SUSTAINABLE FASHION INDUSTRY

Why do we need a switch towards conscious consumption?

Abstract

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Sustainable Fashion Industry Why do we need a switch towards conscious consumption?

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Abstract
Notoriously, fashion industry is one of the major polluters to the environment, and it is also among the leading industries contributing to the modern slavery. Fashion industry and fast fashion system in particular are associated with numerous environmental and social problems. Large amounts of CO_2 emissions, water contamination, landfills of disposed garments, violation of human rights, child labor, working conditions dangerous for health and lives of people involved in manufacturing, extremely low wages… However, the level of consumerism is higher whenever before, and production increases in order to meet the demand. Negative impacts to the environments cannot be excused with positive socioeconomic influences on the society. Fashion industry cannot exist and develop without environmental protection. Executives within fashion industry cannot justify working conditions existing in developed countries with workplaces they give to people there. It is important to speak about existing problems resulting from fashion and textile industries and to raise people awareness on them. Consumer demand is strong and powerful possessing the ability to bring changes to the environment, societies, and economies. Thus, conscious consumption is crucial and able to contribute in achievement of sustainability within fashion industry. For this thesis an inductive research is applied. Secondary data collection involves data from books, articles, studies and other reliable online sources. Primary data collection relates to quantitative data collection method (online survey). This thesis is a combination of literature review and the research. It also includes Garment Lifecycle Assessment, Risk response strategies and Buyer Behavior Model.

CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Thesis background

Nowadays, fashion industry is more often becomes a point of discussions and criticism. Meanwhile, the reason for this lies not in the embodiment of fashion designers` ideas and inspirations, but in the way, they realize them and in those impacts fashion and textile industries cause to the environment and society. The current fashion system, that is known as fast fashion, causes consequences pertaining to each of a human being worldwide. It is a cause of environment contamination, deterioration of peoples` health and well-being, it is an essential of globalization both cultural and economic. Fast fashion is also one of reasons for gap between global poverty and richness. While some people in pursuit of trends throw away their clothes several times in a year and purchase the new ones, others are employed in production of these clothes and are paid low wages for hard work they do. (Brooks 2015, 7)

> *Cheap fashion is really far from that, it may be cheap in terms of the financial cost, but very expensive when it comes to the environment and the cost of human life. (Brown 2010 as cited in Comovita 2018.)*

Fast fashion is a system contravening the ethical principles. It is associated with long hours of particularly dangerous and low paid work of people who are born and living in countries with developing economies (such as those located in Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa, and South America), those people are compelled to do their work in conditions completely dangerous for their health, safety and lives. People from developed countries appreciate brands offering to them a large variety of clothes for low prices, but not much of them ask themselves what stands behind this cheapness? Unfortunately, the truth is usually hidden, so people keep shopping and supporting with their money unfair working conditions, child labor, enforced labor, animal abuse, pernicious impacts to the environment, and reduction of natural resources. (Hann & Wang 2016)

Fashion is such an industry in which the increase of consumerism and volumes of production to meet the demand are so enormous comparing to those which were in the past, that they cannot and should not be ignored. In year 2018, people were purchasing clothes 60% more than they did in 2000. Approximately 20 garments per person are being produced each year. Considering the fact, that in 2019 Earth population accounted to more than 7.7 billion people, the number of clothes manufactured every year impresses and

terrifies. Prices for clothes are growing the way slower in comparison with other consumer goods. In this way, taking into account all the circumstances, utilization of resources is estimated to be tripled by the year 2050 comparing to consumption of them in 2000. Fashion is considered as the leading industry in case of pollution, with 1.2 billion tons of CO_2 emissions produced every year, this number is higher than those amounts of emissions caused by both air and maritime transport. Furthermore, the industry`s greenhouse gas emissions currently makes up a nearly 5% of all the emissions globally. Overall, approximately 60% of total garments produced are being displaced on a landfill or incinerated, with less than 1% of all materials used for garments production being recycled. (Nature Climate Change 2018)

1.2   Thesis objectives, research questions and limitations

The objective of this thesis project is examining the existing problems (environmental and social) which occur because of fashion and textile industries and fast fashion system, observing the role of consumers in them, as well as the factors having an influence on consumer behavior, defining what conscious consumption is and why it is important, as well as observing by the means of research if people presently are aware on impacts the industry of fashion has on the environment and society and if they adhere (and act) for conscious consumption. The main research question is defined in the following way:

> *What challenges of a fashion industry exist nowadays and need to be solved urgently and why conscious consumption is an essential solution?*

In order to answer the key research question, there were determined auxiliary sub-questions provided below:

- *What kind of problems fashion industry causes to the environment and society nowadays?*

- *Which factors affect consumer behavior and how opinion leaders influence the increase in consumerism?*

- *What is the determination of conscious consumption and why it is a crucial integral needed in order fashion industry can be considered as a sustainable one?*

- *Are people aware of current problems resulting from fashion industry and do they adhere to conscious consumption?*

This thesis research conducted by its author is limited with the number of survey participants, as the survey was published on Facebook (in author`s account and it was also spread among students and graduates of Lahti UAS (mostly International Business students)). Hence, it is possible to conclude that the survey is limited in such aspects as: gender of respondents (the majority of respondents are females), their occupation (the majority of respondents are university and/or college students), and age of respondents (mostly people of age from 18 to 29).

The research was conducted with the aim to discover if currently people are aware of environmental and social problems resulting from the industry of fashion and if they adhere to sustainable and conscious consumption. The author of this thesis also set such goals for the research as an overview of bloggers` roles in the increase of the consumption, and examination of people awareness on environmental and social impacts of fashion industry, as she supposes, that people mostly do not aware of the exiting challenges resulting from both fashion and relating to it textile industry. Overall, the need for switching towards conscious consumption within fashion industry is essential so this industry can be sustainable, and it is important to raise awareness of people, so with their knowledge it could be possible to achieve positive changes in this industry.

1.3   Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study encompasses four principal concepts that are: sustainability, consumer behavior, fast fashion, and conscious consumption. The first chapter involves introduction and description of this study. The second chapter of a study involves the information on the environmental and social problems resulting from fashion industry currently and particularly from fast fashion system which are observed with the aim to receive answers for the first sub-question of this study. The third chapter has a goal to examine factors influencing consumer behavior (with particularly observing the role of opinion leaders) and answer the second sub-question. The fourth chapter refers to sustainability within fashion industry and the importance of conscious consumption so it will be possible to respond the third sub-question. The fifth chapter dedicated to overview research findings and answer the last sub-question. The last chapter contains conclusions and the summary to this study, and its dedication is to state the purpose of a research question, as well as the importance of findings gained through theory and research.

1.4   Research methodology and data collection

This study is mostly a combination of research and literature review with all information is gathered from the reliable sources which are provided in the study, as well as in

references at the end of this thesis. Secondary data collection includes those data which were published in books, business and scientific studies, newspaper and magazine articles, and other online sources. Quantitative data collection method (online survey) was applied for primary data collection.

An inductive approach is applied to this thesis. Thesis process had it beginning from the moment its author gained enough background information from variable sources relating to the key research question and supporting sub-questions.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is composed of six chapters, that are determined as follows: introduction, problems resulting from fashion industry, consumer behavior, sustainability in fashion industry, research findings, and the following conclusions and summary. Below, an illustrated structure of this thesis is presented.
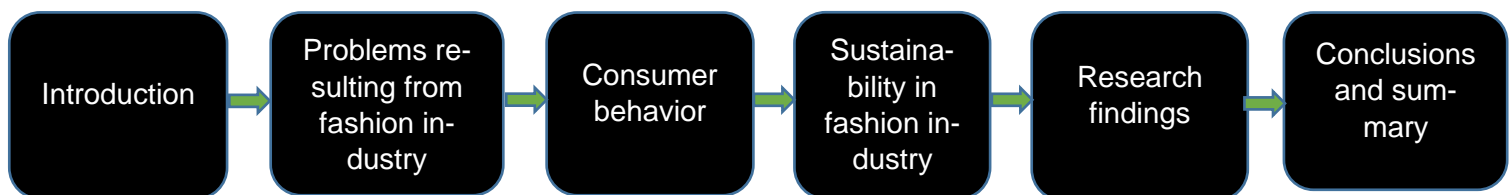
Introduction	→	Problems resulting from fashion industry	→	Consumer behavior	→	Sustainability in fashion industry	→	Research findings	→	Conclusions and summary

Figure 1 Structure of the thesis

2   PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM FASHION INDUSTRY

24th April 2013. This date once and for all went down in history as a terrifying tragedy for thousands of people and the biggest industrial disaster of all the time. On that day, Rana Plaza building (Bangladesh) collapsed. There were situated five manufacturing plants involved in production of clothes for the western market. Rana Plaza catastrophe claimed the lives of 1,138 people and injured 2,500 people. After this terrifying accident, a movement encompassing all the world and known as Fashion Revolution has emerged. (Fashion Revolution 2019, 4)

People from around the globe of all sexes, ages, nationalities, and professions are coming together with a common mission, that is to unite together people and companies from all over the world in order to jointly work on achieving the radical shift in the ways garments are being originated, manufactured, and consumed. Their vision is about fashion to be an industry which equally appreciates people, planet, profit, and creativity. (Fashion Revolution 2019)

People, planet, and prosperity, these 3P`s are actually the basement for sustainability which is crucial for both producers and consumers (Thread Channel 2015). The need for sustainability within the industry of fashion quite often is presented together with a specific example, that is a cotton t-shirt, due to it is an article of clothing which can be found in the majority of wardrobes globally.

Besides the prevalence of a simple cotton T-shirt, it`s cheapness is the factor for making it an example of unethical fashion (The Sydney Morning Herald 2016). Consideration and analyzation of all the stages involved in a t-shirt`s lifecycle (that is the way from cultivating of cotton till the produced cloth is purchased by its consumer) makes it obvious the presence of a discrepancy between the end-price of a product and the utilized resources. And what is more, it always should be remembered, that people who made this t-shirt need to be paid for their work. Below, there are few facts provided which sustain the statement that a cheap cotton t-shirt embodies unethicality of a fashion industry in a whole. They also will be mentioned together with other issues further in this chapter that is dedicated to observing the current challenges of a fashion industry from both points of view (that are environmental and social).

> If we see how much an American is paid, even at the lowest minimum wage of $8 an hour, if you convert that into Indian or Bangladeshi rupees, no one is paid that kind of money [in India or Bangladesh]. That's like a king's ransom already for the person overseas. They're paid, in our equivalency, maybe a dollar or 50 cents, not

even per T-shirt, but maybe per hour or per a few hours of work (Gopinath 2018 as cited in Brucculieri 2018).

The quote cited above belongs to Gita Gopinath who is a worldwide-known economist, Professor of International Studies and Economics in Harvard University, and one of directors (Research Department) at IMF (that is an International Monetary Fund) (IMFBlog Insights & Analysis of Economics & Finance 2019). And it is impossible to deny that her words are exactly correspond the existing reality. The gap between those who earn more and those who paid much less, is one of the most notable issue when we talk about social problems existing due to fashion industry and fast fashion system. This matter will be examined in more detail later in this study.

Furthermore, when we talk on the matter of a cotton and garments being produced from it, we should always keep in mind the most valuable resource without which our lives could not be even imagined. Surely, this is about water, which is crucial not only for our bodies, but also for cotton-made clothes we put on them. Thus, if we compare how much liters of water are needed to produce a single cotton t-shirt and that quantity we drink, we can see the following figures represented in a picture below:

It Takes 2,700 Liters of Water to Make One Cotton Shirt

2,700 liters
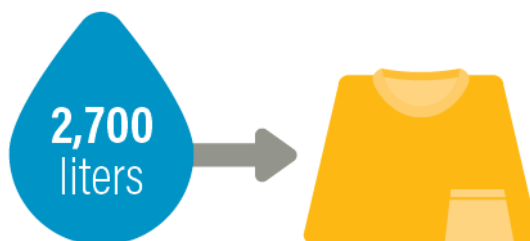
Enough Water for One Person to Drink for 2½ Years

2½ years
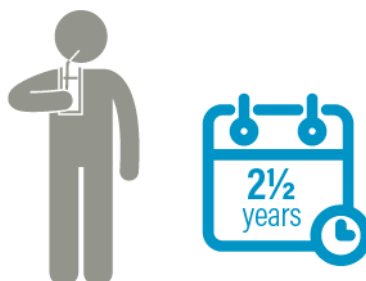
Source: National Geographic

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

Figure 2 The Environmental Impact of fashion industry (National Geographic as cited in Reichart & Drew 2019)

In this way, we see, that for production of one cotton shirt there is a need for that quantity of water, a person can consume in two and a half years (National Geographic as cited in Reichart & Drew 2019).

Though, some people can rightly note, that water is a renewable natural resource, this issue will be observed more in the sub-chapter below. Therefore, if we recognize the amount of those cotton t-shirts manufactured each year, we will realize, that the influence fashion industry and fast fashion have on the environment (as well as on the society) is catastrophic and need to be solved as soon as possible.

2.1   Environment

When going to a mass-market shop like Zara or H&M, we usually do not cogitate what route a product has done in order to achieve a store. Sometimes people just see the cheap price of a product and this fact of cheapness stimulates us to purchase. But what really stands behind this low-price cloth?

In order to examine environmental effects produced by the cloths and demonstrate the need for a sustainable fashion, a life-cycle assessment is applied. Analyzing the lifecycle of products and materials is crucial due to it contributes in realizing the influences of inputs (that is the raw materials recovery) and outputs (which are waste, and emissions caused by the product on the stages of production, consumption, and disposal). (Vezzoli & Manzini 2008 as cited in Payne 2011, 2)

A detailed lifecycle of a cotton t-shirt (presented in a figure below) includes stages from pre-production (fiber and textile production, and design) through production, distribution, retail to reaching the consumer. After the use phase there are several options of ending for garment`s lifecycle. Subsequently, a cloth can be recycled/downcycled/upcycled, re-used, disposed by a consumer, or it will be used for production of new garments. The stages will be examined further in this chapter with the impacts they have on the environment.
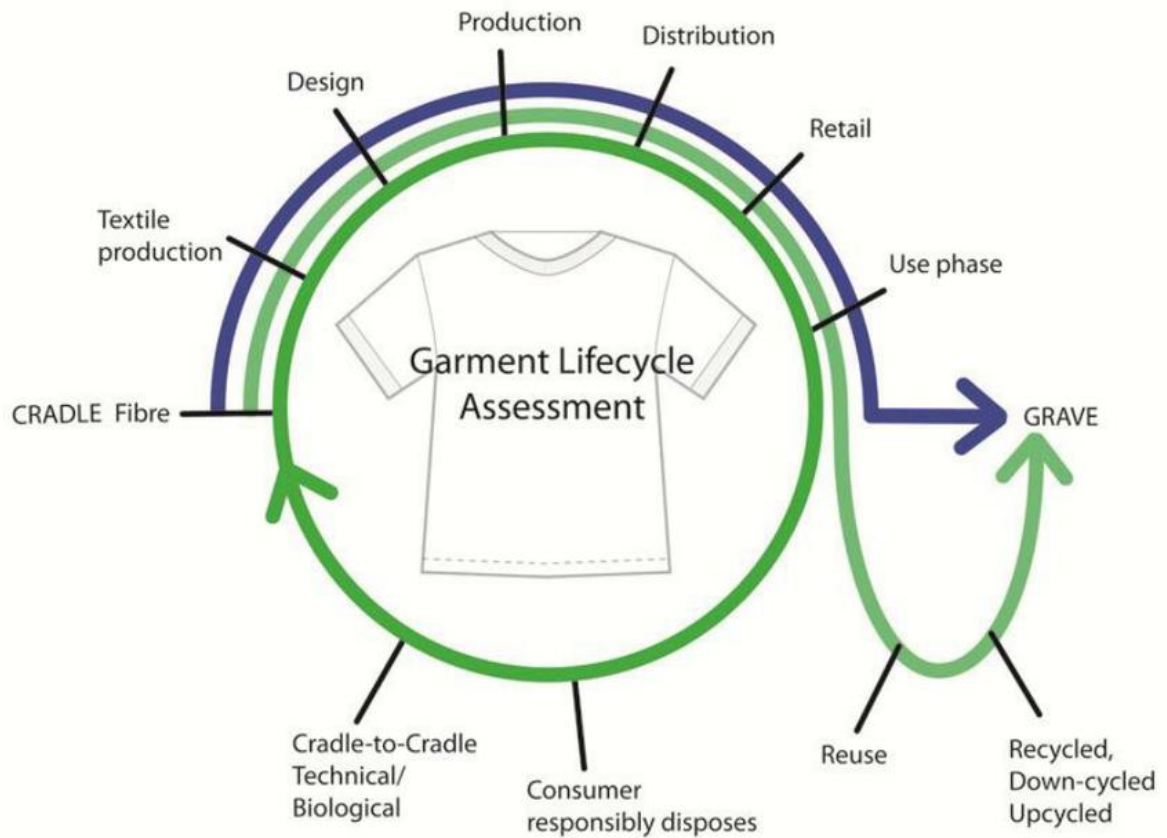
Figure 3 Garment Lifecycle Assessment (Payne 2011)

Fiber production

In accordance with the statistics (a table is provided below), observing the usage of varia-
ble fibers in production of garments, in 2015, there were 2,767,450 tons of cotton con-
sumed. This number is the way higher than those related to other fibers and makes cotton
the most popular textile fiber (Gray 2017, 16).

Table 1 EU consumption of fiber textiles in 2015 (Gray 2017, 16)

EU fibre consumption in clothing textiles[5]	Tonnes (2015)	Fibre type
Cotton	2 767 450	Natural
Wool	579 236	Natural
Silk	64 357	Natural
Flax	128 720	Natural
Viscose	579 236	Cellulosic
Polyester	1 029 747	Synthetic
Acrylic	579 236	Synthetic
Polyamide / Nylon	514 874	Synthetic
PU / PP / EA	193 077	Synthetic
Total	6 435 933	ALL

For cotton cultivation there is a need in enormous amount of water (as it was already mentioned before in this chapter), land, fertilizers, and pesticides (Šajn 2019, 3). 20,000 liters of water are required to cultivate just one kilogram of cotton comparable with one t-shirt and a single pair of jeans. Authorities affirm, that cotton requests more water than any other agricultural good. Because of evaporation and ineffective water management, deprivation of fresh water destined for cotton field`s irrigation (WWF 2019).

70% of Earth are occupied with water. Barely 3% of this number is freshwater, whereas, just 1/3 of it is usable for us (since 2/3 of freshwater exists in frozen glaziers). Nowadays, 1.1 billion of world`s population sense water scarcity, and 2.7 billion of people have the deficiency of water leastwise one month in the year. Currently, 2.4 billion people have waterborne diseases (such as cholera, typhoid, and others) due to insufficient sanitation. Population is growing rapidly, and through agriculture a big amount of water is consumed or wasted. Climate is changing. Waterbodies either are drying up or becoming highly contaminated. In this way, if an action won`t be taken, by the year 2050, 2/3 of Earth`s population can suffer water scarcity. (WWF 2019)

Presently, there are approximately 35 million hectares of land which are used for growing cotton which is nearly 2.5% of all cultivable territories. Furthermore, cotton cultivation is accompanied with hazardous chemicals that are being utilized for protecting cotton from pests. Those pests damage cotton and, hence, diminish the harvest, and farmer`s profit correspondingly. In this way, from 8 to 10 percentages of overall pesticides poisonings are applied in cotton cultivation. Nevertheless, it was stated by specialists, that pesticides are extremely dangerous for people`s health. There was implied on several million incidents in one year with pesticide poisonings in agriculture. Subsequently, from 20 to 40 thousand people died (mostly in developing countries with some of them pertaining to cotton cultivation). On this matter, as well, as on the matter of groundwater contamination were referred

in the 1990s by two organizations, that are The World Health and the International Labour organizations (WHO and ILO). (WWF Freshwater Programme 2007, 1-5)

Textile production

Textile production including variable stages is known as a large producer of toxic waste and it have been criticized a lot for inadequate working conditions (Payne 2011, 5). Below in this sub-chapter, there is a flow diagram representing variable stages taking place in a cotton mill during textile production, and the most negative of them from the environmental point of view will be examined.
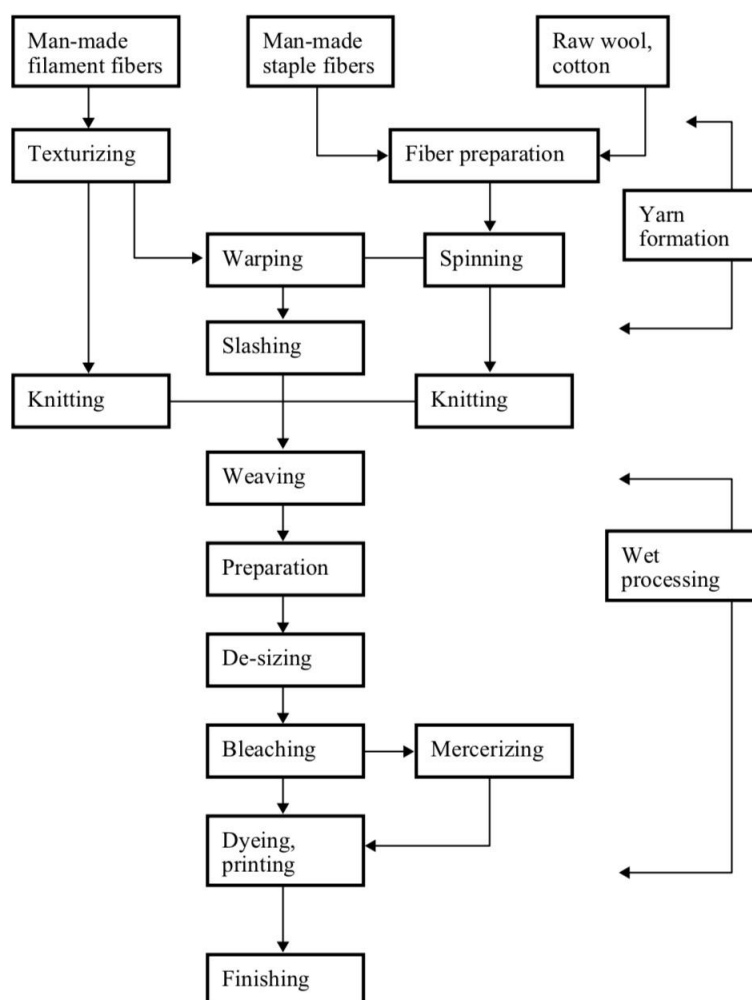

Figure 4 Diverse stages of a textile production in a cotton mill (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 111)

Each process involved in textile production have three types of wastes it produces, that are air emissions, wastewater, and residual wastes. On some of the steps (for example, in fiber preparation) there are residual wastes such as fiber, packaging, and hard wastes, but during this step there are no critical indicators of air emissions and wastewater cause. (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 112) However, there are those

textile production steps creating serious negative impacts to the environment in all three ways (air emissions, wastewater, and residual wastes), and they will be observed in more details in this sub-chapter.

Slashing/sizing process is remarkable for its VOCs (volatile organic compounds) as air emissions; metals discharged in wastewater; and various residual wastes such as fiber lint, yarn and other wastes (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 112).

De-sizing process produces to the air VOCs from glycol ethers; there are biocide, anti-static agents, lubricants, and other wastes discharged to the water; fiber lint, packaging wastes, yarn wastes, and other residual wastes with some of them even containing solvents (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 112).

Scouring process produces VOCs from glycol ethers and also from scouring solvents, and a vast variety of polluters are being drained with the wastewater (such as sodium hydroxide, detergents, wax, fats, oils, and others) (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 112).

Dyeing is accompanied by air emissions (such as VOCs), and wastewater pollutions with different metals, toxics, sulfide, salt, color and others (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 112).

As for the printing process, its air emissions contain acetic acid, exhaust gas, solvents, and particulate matter; wastewater is being contaminated with urea, color, foam, solvents, and other wastes (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 112).

Finally, finishing process produce air emissions (for example, VOCs, formaldehyde vapor, different chemicals, and other substances); spent solvents and other chemicals pollute wastewater; there are also residual wastes (for instance, packaging waste) (Ramesh Babu, Parande, Raghu, & Prem Kumar 2007, 112).

Overall, although textile production is an essential income source, for instance, for Bangladesh (where a big number of cloths are being produced), its` dying industry is considered as a leader with regard to pollution. Considering Bangladesh as an example, it is possible to observe environmental problems resulting from fashion industry and textile production in particularly. As in year 2011, garment industry accounted for approximately 77% of foreign exchange earnings and half of its workforce. Nonetheless, textile production, which has a significant role in country`s economics, is also a greater water consumer and polluter of the environment, with large numbers of toxic waste waters flowing out to sewers and ultimately harming people`s health and well-being, livestock, biodiversity and wildlife. (Islam, Mahmud, Faruk & Billah 2011, 236)

Design

Designing of cloths is a critical stage for fashion industry and has also a great influence on the environment. Depending on the designer`s decision, a garment usage can be long-term or short-term (Payne 2011, 6). Designer`s impact on the cloth`s lifespan is estimated to exceed 80% (ECAP 2019). Garment`s usage durability depends on such factors as: its size and fit (relatively often a cloth is no longer used because it does not correspond the changes in consumer`s bodies); textile`s quality (garments made from tissues of a low quality soon can become the worse for wear); colors, patterns, styles also relate to a cloth`s lifespan (fashion designers can make classic style products, so they will never be outmoded); finally, informing customers on the proper clothing care can contribute in extending garment`s use stage (Cooper, Hill, Kininmonth, Townsend & Hughes 2013, 3).

Making cloths usage last longer concerns different organizations worldwide, and each of them propose their solutions on this issue. Hence, there are ten ways for sustainable clothing design, which were offered by TED (Textiles, Environment, Design) research group. TED group is represented by design researchers in the University of the Arts London, and their key interests are designer`s role in minimizing environmental impact of textile and clothing industries and their provision with relevant solutions (Earley, Goldsworthy & Vuletich 2010, 3).

Textiles, Environment, Design research cluster presented ten possible ways for sustainable design, which are the following: reducing waste, recycling or upcycling, minimizing effects of chemicals, reduction of water and energy consumption, searching for cleaner and improved technologies, considering nature and history, being an ethical producer, eliminating the necessity in consumption, dematerializing and advancing of systems and services, acting for change (Laitala, Boks, & Klepp 2015, 94).

Production

Production/manufacturing is the next stage of a cloth`s lifecycle. Depending on garment producer`s decisions on this stage also cloth`s durability can be improved, as well as, minimized environmental effects. This stage usually involves several steps, that are the following: cloth construction, risk assessment in case of a failure, pre-production testing, and, finally, creating garment`s prototype with the use of 3D printer and other necessary technologies which is mostly related to production of shoes and will not be observed in this report (WRAP 2015, 33-40).

To begin with garment construction, like in the design stage, here producer`s design decisions matter significantly. The number of negative environmental consequences may be

decreased when producer make decisions on such issues as: size requirements, construction methods, number and types of stitches, kinds and colors of threads, and others (WRAP 2015, 33).

Risk assessment of all elements involved in manufacturing and supply chain also refers to extension of garment`s durability, as by examining possible failures, it is possible to improve lifespan of a cloth. For instance, there are three proposed solutions for assessment the risk of garment failure, which are determined as follows: firstly, defining all potential failures and areas where they may occur; secondly, testing of fabrics; finally, providing a consumer with care label to the garment (WRAP 2015, 34).
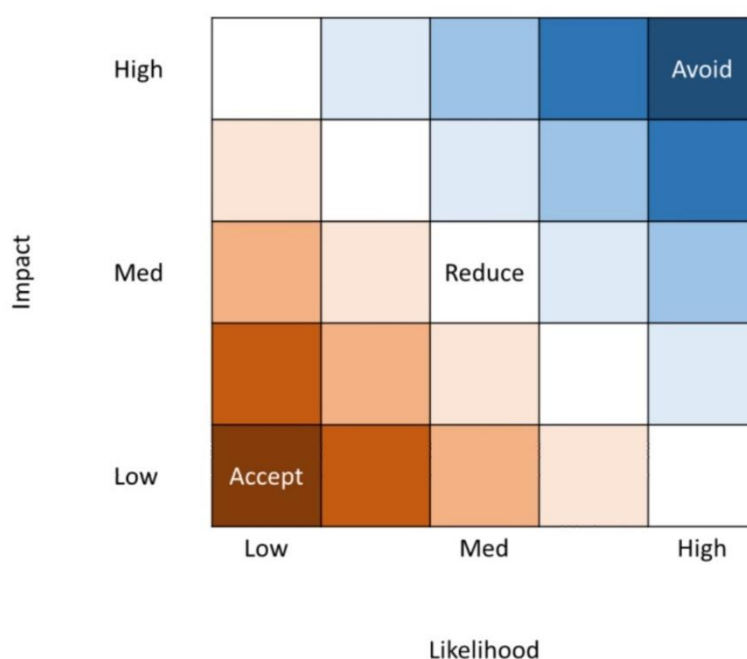

Figure 5 Risk response strategies (WRAP 2015, 34)

A matrix above graphically demonstrates strategies for estimating and responding the risks. In this way, a matrix allows producer to minimize, totally avoid, or accept the risk by examining its chances to occur and possible effects related to production processes, raw materials, and other aspects of production (WRAP 2015, 34).

Variable tests make it possible for producer to improve garment`s quality and at the same time its durability. Pre-production tests refer to examination of potential physical damages, decolorization, test for print`s durability, tear strength, and other possible failures which should be accounted before manufacturing (WRAP 2015, 35).

Overall, it can be seen, that in manufacturing stage, as well as in design stage, crucial decisions are being made. Thus, by improving overall quality of cloths, testing them,

providing consumers with care guidelines, analyzing the risks for failures, it is possible to increase their durability and, hence, reduce the number of disposed garments.

Distribution

Distribution is that stage where producer`s wish for declining transportation costs stands above the sustainability (Payne 2011, 8). Nowadays, a large number of garments and textiles transportations influence the growth of pollution and CO_2 emissions to the environment (Redress 2014, 5).

Quick response (QR) system or quick response manufacturing is an approach which is popular in a modern fashion industry (Choi 2013, 1). Quick response, which is one of integral parts of fast fashion system implies in satisfying arising consumer needs in trendy design products and using minimum production lead time for supply delivery with unknow demand (Cachon & Swinney 2010, 1).

Outsourcing of production/manufacturing processes to developing countries together with the rapid internationalization create lots of concerns on resources exploitation (both societal and environmental) (Freise & Seuring 2015 as cited in Perry & Wood 2019, 2).

Fast fashion system is driven by consumer`s demand for quickly obtain new cloths for cheap prices (Linden 2016, 19). Transportation in fashion industry takes place not only with the purpose to deliver garments to the retails, but also to transport them among countries in previous stages, due to cultivation of cotton, textile production, and design stages take place in different areas (Payne 2011, 8). In this way, distribution will continue to be a challenging part, as by reducing the costs and creating cloths in several countries an environmental will be suffering.

Retail

Sustainable retail environment is a goal which already was set by Euro Commerce and European Retail Round Table with establishment of Retail Environmental Sustainability Code in year 2010. Its purpose is contributing to sustainability within production and consumption (Euro Commerce & European Retail Round Table 2010, 1).

Nowadays, retail process has numerous challenges which impact the environment. These challenges involve different aspects and will be observed in this sub-chapter. The first challenge relates to sourcing, as it was stated many times by specialists, that consumer`s decision to purchase sustainably mostly influenced by price and availability of a product. In this way, what can be done by producers is an active advertising of production and

consumption of environment-friendly products. (Euro Commerce & European Retail Round Table 2010, 3-4)

The next point of question refers to resource efficiency. A pie-chart above demonstrates principal energy consuming areas of a non-food store.
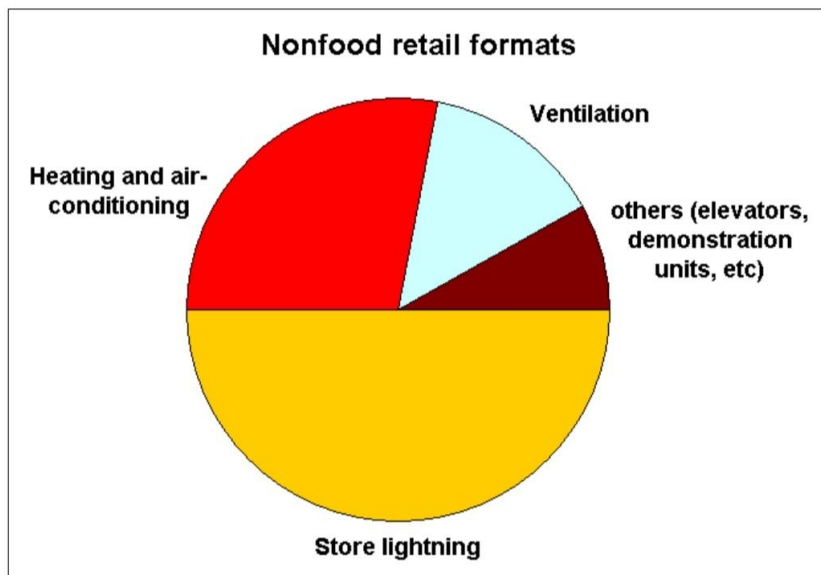

Figure 6 Key energy consuming areas in non-food retail (European Retail Forum 2009, 2)

It can be noticed from the pie-chart, that provision a non-food shop with lightning demands energy the most. Hearting/air-conditioning is the second energy consumer in a retail. Third is ventilation of a store. The last sector combines in itself other areas consuming energy (for example, elevators or lifts) (European Retail Forum 2009, 2).

A significant point of attention is CO_2 emissions being produced by stores. A carbon footprint results from areas mentioned above (such as lightning, ventilation, heating, and others) (Retail Forum for Sustainability 2011, 1). Hence, there is an aim to decrease an environmental impact of shops (Euro Commerce & European Retail Round Table 2010, 4).

Transportation/distribution in this case also have notable environmental impact, due to besides products, variable modes of transport bring staff and consumers to the shops (Euro Commerce & European Retail Round Table 2010, 4).

Aside from sales, stores make waste (for instance, food and packaging wastes) (Euro Commerce & European Retail Round Table 2010, 4). And this is also an important issue of a retail process influencing the environment.

The last, but not the least challenge is communication between retailers and consumers. Retailers effect consumers behavior and their knowledge on environment and sustainability (Euro Commerce & European Retail Round Table 2010, 5).

Usage

When observing environmental problems resulting from clothing industry, it is a production which is observed the most often, but during the usage process a negative impact to the environment still exists, and in accordance with some experts it surpasses those consequences from manufacturing (Payne 2011, 9).
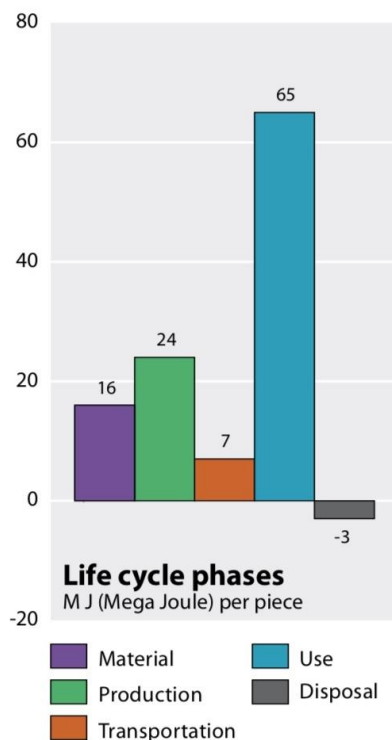

Figure 7 Primary energy use for cotton t-shirt (Allwood, Laursen, Malvido de Rodriguez & Bocken 2006, 27)

A bar-chart above provides information on the primal energy use for cotton t-shirt. It can be seen from this bar-graph, that energy consumption during use phase significantly exceeds energy consumption in other phases of a cotton t-shirt lifecycle (such as production of material, manufacturing/production, transportation/distribution, and disposal). The overall energy usage for single t-shirt accounts for nearly 109MJ (Mega Joule). (Allwood, Laursen, Malvido de Rodriguez & Bocken 2006, 27).

Overall, clothing care significantly impacts the environment mostly because of washing and drying. Clothes washing effects the environment in several ways. Firstly, laundry consumes lots of water. It was stated, that a single flat with in-unit washer consumes nearly 8,500 gallons (that is approximately 32,176 liters) of water each year (Leverette 2019). Secondly, besides water consumption, there is a negative environmental impact in wastewater. Detergents which people usually use contain variable chemicals (for example, nonylphenol) polluting the marine life and affecting negatively human's health (for

instance, reproductive system) and well-being (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as cited in Beach 2017). Furthermore, nowadays, the problem on which people are starting to pay attention is microplastics and its effect on people and the environment. Because of the laundry, 60% of total microplastics particles existing in fresh water are from garment lint (Augenbraun 2019). Microplastics particles (MP are small participles of plastics) are considered to be a great polluter of oceans, as it was stated by the United Nations (UN), that currently, there are more than 51 trillion of MP particles there (United Nations 2017).

Moving to clothing drying, there are people who prefer to dry garments after washing process by using clothing dryers instead of air-drying. Though, this could be useful, as it allows to dry clothes faster, it was proved, that for many houses/apartments dryer is a third machine (after fridge and washing machine) which consumes a lot of energy and, therefore, produces CO_2 emissions with estimated carbon footprint of 2,400 pounds (approximately 1,087 kg) per year (Green America 2019).

After use

At the end of a garment`s lifecycle there are variable alternatives for further actions which are possible to reduce or increase its environmental effect. Presently, 80% of garments at the end of their lifecycle procced to landfills or incinerations, and just other 20% are being recycled or reused (McCarthy 2018). Each year people purchase 80 billion new garment pieces (which is 400% more than they did just 20 years ago), and many of them are being discarded rapidly with 82 pounds (37 kg) being wasted only by average American (The True Cost 2019).

Recycling is a process which can be applied for garments and other textiles in order to repair them for the further reuse of them or fabrics (Leblanc 2019). The importance of recycling is crucial and can be explained in the particularly negative environmental effect are being caused by landfills and clothes incinerations. To begin with the landfills, when being taken there, a natural fiber clothing (such as those made from cotton, wool, silk, and others) could be decomposing (decaying) for hundreds of years with possibility to generate carbon dioxide and methane to the atmosphere and other toxicants to soil and groundwater (Leblanc 2019).

Clothing incineration is a process of burning down clothes and, unfortunately, currently relating not only to those pieces of garments which were discarded by a consumer, but also for those which were not sold. In the recent years, news on the incidents involving numerous brands (both mass-market and luxury) started to be spread and particularly criticized. Here can be mentioned such companies as: Burberry, H&M, Nike, Louis Vuitton, Michael Kors, Cartier, Victoria's Secret, and others (Lieber 2018). In 2017, Burberry (which is a

luxurious brand) incinerated unsold cloths, parfums, and accessorizes with all them totally costing for USD 36.8 million, with explaining this incident as the way to keep their products to be exclusive (BBC 2018).

> *Despite their high prices, Burberry shows no respect for their own products and the hard work and natural resources that are used to made them (Roloff 2018, as cited in BBC 2018).*

As for the H&M Group (that is a well-known fashion mass-market retailer), it was criticized after in year 2017 appeared news on that they were burning out their new unsold products since 2013 with 12 tons of garments incinerated each year in Denmark, despite the fact that they promote their sustainable actions (such as collecting clothes for recycling and making the «Conscious collection») (Brodde 2017).

Overall, clothing incineration significantly increase product` environmental effect creating emissions to the atmosphere that might be adverse for human`s health and, for instance, synthetic pieces of clothes can also generate microplastics participles, as well as carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emission which enhance global warming (Baraniuk 2019).

2.2   Society

In 2015, The True Cost documentary movie came out demonstrating along with environmental impacts of fashion industry, the ways it influences the society. Nowadays, approximately 40 million people are employed in clothing production, and lots of these people who work in developing countries are not equal with those employees occupied in this industry in the Western countries, as they receive extremely low labor remuneration, they face violation and violation of their rights in particular. Fashion is a large industry involving numerous brands generating a huge profit every year. Currently, the industry`s annual revenue is accounted for nearly 3 trillion of US dollars. (The True Cost 2015) However, fashion should be known not only by the sums they earn each year, but by their cheap workplaces in developing countries.

In this study it was already mentioned previously about the movement called Fashion Revolution started on May 2013 as a reaction on Rana Plaza collapse. A crucial question is spread worldwide, and people willing for changes in fashion industry operations, join this resistance movement, asking brands who made their clothes. Many people all around the world knowing the current environmental and social problems resulting from fashion industry and fast fashion in particular believe, that changes are needed, and they are possible to be achieved. There are three aspects requiring for changes, that are the model,

material, and the mindset (Fashion Revolution 2019). People joining Fashion Revolution believe, that the whole business model within fashion industry need to be changed.

Previously, garment production within fashion industry was a process requiring high costs of labor, energy and raw materials; but now people consume more, and prices of clothes they purchase are significantly lower than in previous decades. Furthermore, fashion is such industry which, as it was mentioned before in this project, where there is a negative impact on planet and society. There is a violation of human rights, people work in conditions particularly dangerous for their health and lives and receive extremely low payment for labor. Finally, people mindset relating to fashion industry should be changed, as when buying cheap clothes, they can easily be discarded in the short period of time, as they are valued lower than those more expansive and less accessible clothes. In this way, Fashion Revolution movement`s mission is to unite people in order to have these changes in fashion industry, so this industry will not be associated with waste, pollutions, and unfair labor practices. (Fashion Revolution 2019).

Despite the fact, that it was supposed to be that internationalization within fashion industry with outsourcing operations to developing countries will contribute in improving socio-economical situations in these countries as people there (particularly, women) will be provided with work places and for women in developing countries, theoretically, that would mean reaching their economic empowerment. However, present realty is different, and modern fashion industry is associated with poor human rights of people employed in this industry and operate in developing countries. Especially, this problem touches women who are the majority of workers in this industry. It is prohibited for workers to join or to establish trade union, thus, their rights are being abused in different ways (that are forced labor practices are applied to people, child labor practice also exists and widespread, workers work in particularly dangerous and unhealthy conditions, women are being abused and meet sexual harassment). (Niebank 2018, 9-19)

Sisters For Change and Munnade which are non-governmental organizations made a research on violence towards women at their work in Karnataka (India) and presented results in report from 2016. They detected, that every fourteenth woman has been physically violent, and every seventh woman has been raped, while 45 million (60%) of Indian workers in clothing and textile industries are women. (Sisters For Change and Munnade 2016, 2-3)

The fact of presence of child labor in clothing factories, is usually denied by governments and companies, however, researches show the opposite, that is 16.7 million children (of age from 5 to 17) in South Asia work, and most of them (nearly 10.3 million) are children

under age of 15, and this work is especially dangerous for their health and further development (Niebank 2018, 22).

Furthermore, in this industry exists such problems as forced labor, low pay, conditions dangerous for humans` lives and health, lack of social protection, and absence of juridical and non-juridical remedy. To begin with wages, below there is a bar chart created by Fashion Revolution report writers providing figures on minimal monthly salaries of garment workers with comparison of these numbers to living wage in three different countries (that are India (Uttar Pradesh), Bangladesh (Dhaka City), and Cambodia (Phnom Penh)) (Ditty, Cook, Hunter, Futerra, & Blanchard 2018).
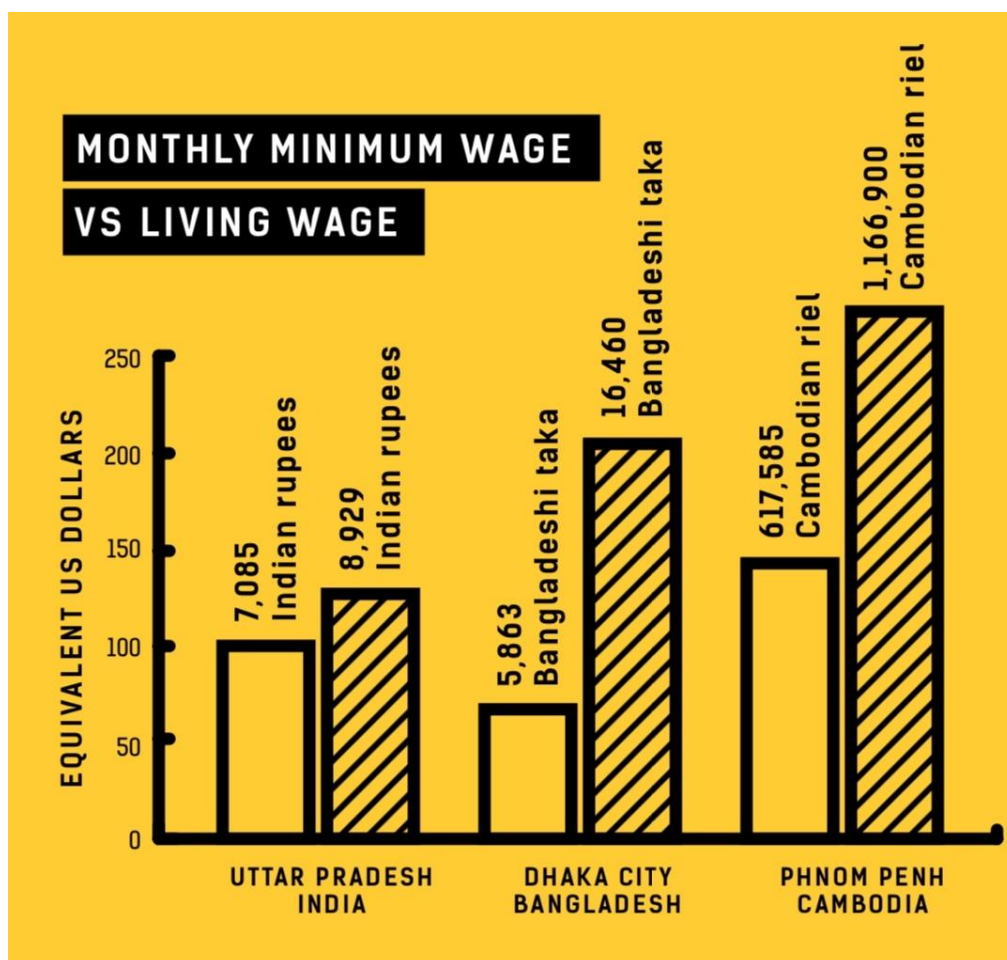
Figure 8 Monthly minimum wage VS living wage (Ditty, Cook, Hunter, Futerra, & Blanchard 2018)

It can be seen from the bar chart, that in Dhaka (Bangladesh), a city where Rana Plaza was situated, there is a huge gap between the minimal wage per month of a garment worker and city`s living wage. Monthly minimum salary accounts there for 5,863 Bangladeshi taka (63,12 EUR/69,31 USD) while living wage is 16,460 Bangladeshi taka (177,21 EUR/ 194,57 USD). In Phnom Penh (Cambodia) garment worker is paid with minimum 617,585 Cambodian riel (137,68 EUR/151.17 USD) with living wage in Phnom Penh being

1,166,900 Cambodian riel (260,14 EUR/285,63 USD). Indian wages situation is a bit different, there monthly minimal wage of people employed in this industry accounts for 7,085 Indian rupees (91,11 EUR/100,04 USD) and living wage there is 8,929 Indian rupees (114,82 EUR/126,07 USD). All currency calculations have been made on 6th of October 2019. Obviously, it cannot be denied the presence of inequity when it is possible that a human for his/her work receives less money than it is need for him/her to live (Ditty, Cook, Hunter, Futerra, & Blanchard 2018).

When we talk on sustainability and sustainable fashion industry in particular, we should always keep in mind Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established in 2015 by the United Nations (UN) which are targeted to be achieved by the year 2030. There are 17 Global Goals and each of them are dedicated to make it possible worldwide achievement of better and more sustainable future, with 8th goal relating to «decent work and economic growth», and its 7th target refers to the obligatoriness for eliminating modern slavery, human trafficking, forced labor, and child labor (Sustainable Development Goals 2019).

Nowadays, garment industry is the world`s second industry which is being a contributor to modern slavery. This fact was presented in The Global Slavery Index 2018 report. It was discovered that, currently, there are five types of products that are being imported to G20 countries are at risk of being products of modern slavery. These types of products are the following: personal technologies (such as mobile phones, computers, and laptops), garments, fish, cocoa, and sugarcane (Walk Free Foundation 2018, 4).

Contemporary, modern slavery is represented with its three components. It is represented in forced labor, human trafficking, slavery and related to its practices (for instance, forced marriage or servile marriage). These components are interconnected, thus, forced labor occurs as a consequence of forced marriage or either human trafficking realizing for further labor exploitation, sexual exploitation, slavery and its other variations (Walk Free Foundation 2018, 7).

Currently, modern slavery within garment supply chain exists in such industry as cotton picking, and on the stages of clothing spinning and weaving. For instance, as for cotton harvesting, forced labor in this industry usually takes place in Uzbekistan, which is in top leaders in cotton industry. In order to harvest amount of cotton enough to reach the government`s quota, farmers` forces are not enough, that is why in Uzbekistan students of National University are being sending forcibly to cotton fields. In order to be free from this forced labor practice, student must pay 300,000 Uzbek soms (29 EUR/31,8 USD), this sum of money is in two times exceeding student`s grant per month. Moreover, not only students are being forced to work on cotton field, as people of other occupations (for

example, teachers and doctors) are also involved in this forced labor practice. Furthermore, child labor also exists in Uzbekistan. Although, in 2012 under the pressure from other countries, Uzbekistan` capital Tashkent ended on taking young children to cotton fields, teenagers are still being sending there forcibly. (Lillis 2014).

Small salaries induce garment workers to work more (for instance, in Bangladesh 97% of them work for 60 hours in a week). Although, garment industry`s working week should not be longer than six working days in a week with 48 overall working hours without extra working time. In fast fashion system producer target on short turnaround time. This means, a time between when a garment was designed, and it reaches the stores should be minimal. In order to meet this goal, manufacturing time should be also short, due to this, workers at manufacturing stage are forced to work overtime, and this issue is dangerous for workers as there is a bigger risk for accidents at workplace. Furthermore, overtime working hours have impact on garment workers` health and productivity. (Common Objective 2019).

3   CONSUMER BUYER BEHAVIOR AND MARKETING

Consumer buyer behavior can be defined as buying behavior of end-customers on pur-chasing products/services for their personal use (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 133). Exami-nation of a consumer buyer behavior is an important part of this study. Obviously, purpose of marketing is to influence the ways consumers think and how they behave. Author of this study believes that presently marketing has a great impact on people, and due to this there is a significant increase in consumption within fashion industry for the last decades.

In this chapter will be a literature review, as well as a research conducted by author of this thesis. A purpose of the research was to observe how often people buy clothes, where do they buy them and what factors influence their buying decisions. Marketing is used to in-fluence consumers` thoughts and actions (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 132). Some people tend to think that marketing does not affect them. However, nowadays, marketing differs from what it has been in previous decades. To begin with observing consumer behavior model, its illustration is presented below.
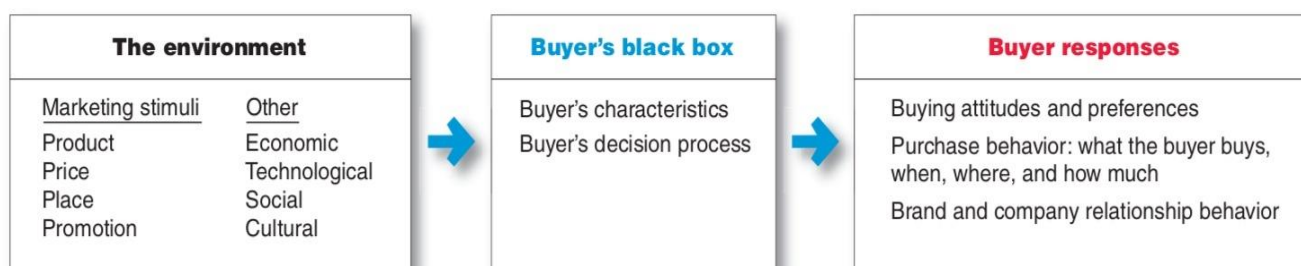

Figure 9 Buyer Behavior Model (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 135)

The key question for marketer is:

> *How do consumers respond to various marketing efforts the company might use?*
> *(Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 134)*

From a figure above representing buyer behavior model we can see how the environment influences buyer`s black box, and this in turn leads to buyer responses. By the environ-ment we define marketing stimuli that is 4Ps (product, price, place, and promotion), and other factors (such as economic, technological, social, and cultural). Buyer`s decision pro-cess and buyer`s characteristics are included to buyer`s black box. As it was already men-tioned, what marketers wish to know is the ways in which marketing stimuli (4Ps) trans-form to buyer responses within buyer`s black box. (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 134-135)

Marketing stimuli (which are also known as marketing mix) are marketing`s four Ps that is a set of tools for tactical marketing being compounded by firms in order to generate

desired response within target market. Marketing mix composed with product (goods and services offered by a company), price (of goods/services), place (that are the company`s actions for making its products/services being accessible to consumers), and promotion (that is introducing characteristics of goods/services and assuring of target customers with the regard of they purchase a product or a service). (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 51-52)

Besides marketing stimuli, other characteristics have also an effect on buyer behavior. These characteristics are as follows: cultural, social, personal, and psychological (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 135). Marketers mainly cannot control these factors, though they consider them.

3.1 Cultural factors affecting consumer behavior

To begin with cultural factors, here we talk about cultures, subcultures, and social class. First of all, by culture is meant a batch of basic values, behaviors, desires, and perceptions a person gets to know from his/her family and other institutions. There are changes within cultures, and marketers are always willing to take them into account while developing new goods. Secondly, as for subcultures, these are associations of people processing common values generated from their generic life experiences and contexts. They involve, for instance, nationalities and geographic areas. Finally, social class is a point of interest for marketers, and it can be defined as a separation of people within society as there are its members with common values, concerns, and attitudes. (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 135-136)

3.2 Social factors affecting consumer behavior

Other factors influencing buyer behavior are considered as social factors which include small groups, family, social roles, and social status (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 136). Author of this thesis paid much attention on social factors during research, when discovering how people as consumers are influenced by opinion leaders. At the beginning of this thesis process, its author set a goal to overlook the present of marketing and the ways modern customers are influenced by variable marketers` attempts to attract target customers to particular good/services and to arouse their willingness for purchasing. This thesis author formulated a theory in the following way: there are individuals who tend to suppose, marketing does not affect them, however, they can even not to consider the way marketing has changed for the last decade. Previously, people who do not possess a professional knowledge in sphere of marketing could associate it with advertisements on television, radio, or on pages of printed products (for instance, magazines or catalogs). Nowadays, the role of opinion leaders is becoming even more noticeable.

Opinion leader is an individual belonging to a reference group possessing particular personal characteristics, skills, or knowledges contributing to his/her possibility to make influence on other individuals. People are influenced by small groups, and those groups to which they belong and particularly they influenced are known as membership groups. Furthermore, reference group contribute to formation of individual`s behavior even though he/she is not involved in this group. However, reference group can be a provider for direct (that is face-to-face) and indirect reference point for an individual. In this way, gaining the knowledge on the target markets` reference groups and reaching an opinion leader are important actions for marketers. Here, there might be mentioned well-known definitions for reference groups such as the influentials/leading adopters, as consumers tend to follow the words of influentials (that is why, marketers choose them in order to entrust them marketing efforts, as word-of-mouth (WOM) influence and buzz marketing can be truly powerful in influencing consumer buying behavior). (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 139)

Nowadays, the role of Internet in the society is that crucial, so marketers within fashion industry try to get attention of target customers to their products via fashion blogs. Presently, fashion blogging is generally a modern and widespread type of online journalism, as if previously fashion opinion leaders were editors working for popular fashion magazines and well-known to the society fashion customers (for example, actresses or pop-music artists), now fashion opinion leaders are bloggers within social media who make reviews/recommendations and spread information on products/services) (Crane 1999 as cited in DePhillips & Son 2017, 1).

In 2017, a qualitative research on the fashion consumption of millennials and definition of social media`s fashion opinion leaders was published by ITAA (International Textile and Apparel Association). According to the findings, there are several factors which identify fashion opinion leaders within social media. Firstly, personality of a blogger is considered. Secondly, there is an importance for platform which blogger chooses for his/her blog. For millennials what matter in relation to an opinion leader were numerous factors such as: fashionable lifestyle, extraordinary style, attractive personality and appearance, common similarities, popularity within the industry and society. As for the platform of a blog millennials noted the following aspects: a big amount of followers, attractive platforms or pictures, as well as regular posts to the blog. (DePhillips & Son 2017, 1-2)

Other significant influencers of consumer behavior are family and its members, as well as roles and status. Besides blogs, other social networks (or communities) such as social networking services (websites) and virtual worlds have a significant impact on people consumer behavior, and marketers tend to utilize social communities as well as diverse world-

of-Web options in order to advertise their goods and form strong relationships with customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 141).

3.3 Other factors affecting consumer behavior

Personal and psychological factors are other factors which have an influence on consumer behavior. Personal factors include such aspects of a consumer as:

- Consumer`s age and life-cycle stage (generally characterized by demographics and experiences considered as life-changing (for example, marriage, divorce, having children, or retirement).

- People also tend to purchase one or another goods/services due to their occupation.

- Economic situation (for instance, income) of an individual is an important factor affecting his/her consumer behavior, as decision to purchase a particular product or service may results from the ability to pay for it (for example, in case of garments: a person would like to buy a T-shirt in Gucci (which is a luxury retail store), but he/she is only able to purchase a T-shirt from Zara (which is a mass-market retailer).

- The way we live (for example, our points of interests and preferences, opinions, and activities (such as hobbies, job, variable events, and others) form our lifestyle which significantly influence our consumer behavior.

The last, but not the least personal factors influencing consumer behavior are personality (which is particular psychological characteristics that are inherent to an individual or a group of people) and self-concept. (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 144-147)

The following factors are related to psychological factors:

- Firstly, motivation is one of psychological factors affecting our consumer behavior, as it was proposed by Sigmund Freud, buying decisions of an individual are driven with his/her subconscious motives which he/she can even do not recognize. Motives (drives) demand us looking for a satisfaction of our needs.

- Secondly, a process of forming a world view by choosing, organizing and interpreting information (perception) has a great influence on our consumer behavior.

- Furthermore, shifts in our behaviors resulting from experience we receive (learning) also affect our consumer behavior.

As well as other psychological factors beliefs and attitudes we get from actions and learning influence person`s consumer behavior. (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 147-150)

3.4   Impulsive shopping

Nowadays, a common tendency of a consumer behavior is impulsive shopping, which is worth to consider and speak about. By impulsive buying can be defined consumer`s purchasing of any types of goods/services without planning it beforehand, as it is based on irrational thinking (The Economic Times 2019).

Though, as it was mentioned above a product or service of any type may be an impulsive purchase, there are five the most common goods/services which people purchase impulsively. They are the following: 71% of food and groceries are impulsive buys; 53% of garments are impulsive purchases; 33% of households are being purchased impulsively; 29% of food take outs are impulsive; and 28% of shoes people buy impulsively (O`Brien 2018).

4   SUSTAINABILITY WITHIN FASHION INDUSTRY

This chapter is worth to begin with definition of sustainability (sustainable development).

> *Sustainable development means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (World Commission On Environment and Development 1987, 16)*

The definition mentioned above was provided in Our Common Future report which is also known as Brundtland Report, and usually applied to define sustainability and sustainable development. There are three major pillars for sustainability that are: the environment (planet) and its protection, society (people) corresponding to social inclusion, and economy (profit) and economic growth (UN 2019).

Thus, there were 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations (UN) and adopted by countries in year 2015. It is planned that these 17 goals will be worldwide achieved by year 2030 (2030 Agenda). The outline for the SDGs is to provide all people around the world with more sustainable and improved future (UN 2019). The table below was created by the UN and illustrates all SDGs.

Figure 10 Sustainable Development Goals (UN 2019)

In this way, there should be analyzed the role of sustainability in the industry of fashion and how it can be considered as sustainable. In this chapter, the author of this thesis observes all of them, though paying more attention on sustainable and conscious consumption, examining data from literature sources and research findings. To begin with, here the author of this thesis finds it necessary to briefly describe a source which contributed to author`s summarization of all forms of sustainable production and consumption, as even they can seem well-known (for example, purchasing clothes in second-hand stores or

their recycling), it is useful to discover and lean on a particular reliable source or study (book or article). Green Strategy was chosen by author as one of the sources to rely on when working on this chapter. Green Strategy is a consultancy firm assisting companies operating within fashion and textile industries to create, improve, and communicate efficiently their sustainability and circularity processes (Green Strategy 2019).

Above all things, there is a large number of variable forms of sustainable fashion and the ways it can become more sustainable. These varieties can be associated with more environmentally friendly production which is conscious both socially and ethically. However, sustainability within fashion industry relates not only to production, but to consumption as well. For instance, there were seven major forms for sustainable production and consumption determined (by Green Strategy).

These forms of sustainable fashion are presented in the pie-chart below:
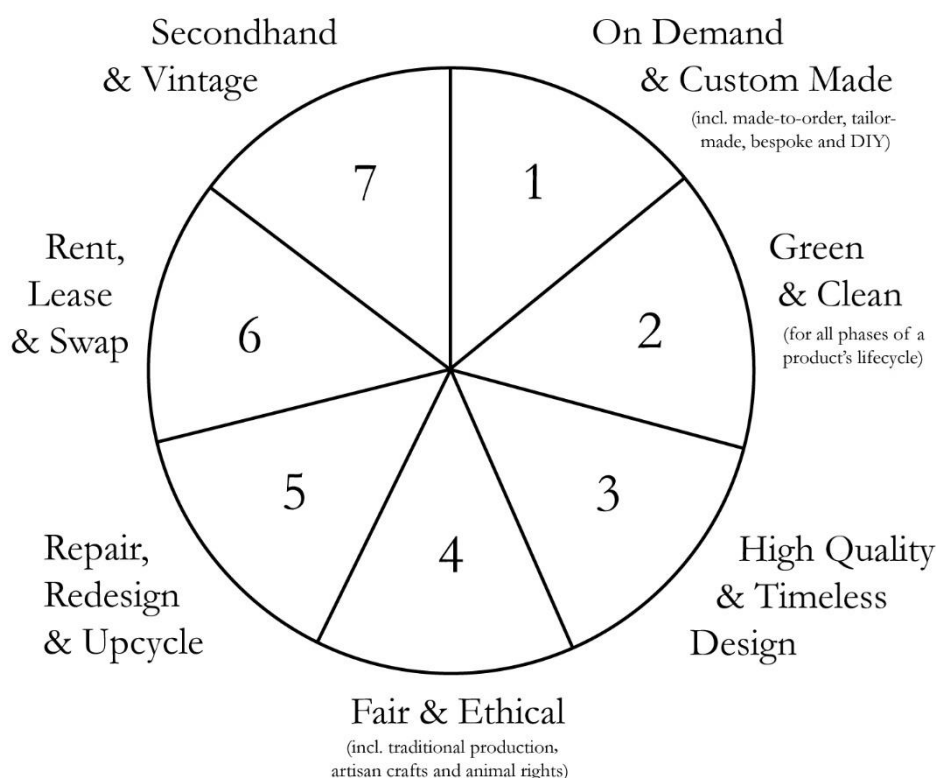
© Green Strategy, www.greenstrategy.se
By Dr. Anna Brismar 2019

Figure 11 Seven forms of sustainable fashion (Brismar 2019)

Fashion can be sustainable and circular. In this chapter both sustainability and circularity within fashion industry will be observed, as well as the ways consumption refers to them. It would be perfect, if all seven forms illustrated above merge together. In that way,

clothes would be produced in accordance with demand (or custom made). These garments would be of a high quality and timeless design, which would relate to their durability. Furthermore, they would be produced in the way which is not harmful to the environment (environmentally friendly production) and society. The next (fourth) aspect yet relates to sustainable consumption. The fourth form of a sustainable fashion includes garments repairing, redesigning and upcycling, so they will be useful for a longer time. However, in case when an individual does not wish to wear a piece of garment any longer, he/she discover sustainable ways for its disposal (for instance, a garment can be passed to a second-hand store, donated to charity, or given to friends/relatives/colleagues), so this cloth (or accessories) could be useful to someone else. Finally, if a garment cannot be reused (for example, in case when it is totally worn down with use or damaged) it should be taken for recycling, so when the textile can be applied again for production of new clothes or other types of textile goods, however, ideally, 6th and 7th aspects of sustainable fashion are more welcomed as instead of purchasing a new cloth it is better to use the one already produced. (Green Strategy 2019)

Hence, from the points described above, there can be several of them be chosen for further examination in this chapter, as it was already mentioned in its beginning, the author of this thesis will focus on sustainable (conscious) consumption. From seven aspects of sustainable fashion, three of them the author of this thesis decided to consider and observe in more details, as they refer to conscious consumption.

4.1 Fast fashion vs Slow Fashion

In the first chapter of this thesis, the author had a look on impacts fashion and textile industry cause to people and planet. When we talk on the role of consumer decisions in the current outlook of fashion and textile industries, it always should be considered the present fast fashion system and the opposite to it system which is known as slow fashion. In this thesis there were already mentioned about fast fashion system. Hence, in this subchapter there will be taken a deeper look on it. Furthermore, slow fashion system will be observed as well.

Fast fashion is a modern concept characterizing the clothing collections appearing as a consequence of the latest fashion tendencies, and existing because of the never-before rapidness of a fashion cycle (which is influenced by such factors as the Internet, technological progress, and globalization) (Wang 2010, 8).

Fast fashion has three key characteristic words which are: cheapness, to cater, and dominance. Firstly, this system is associated with low costs and short lead time, thus, fast

fashion brands are able to influence consumption and produce garments rapidly, as they possess space and money. Secondly, fast fashion brands tend to decrease shelf time of their goods as well, and this rapid change of products in shops affect consumers to come back to shops again and again. Thirdly, it can be noticed, that there are several fast fashion brands leading within fast fashion market, and this is possible due to there are dominant groups managing and supporting them: for instance, Inditex and H&M groups. (Wang 2010, 10)

For reference: Inditex Group is a Spanish company involving such brands as Zara (that is the most popular group`s brand accounted in year 2017 for more than 7,000 stores which are located around the world), Pull & Bear, Massimo Dutti, Bershka, Stradivarius, Oysho, Zara Home, and Uterque (Loeb 2017). H&M Group is a Swedish company including the following brands: the best-known H&M (with more than 3,000 stores around the world), ARKET, Weekday, COS, Monki, H&M Home, & Other Stories, and Afound (H&M Group 2019). Overall, H&M and Zara are considered as leading fast fashion brands. Below, there is a bar-chart showing a comparison between H&M Group and Inditex with consideration of such figures as: the number of stores and operating profit in million USD for H&M Group and the number of stores and operating profit in billion EUR for Inditex (Law 2018).
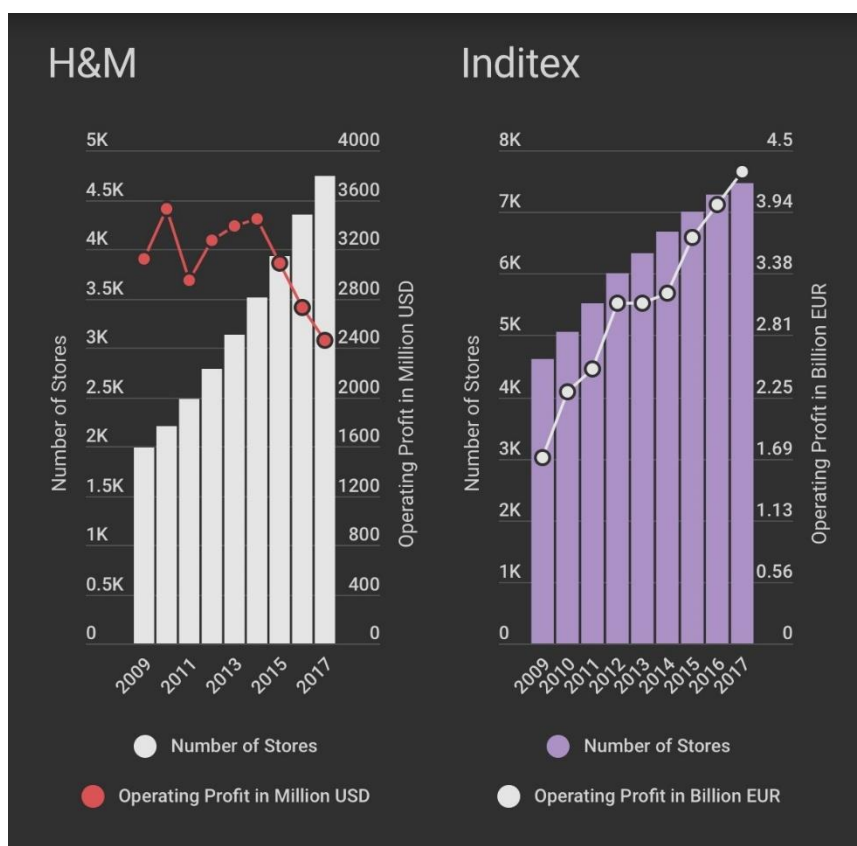
Figure 12 Comparison of number of stores and operating profit (H&M Group and Inditex) (Law 2018)

From this bar-chart it can be seen, that Inditex was showing a growth in the amount of their stores (from nearly 5,000 stores in 2009 to more than 7,000 stores in 2017) and in their operating profit which was fluctuating over the period and increased (from approximately 1.69 billion EUR received in 2009 to more than 3.94 billion EUR in 2017). At the same time, H&M Group also showed an increase in the number of stores (from nearly 2,000 stores in 2009 to more than 4,500 stores in 2017), and their operating profit was fluctuating and showed a decline in the period from 2009 to 2017 (which in 2009 was approximately 3200 million USD and in year 2017 it was nearly 2400 million USD) (Law 2018).

Moving to slow fashion, this movement (or it is also called as an ideology) is based on the core principles referring to creation, production, distribution, consumption, and end-life/disposal within fashion industry (Falkiewicz 2019). Overall, slow fashion can be defined in the following way:

> *Slow fashion is a conscious effort to move away from the excessive consumerism encouraged by the fast fashion industry through changing consumer behavior and forcing the industry to embrace sustainability and to produce high-quality fashion. Unlike fast fashion, the primary focus of slow fashion is a continued commitment to creating fewer collections per calendar year with pieces made from high-quality materials that lengthen the life of the garment. Slow fashion is founded on the principles of conscious consumerism, environmental sustainability, and transparency, with design and production methods upholding high ethical standards. (Falkiewicz 2019)*

As this chapter is dedicated to conscious and sustainable consumption, the last (but not the least) two principles of slow fashion (consumption and end-life/disposal) will be observed. Overall, slow fashion can be defined as an approach under the motto which is a quote said by a famous British fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, meaning that we should purchase less clothes which will be of a high quality, so we use them for longer:

> *Buy less. Choose well. Make it Last. (Vivienne Westwood 2014)*

5   RESEARCH FINDINGS

The survey on conscious consumption within fashion industry was spread in several ways. The author made a translation of research questions and formed them in identical survey in her native language (Russian), so than it could be possible to attract for participation in a survey people who are not English-speaking. Both version (English and Russian) was attached to the author`s page in VK (which is a social networking service popular among Russian-speaking countries). However, there were no answers to the Russian version of a survey. In this way, English survey (named as a «Survey on conscious consumption within fashion industry») answers were only accounted when working on this thesis.

The author if this thesis was checking the process of accumulation of survey answers after each publication of its link, and after publication to social networking services (VK and Facebook) there were less than 10 answers received. The link to the survey was also spread among International Business students at Lahti UAS (via Outlook) and after that the number of responses to the survey accounted for 39. Here, the author decided to stop receiving responses and observe results of those 39 people participated in the survey.

The research was dedicated to analyze where and how often they purchase clothes and accessories; how often do they waste clothes/accessories and in what manner do they do (for example, if they reuse them or take to recycling point or throw them in to the trash can); what options do people choose when a cloth or an accessory is broken or damaged (for instance, if they repair them or they decide to take it for recycling, keep at home without using it, or throw it in to the trash can). Research participants were also asked if they read posts in social media services or watch videos on YouTube (as an example) where opinion leaders promote clothes or accessories and how often respondents tend to buy things which were recommended to them through social media services.

As it was mentioned in introduction part of this thesis, the majority of research participants are females (Figure 14), most of the respondents are university and/or college students (Figure 15), and the majority of survey participants are people of age from 18 to 29 (Figure 16).
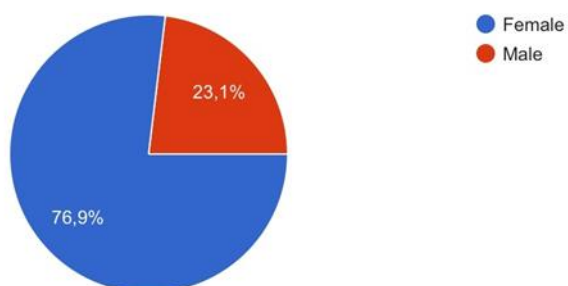
Your gender

39 ответов

Figure 13 Gender (39 respondents)
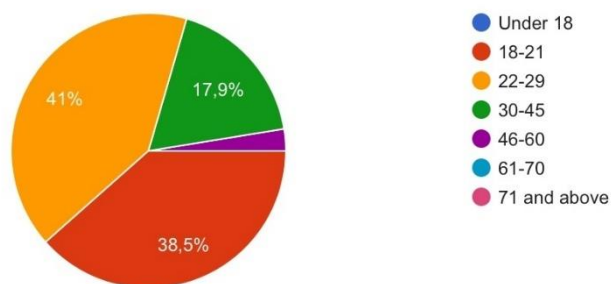
Your age

39 ответов

Figure 14 Age (39 respondents)
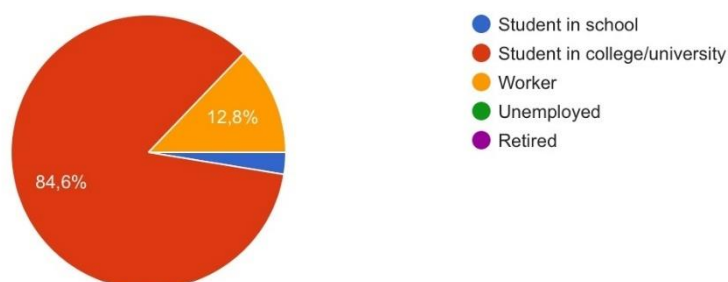
Your occupation

39 ответов

Figure 15 Occupation (39 respondents)

In research on the conscious consumption within fashion industry, the author of this work added several questions to the survey in order to discover the role of bloggers in the increase of consumerism. The first question was: «Do you watch/read bloggers (e.g. in Instagram and/or on YouTube) who promote clothes/accessories in their posts/videos? »

Do you watch/read bloggers (e.g. in Instagram and/or on YouTube) who promote clothes/accessories in their posts/videos?

39 ответов
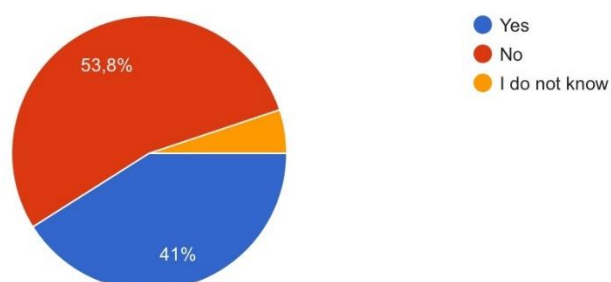
Figure 16 People watching/reading bloggers who make promotions (39 respondents)

It can be seen from the pie chart above, that more than half of respondents do not watch or read bloggers who make promotions of clothes or accessories in their posts or videos, while 41% watch and read bloggers doing promotions in their posts/videos, and 5,2% of respondents answered that they do not know.

The second question was: «Do you buy clothes and/or accessories by recommendations of Instagram/YouTube bloggers? »

Do you buy clothes and/or accessories by recomendations of Instagram/YouTube blogers?

39 ответов
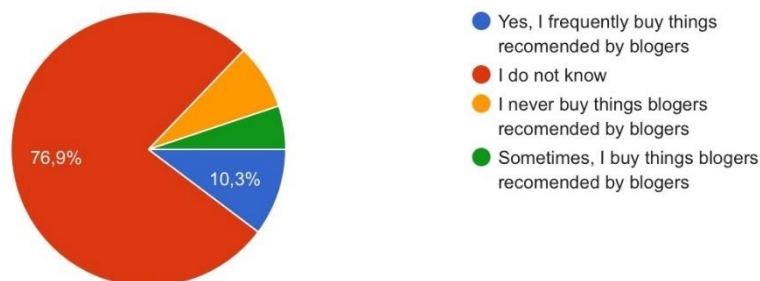
Figure 17 People who make purchases by recommendations of bloggers (39 respondents)

A pie chart above shows, that more than half (76,9%) of the respondents do not know if they purchase clothes or accessories which bloggers recommend in their posts or videos, 10,3% frequently buy clothes or accessories bloggers recommend (promote) in their Instagram posts/YouTube videos, 3 survey participants (7,7%) answered that they never buy any clothes/accessories promoting by bloggers, and 2 respondents (5,1%) sometimes buy clothes or accessories bloggers promote in their posts/videos.

Furthermore, the author of this thesis paid attention on impulsive shopping as a possible accelerator for the growing consumption. Therefore, she asked participants of survey on the conscious consumption within fashion industry if they think they buy more clothes or accessories than they really need. From a pie-chart below it can be seen that the majority of respondents (53,8%) do not think that they buy clothes or accessories which they do not need, while 46,2% of survey participants respond that from time to time they buy something (a garment or an accessory) and they are not sure if they need it and if they will wear it further.

Do you think you buy more clothes/accessories than you actually need?

39 ответов

- Yes, sometimes I buy something and I am not sure if I will wear this
- No, I need everything that I buy

53,8%

46,2%
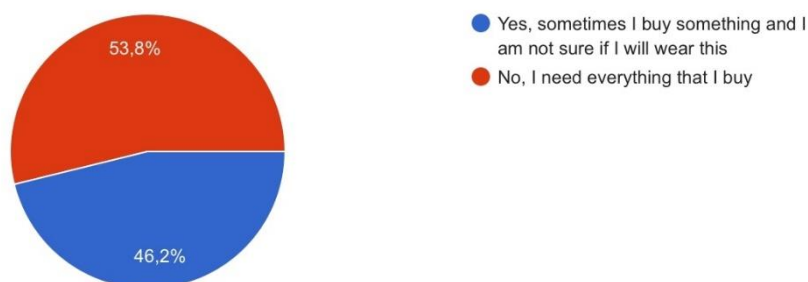
Figure 18 How many people buy more clothes/accessories than they actually need (39 respondents)

Research participants were also asked on where they most often purchase clothes and accessories. A pie-chart below shows that respondents usually buy clothes and accessories in mass-market retailers, rather than in luxury retail stores or second-hand/charity shops.

Where do you the most often buy clothes and/or accessories?

39 ответов

- Mass-market retailers (e.g. Zara, H&M, Mango, Primark, COS, Massimo Dutti, Uniqlo, etc.)
- Luxury retail stores (e.g. Armani, Dolce&Gabbana, Dior, Prada, etc.)
- Second-hand/charity shops

7,7%

82,1%
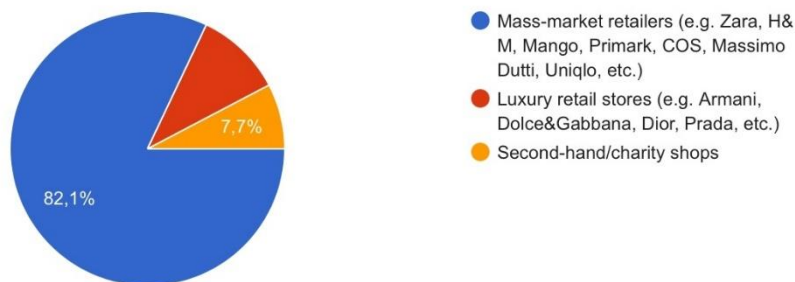
Figure 19 Where usually people buy clothes/accessories (39 respondents)

From the pie-chart we can see, that the majority of respondents (82,1%) purchase clothes and accessories in mass-market retailers such brands as those belonging to Inditex group (Zara, Massimo Dutti), to H&M Group (H&M, COS), and other brands (for example, Mango, Primark, Uniqlo, and others), 10,3% of people participated in this survey the most often purchase fashion industry products in luxury retail stores (to them belong such brands as Armani, Dolce&Gabbana, Dior, Prada, and others), and the rest of respondents (7,7%) usually purchase clothes and accessories in second-hand and/or charity shops.

Overall, at this stage it is possible to conclude that currently second-hand shopping is not that popular than buying new clothes from fast-fashion brands.

People participated in a survey on a conscious consumption within fashion industry were asked several questions related to sustainable and conscious consumption. Firstly, how often they buy new clothes and/or accessories. Secondly, how often they waste their clothes and/or accessories. Finally, do they think if they buy more clothes and/or accessories than they actually need.

How often do you buy new clothes and/or accessories?

39 ответов
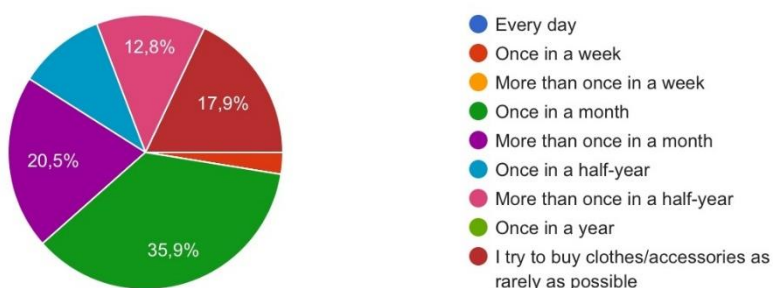
Figure 20 How often people buy new clothes/accessories (39 respondents)

On the first question there were the following responses:

- 35,9% of respondents buy new clothes/accessories once in a year

- 20,5% of respondents buy new clothes/accessories more than once in a month

- 17,9% of respondents try to buy new clothes/accessories as rarely as it is possible

- 12,8% of respondents buy new clothes/accessories more than once in a half-year

- 10,3% of respondents buy new clothes/accessories once in a half-year

- 2,6% of respondents buy new clothes/accessories every week

At the same time, respondents were asked on their awareness on the current problems fashion and textile industries cause to the environment.

Do you know about impacts fashion and textile industries have on the environment?

39 ответов

- Yes, I know (and I try to buy less)
- Yes, I know (and I do not care about it)
- No, I do not know (but I want to know)
- No, I do not know (and I do not want to know)

71,8%   20,5%
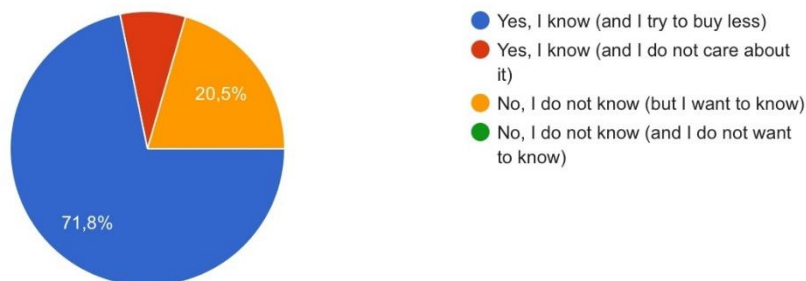
Figure 21 Awareness of people on impacts of fashion and textile industries to the environment (39 respondents)

From a pie-chart above it can be seen, that the majority (71,8%) of people participated in the survey know about environmental problems resulting from fashion and textile industries and try to buy less. 20,5% of respondents do not know about impacts fashion and textile industries cause to the environment, but they want to know about them. At the same time, 7,7% of respondents know about these problems and they do not care about them.

Do you know where you clothes/accessories are being produced?

39 ответов

- Yes, I always read the label in order to know who made my clothes
- Sometimes I read the label
- I never read the label

51,3%   10,3%   38,5%
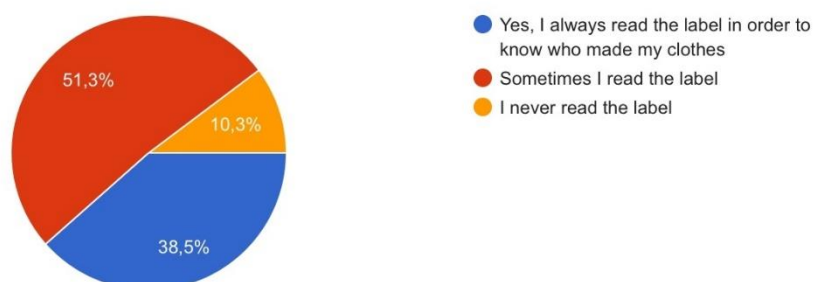
Figure 22 Awareness of people on where (and by whom) clothes/accessories are being produced (39 respondents)

More than half of the respondents (51,3%) from time to time read the label (where the country of production is mentioned). 38,5% of respondents always read the label in order

to be acknowledged on who and where made clothes they buy. 10,3% of respondents never read the label with this purpose.

As for the social problems resulting from fashion and textile industries, survey participants were asked on their awareness about conditions where people produce clothes and accessories.
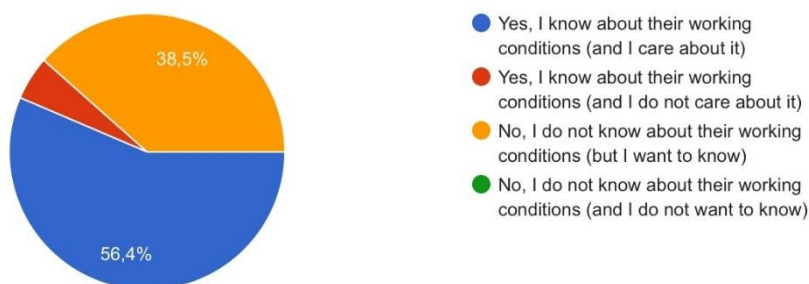

Figure 23 Awareness of people on conditions in which clothes and accessories are being produced (39 respondents)

Mostly (56,4%) people know about these conditions and they care about it. 38,5% of respondents answered that they do not know about conditions in which people produce clothes and accessories, but they want to know about them. 5,1% of respondents also answered that they are aware of poor conditions in which people produce clothes and accessories, but they do not care about it.

Moving to end-life and disposal of garments, as it was already mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the most conscious ways to deal with no more desired clothes or accessories. For example, they can be taken to second-hand store, donated to charity (for instance, handed in to charity shop), or given to friends, family, colleagues or other people. In case, when cloth or accessory is completely worn out, broken or damaged without possibility to repair or redesign it, then it should be given to recycling point.

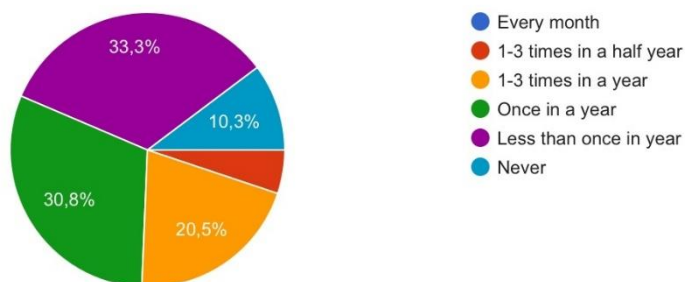How often do you waste clothes and/or accessories?

39 ответов

Figure 24 How often people waste clothes/accessories (39 respondents)

Survey participants were asked on how often they waste their clothes/accessories. From the pie-hart above it can be noticed, that 33,3% of respondents waste clothes/accessories less than once in a year; 30,8% of respondents make it once in a year; 20,5% waste clothes/accessories few times (1-3) in a year; 10,3% never waste clothes/accessories; 5,1% of respondents waste clothes/accessories several times in a half year (1-3 times in a half year).

Respondents also were asked on what they do with clothes/accessories they do not wear (that is how they dispose them), and what they do if clothe/accessory is broken or damaged.

What do you do with clothes/accessories you do not wear?

39 ответов
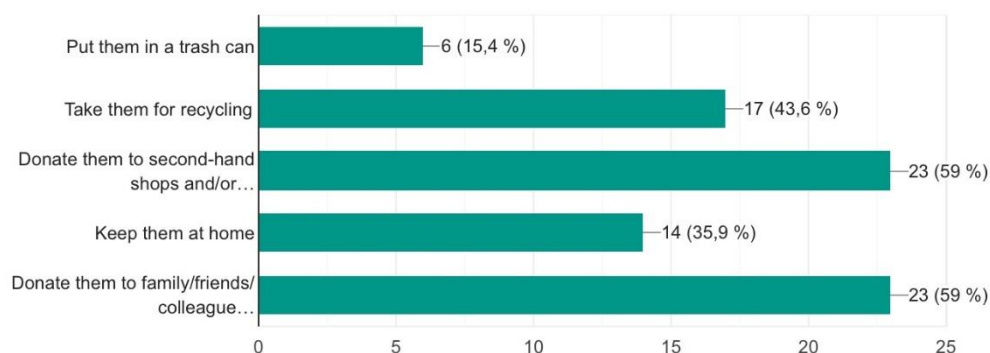
Figure 25 What people do with clothes/accessories they do not wear (39 respondents)

Respondents were able to choose several answers to this question. Handed clothes/accessories into second-hand shops and donating them to charity (for example, handed in to

charity shops), as well as giving them to family/friends/colleagues/other acquaintances were chosen as options to dispose clothes/accessories by 23 people (which accounted for 59% of all respondents). Taking clothes/accessories to recycling point was chosen by 17 respondents (43,6%). 14 people (35,9%) chose as an option keeping those clothes/accessories they do not wear at home. 6 people (15,4%) answered that they put them in a trash can.

What do you do with damaged/broken clothes and/or accessories?
39 ответов
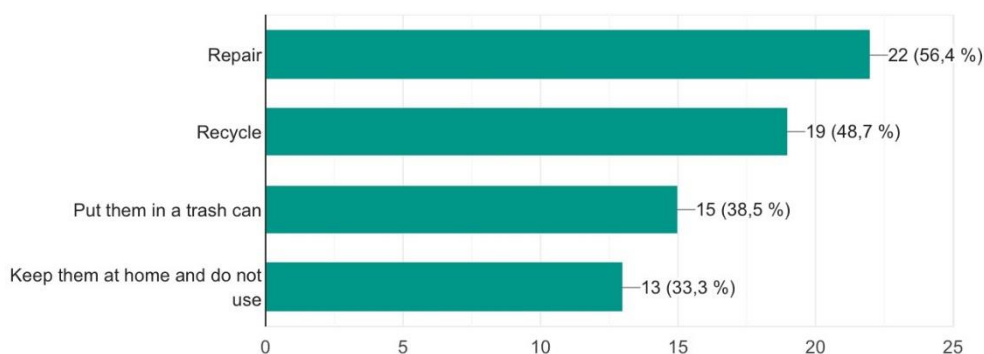
Figure 26 What people do with damaged/broken clothes/accessories (39 respondents)

To this question, there were also possible to choose several answers. 22 respondents (56,4%) repair damaged/broken clothes/accessories; 19 (48,7% of respondents) recycle them; 15 survey participants (38,5%) put them in a trash can; 13 respondents (33,3%) answered that the keep these clothes/accessories at home without using them.

They were also asked if they saw or if they knew about the documentary movie «The True Cost» (2015) showing both environmental and societal problems resulting from fashion industry, if they have seen it, and if they are interested in it.

Do you know about "The True Cost" (2015) documentary, which observes what impacts fashion industry has on the environment and soceity?
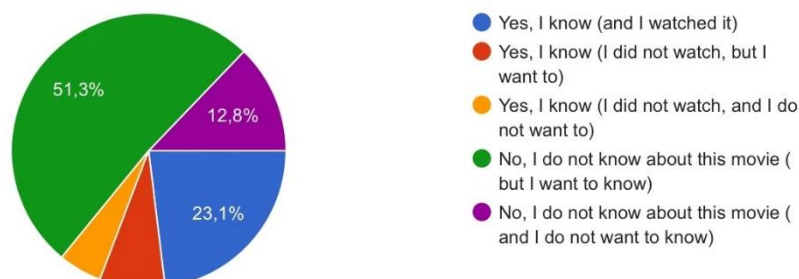
39 ответов

- ● Yes, I know (and I watched it)
- ● Yes, I know (I did not watch, but I want to)
- ● Yes, I know (I did not watch, and I do not want to)
- ● No, I do not know about this movie (but I want to know)
- ● No, I do not know about this movie (and I do not want to know)

Figure 27 Awareness of people on «The True Cost» (2015) documentary movie (39 re-spondents)

As it can be seen from the pie-chart above can be seen, that majority (51,3%) of respond-ents do not know about this documentary, but they are interested in it and now they want to see it; 23,1% of research participants already have seen this documentary; 12,8% of respondents do not know about it and they do not want to see it; 7,7% of survey partici-pants answered, that they know about this movie, they have not seen it, but they want to see it; 5,1% of respondents answered, that they know about this documentary, they have not seen it and do not want to.

6   CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The following chapter contains conclusions which were made from literature review and the research conducted by the author of this thesis. It also involves summary with author`s thoughts on possible further researches.

6.1   Conclusions

It is possible to end this thesis with the following conclusions. Currently there are many problems for the environment and society resulting from fashion and textile industries, and because of fast fashion system in particular. Referring to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which was a result of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) that took place in Rio de Janeiro (June 1992), already mentioned above in this study Green Strategy proposed 11 principles (advices) for sustainable fashion industry, which are determined as follows:

- Sustainable development will be achieved in case protection of the environment has a crucial role during processes and activities within fashion industry;

- It is important for the industry of fashion to particularly prioritize conditions and needs of developing countries (especially, those which are least developed and to the greatest extent environmentally vulnerable);

- An integral part of sustainable development is partnership; thus, fashion industry should cooperate for the benefit of the environment with other areas and businesses;

- Companies operating in fashion industry and located in developed countries should inform executives on the matters of sustainable development, the pressure to the environment they cause, and resources that they possess;

- Unsustainable production and consumption should be diminished and stopped, and fashion industry should work in this direction;

- People working in the industry of fashion should cooperate in order to enhance the internal capacity through science and technologies;

- The environment need to be protected, that is why fashion industry should operate carefully in order not to make a situation worse;

- Those activities and projects of fashion industry which may threaten the environment of the essence must be examined beforehand on the possible impacts to the environment;

- Women are important actors in environmental management and fashion industry`s development, and it is particularly important that they are fully involved in order to reach sustainable development;

- There is a strong connection among peace, development, and environmental protection. That is why, fashion industry cannot operate when it does not protect the environment, as well as it cannot use socioeconomic advantages as an excuse for the negative effects is cause to the environment. (Brismar 2015)

It is obvious, that sustainable development and sustainable fashion industry is not possible without consumers` contribution to the development and their interest and involvement in sustainability issues. As it was said by Anna Lappé (an activist and a writer):

> *Every time you spend money, you're casting a vote for the kind of world*
>
> *you want (Anna Lappé as cited in Aburam 2017).*

The quote mentioned above can be referred to so-called Dollar (or here any other currency may be inserted) voting. So, what is meant by Dollar voting? Dollar voting is an approach implying careful consideration of influences when making a purchase. This practice usually relates to the environment, human rights, and societal and cultural points of views. Consumer demand is crucial and possess a high level of force, so it is able to significantly contribute in shifts within the environment, societies, and economies. (Spacey 2016)

In this way, it is possible to conclude, that conscious consumption is crucial when we speak sustainable fashion industry. It is also very important to raise awareness on the existing problems, as how it was discovered through survey on conscious consumption within fashion industry, generally, people do not know that these problems exist, but they are interested to know about them. The author of this thesis would like to end it with the reference to the documentary movie which inspired her to choose this topic and write about it. It was already mentioned about that documentary, which is known as The True Cost (2015). Author suppose, that every consumer should watch it in order to know about the impacts of fashion industry, as through knowledge leading to actions it is possible to achieve changes.

6.2   Summary

Overall, in the end of this thesis, it can be summarized, that the main research question was particularly valuable. It was discovered, that currently fashion industry makes significant negative effects to both environment and society (as it was mentioned in the second chapter). It is obvious, that changes should be made as soon as possible, as sustainable future cannot be achieved when such a huge and profitable industry cause issues affecting people and planet.

Furthermore, findings which were gained from the theoretical part of the thesis contributed in examining the importance of a consumer and its decision when we think and talk on sustainability and sustainable fashion industry. Some people tend to say, that single person desiring to make the world and people lives better will not succeed. However, the power of a consumer`s demand is huge, and as it was written on the matter of Dollar voting, changes in fashion industry and its operations are possible, if consumers wish so and he/she decides not to choose goods which are offered by unsustainable producer. Conscious and sustainable consumption is also crucial in case of positive shifts within fashion industry as not only production matters and should be change, but the way people purchase new clothes and accessories. Therefore, we need to consider slow fashion and adhere to it (instead of fast fashion), buy less garments and of better quality which will be consumed for longer.

For answering the key research question, auxiliary sub-questions were essential. It was discovered, how and in what ways consumer behavior is affected. We have seen, that, nowadays, Internet and opinion leaders have significant roles and they are able to influence consumerism.

As for the research, it contributed in getting a deeper look on the current situation. It was possible to notice, that there are people who are not aware on the existing problems in the environment and society resulting from fashion industry, but usually people are willing to know. What is also important, that mostly people are ready to act for achieving changes (for example, when research participants were asked if they know about present environmental impacts of the fashion industry, 71,8% of respondents answered, that they are aware of them and they try to buy less clothes and accessories). Research as a primary data collection, as well as reliable data gathered from books, studies, articles and other online sources which were involved in the secondary data collection are contributed in getting answers to research questions which were established in the introduction part. In this way, it can be stated that this study is reliable and valid.

Therefore, for further researches there could be studied the ways contributing in spreading information on the existing problems and possible solutions. As the Internet and bloggers can contribute in growing fashion consumption, it is also possible to examine potential of Internet in case of shifts which can be made towards conscious consumption (for example, there might be possible attracting consumers attention to eco-bloggers promoting slow fashion, sustainability, and conscious consumption). In the future, there also can be organized the research on factors influencing consumers to buy consciously and sustainably (for instance, they do this because of climate crisis and they want to contribute in its prevention or they are vegans and so they do not want animals to suffer because of non-environmentally-friendly production; they could also read stories on unethical labor practices and so they decided not to support unethical fashion companies; or both social and environmental problems make them involved and interested in the matters of sustainability and stimulate them to be conscious consumers).

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APPENDICES

List of questions and responses (39 respondents) for survey on conscious consumption within fashion industry:

1. Your gender.

Your gender

39 ответов
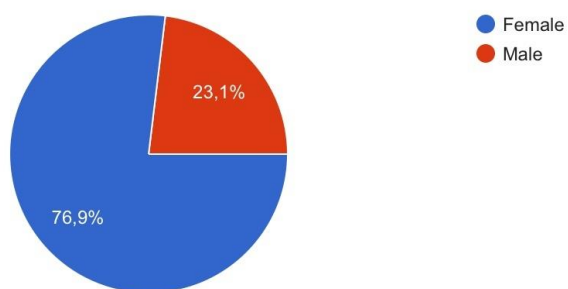
2. Your age.

Your age

39 ответов
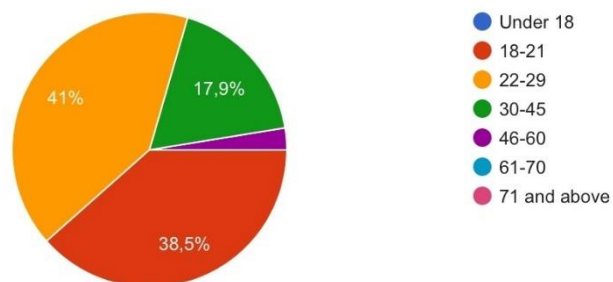
3. Your occupation.

Your occupation

39 ответов
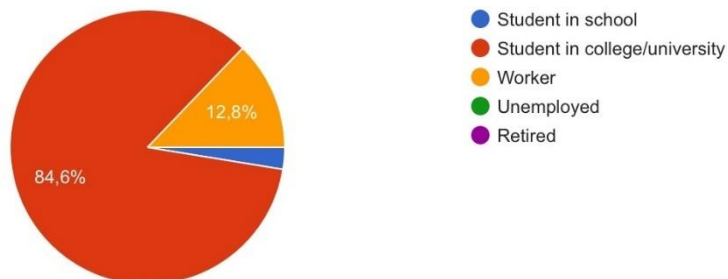
Legend:
- Student in school
- Student in college/university
- Worker
- Unemployed
- Retired

84,6%
12,8%

4. How often do you buy new clothes and/or accessories?

How often do you buy new clothes and/or accessories?

39 ответов

Legend:
- Every day
- Once in a week
- More than once in a week
- Once in a month
- More than once in a month
- Once in a half-year
- More than once in a half-year
- Once in a year
- I try to buy clothes/accessories as rarely as possible

12,8%
17,9%
20,5%
35,9%
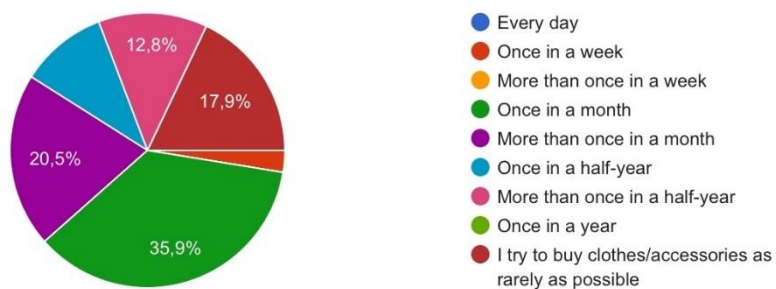
5. Where do you the most often buy clothes and/or accessories?

Where do you the most often buy clothes and/or accessories?
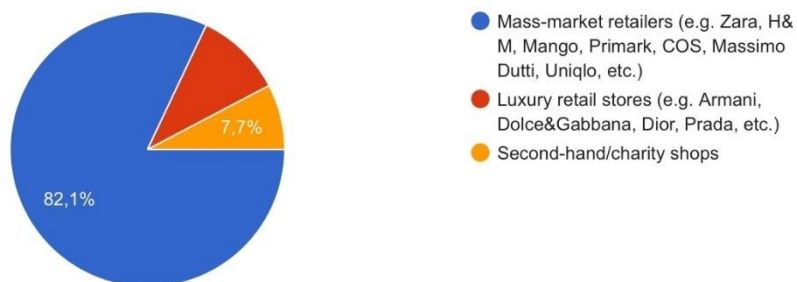
39 ответов

Legend:
- Mass-market retailers (e.g. Zara, H&M, Mango, Primark, COS, Massimo Dutti, Uniqlo, etc.)
- Luxury retail stores (e.g. Armani, Dolce&Gabbana, Dior, Prada, etc.)
- Second-hand/charity shops

82,1%
7,7%

6. How often do you waste clothes and/or accessories?

How often do you waste clothes and/or accessories?

39 ответов

- Every month
- 1-3 times in a half year
- 1-3 times in a year
- Once in a year
- Less than once in year
- Never

33,3%
10,3%
30,8%
20,5%
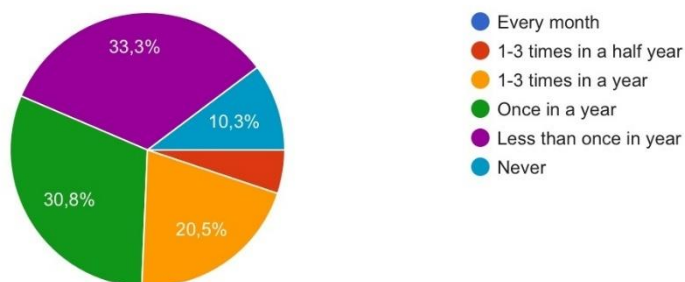
7. What do you do with clothes and/or accessories you do not wear?

What do you do with clothes/accessories you do not wear?

39 ответов

Put them in a trash can	6 (15,4 %)
Take them for recycling	17 (43,6 %)
Donate them to second-hand shops and/or…	23 (59 %)
Keep them at home	14 (35,9 %)
Donate them to family/friends/ colleague…	23 (59 %)
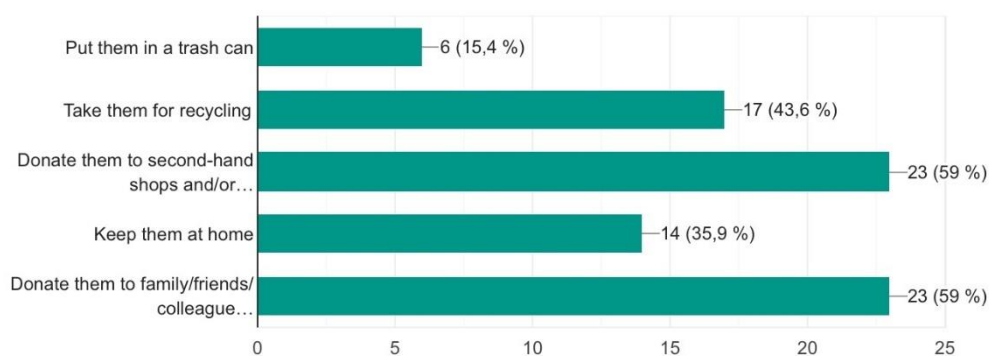
8. What do you do with damaged/broken clothes and/or accessories?

What do you do with damaged/broken clothes and/or accessories?

39 ответов

Repair	22 (56,4 %)
Recycle	19 (48,7 %)
Put them in a trash can	15 (38,5 %)
Keep them at home and do not use	13 (33,3 %)
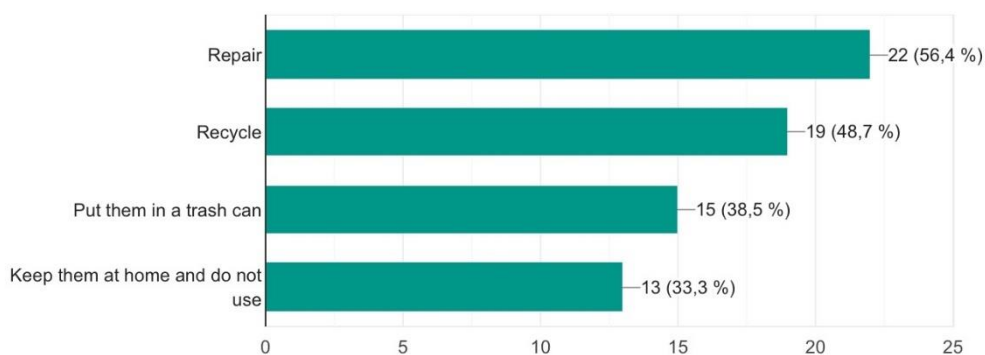
9. Do you know about impacts fashion and textile industries have on the environment?

Do you know about impacts fashion and textile industries have on the environment?

39 ответов

- Yes, I know (and I try to buy less)
- Yes, I know (and I do not care about it)
- No, I do not know (but I want to know)
- No, I do not know (and I do not want to know)

71,8%
20,5%
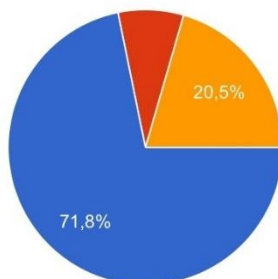
10. Do you know where your clothes and/or accessories are being produced?

Do you know where you clothes/accessories are being produced?
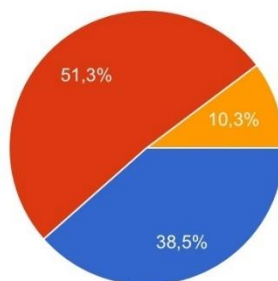
39 ответов

- Yes, I always read the label in order to know who made my clothes
- Sometimes I read the label
- I never read the label

51,3%
10,3%
38,5%

11. Do you know about conditions in which people produce clothes and accessories?

Do you know about conditions in which people produce clothes and accessories?

39 ответов
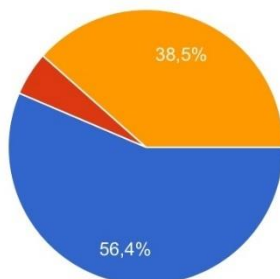
- Yes, I know about their working conditions (and I care about it)
- Yes, I know about their working conditions (and I do not care about it)
- No, I do not know about their working conditions (but I want to know)
- No, I do not know about their working conditions (and I do not want to know)

38,5%

56,4%

12. Do you think you buy more clothes/accessories than you actually need?

Do you think you buy more clothes/accessories than you actually need?
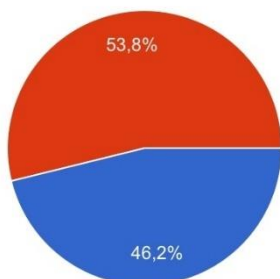
39 ответов

- Yes, sometimes I buy something and I am not sure if I will wear this
- No, I need everything that I buy

53,8%

46,2%

13. Do you watch/read bloggers (e.g. in Instagram and/or on YouTube) who promote clothes/accessories in their posts/videos?

Do you watch/read bloggers (e.g. in Instagram and/or on YouTube) who promote clothes/accessories in their posts/videos?

39 ответов

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

53,8%

41%
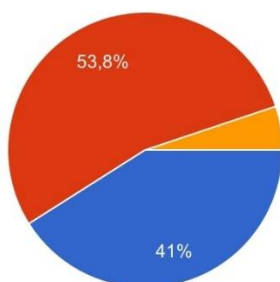
14. Do you think advertisement influence you and stimulates you to buy clothes/accessories?

Do you think advertisement influence you and stimulates you to buy clothes/accessories?

39 ответов

- 30,8%
- 17,9%
- 51,3%

- ● Yes, I think advertisement has an influence on me
- ● No, I make decisions on my own and do not pay attention on what people promote to me
- ● I do not know

15. Do you buy clothes and/or accessories by recommendations of Instagram/YouTube bloggers?

Do you buy clothes and/or accessories by recomendations of Instagram/YouTube blogers?

39 ответов

- 76,9%
- 10,3%

- ● Yes, I frequently buy things recomended by blogers
- ● I do not know
- ● I never buy things blogers recomended by blogers
- ● Sometimes, I buy things blogers recomended by blogers

16. Do you know about «The True Cost» (2015) documentary, which observes what impacts fashion industry has on the environment and society?

Do you know about "The True Cost" (2015) documentary, which observes what impacts fashion industry has on the environment and soceity?

39 ответов

- ● Yes, I know (and I watched it)
- ● Yes, I know (I did not watch, but I want to)
- ● Yes, I know (I did not watch, and I do not want to)
- ● No, I do not know about this movie (but I want to know)
- ● No, I do not know about this movie (and I do not want to know)

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES