to purchase it, and the relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention becomes stronger the more consumers are involved in social initiatives (Patel et al., 2017). It has also been found (Gupta, Pirsch, 2006) that when consumers perceive a brand's altruistic motivation to unify with a social initiative, their willingness to support it becomes much stronger, and this in turn allows consumers to adopt positive attitudes towards the sponsoring brand. Research among Polish consumers shows that women are more in favour of social issues than men.

Consumers, especially young consumers, show strong anxiety towards social issues. Consumers prefer to support activities related to helping children (Witek, 2015).

Table 2 evaluates the factors that are important when young consumers choose clothing. Analysing obtained results, it was found that for the young consumer (about 94% of the respondents), the functional value related to quality is the most important factor when purchasing clothing (mean score 6.67, M = 7, Mo = 7). Price (mean score 6.54, M = 6, Mo = 6) and promotion (mean score 6.17, M = 6, Mo = 6) also rank high in the hierarchy of factors. Branding and fashion/trend are important to around 72% of respondents. Slightly more than half of the respondents (about 58% of indications) pay attention to whether the products they purchase are environmentally friendly (mean score 5.25, M = 5, Mo = 5). When analysing social value as a criterion for product selection, it was found that the producer's involvement in charitable activities is only important for about 38% of consumers when purchasing food products.

Table 2.

Consumer assessment of values relevant to clothing choice

Variables	X	SD	M	Mo	S	K	Percentage of responses		
							N	A	P
Quality	6,67	1,02	7	7	0,18	0,54	2,30	3,22	94,48
Price	6,54	1,07	6	6	0,22	0,58	6,90	2,76	90,34
Promotion	6,17	1,53	6	6	0,37	-0,63	9,20	6,45	84,35
Brand	5,94	1,34	5	5	-0,44	-0,94	18,42	9,21	72,37
Fashion/trends	5,53	1,44	5	5	-0,48	-0,87	18,88	8,75	72,37
Country of origin	5,24	1,59	5	5	0,16	-0,92	32,22	13,36	54,42
Product composition	5,77	1,15	5	5	-0,13	-0,86	21,20	10,42	68,38
Environmentally friendly product	5,25	1,34	5	5	-0,71	-0,52	23,80	18,43	57,77
The manufacturer's commitment to charity	4,01	1,66	3	3	-0,97	-0,28	49,15	12,35	38,50

x – arithmetic mean, M – median, Mo – mode, SD – standard deviation, S – skewness, K – kurtosis, N – negative responses, A – neutral/ambivalent responses, P – positive responses.

Source: own research results.

The clothing industry is one of the sectors that has a significant negative impact on the environment and is the most challenging industry in terms of sustainability. Although sustainability requires companies to have a positive impact on the environment and society and not only focus on economic performance, the environmental aspect is usually the most analysed in the literature (Bernardi et al., 2022). According to available research, there is a strong link between sustainability and innovation. Sustainability requires new ways of thinking, new products, processes and business models aimed at achieving economic, social and environmental benefits while ensuring that meeting today's needs does not limit the range of economic, social and environmental opportunities available for future generations. When it comes to sustainable innovation, the textile industry is a good research context, as it is one of the most complex and least researched sectors (Scuotto et al., 2020; Macchion et al., 2017).

Although sustainability is mainly analysed by looking at the environmental performance generated by companies, it is a complex and multidimensional concept that includes social and economic aspects, as summarised in the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). This means that a sustainable enterprise makes choices to reduce the environmental impact of its production activities, to rationalise its production processes, to reduce waste, and to design and produce items that, due to the raw materials and production processes used, do not have an unduly negative impact on the environment. However, a sustainable company is one that also respects the health and rights of workers and consumers and creates transparent links with the communities concerned (Tartaglione et al., 2012). The need for more sustainable production in the garment industry emerged in the 1960s, when consumers began to be aware of the environmental impact of garment production (Jung, Jin, 2014), but became more important after the Rana Plaza factory accident. Its collapse in Bangladesh in 2013 led to the deaths of more than 1,000 people and heightened interest in sustainability and ethics in the garment textile industry, mainly focusing on increasing supply chain control and transparency throughout the production process (Jung, Jin, 2014). For the textile industry, characterised by outsourcing and relocation, the concept of sustainability should start with improving working conditions (Da Giau et al., 2016). The literature still lacks comprehensive research results on the implementation of sustainability concepts and CSR in the apparel industry (Bernardi et al., 2022; Pavione et al., 2016). Also, when it comes to developing sustainable innovations, the textile industry is among the most challenging and least addressed industries (Macchion et al., 2017). The clothing industry is characterised by high demand uncertainty and constant fluctuations in consumer expectations and trends. Consequently, process innovation is key to gaining a significant foothold in the industry by creating an agile supply chain capable of responding to changes in consumer needs (Jin et al., 2019).

Conclusions

With global brands spreading their innovative solutions in the business world, sustainable practices are becoming a reality and more consumers should pay attention to the social and environmental aspects of their activities. The study found that young consumers have positive pro-environmental and pro-social attitudes. In the opinion of the overwhelming majority of respondents, the social involvement of companies influences the positive image and popularity of their products. Nevertheless, almost half of the total number of consumers presented an ambivalent or negative attitude towards incurring higher costs for purchasing goods whose producers are involved in philanthropic and pro-environmental activities. This suggests that, in the view of this segment of respondents, it is the producers who should take financial responsibility for their actions by not raising the prices of the offered products.

The results of the survey indicate that concern for others by purchasing socially committed brands and the environmental friendliness of the product have lower rankings in the hierarchy of other clothing choice factors, especially functional values. This indicates that these values are secondary benefits in the decision-making process of young consumers.

The study presented here has some limitations. The research was conducted on a narrow subject basis, so the results obtained cannot be generalised to the segment of young consumers. The scope of the presented research is also limited. Further research is needed to establish the profile of the socially responsible consumer, taking into account psychographic characteristics and features resulting from the social structure. Future research would also need to establish the relationship between consumers' attitudes towards sustainability and their actual behaviour.

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