

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR OF POLISH CONSUMERS

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1 INTRODUCTION

One of the directions of change in consumption is that of the development of socially responsible consumption, which encompasses sustainable purchasing, recycling, co-sharing of goods, provision of services as an alternative for purchasing. Hence, it may be assumed that a socially responsible consumer is a person who is socially conscious of his/her consumer choices, while also ready to give up the consumption of goods that are damaging to the natural and social environment. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has developed as an area of research in the last few years [1]. It has been observed that consumers in terms of their consumer choices are more frequently guided by such factors as the following: climate change, global warming and social development of marginalized social groups [2], while their preferences relating to responsible consumption are constantly rising [3]. From the perspectives of research on CSR, it is significant to define its dimensions. The most important of these may be enumerated as follows: ethical issues in relations with producers, ethical exchange of goods, while also relations with the natural environment and relations with the local community.

2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research aim was formulated, which was to identify the patterns of socially responsible consumption in Poland. The assumed goal was executed thanks to the application of the survey method, with the aid of a questionnaire. Empirical research with the aid of a standardized survey questionnaire conducted with the CAWI technique in December 2024. Research was of the nature representative for the adult population of Polish people. The research was participated in by 1,081 respondents, including 50% women and 50% men, aged between 18–24 (7%), 25–34 (17%), 35–44 (20%), 45–54 (18%), 55 years of age and older (38%).

3 RESULTS

The most important dimension of CSR in the opinions of the Polish people analysed is that of purchases made on the basis of geographical origin. Subsequent to this in terms of importance for Polish people would be purchases of products connected with social goals. Relatively less important are purchases from small local firms and purchases of products with ethical elements. Generally speaking, the notion of CSR is executed to a moderate degree by consumers in Poland.

With the aim of defining the impact of the notion of CSR on the behaviour of consumers, analysis was conducted on the relations between its dimensions and socio-demographic features. The research findings indicate the significant differences between the variables that facilitated the building of the profile of socially responsible consumers. In the area of the purchases of products associated with social goals, it was observed that the most significant is that of the boycott of

products of firms, which are deemed to be illegal (black market). This aspect is paid attention to by women to the greatest extent, people aged 55 and more, while also those with higher level education and those who live in a city of 100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants.

The acquisition of products with an ethical element is an important dimension of CSR. One of the criteria in terms of the purchasing of a product is the information that some of the price is allocated towards humanitarian aims. This is important for women, people aged 55 and more, those with higher level of education, while also those living in cities inhabited by 20,000 to 99,000 people.

Supporting locally manufactured products is another analysed area of CSR. The majority of respondents pays attention to the country of origin and chooses products manufactured in Poland. In particular this refers to the purchase of fruit and vegetables cultivated in Poland. Purchases are declared by both women and men, people aged 55 years or more, while also those of higher education living in cities of between 20,000 and 99,000 inhabitants.

Another area of research is the support of local firms through the prism of acquiring products in small shops, local shops or village shops. If consumers decide to make purchases in local shops, this is usually small bakery shops, butcher shops or bookshops. This refers to the majority of women, aged 45–54, with vocational level education, or living in rural areas.

Care of the natural environment is another dimension of CSR. Research indicates that the majority of Polish people declare activities aimed at the protection of the natural environment, which is shown by research, including restriction of the consumption of products that damage the natural environment, namely, energy, clothing, while also food at the level of actual needs. In the majority of cases, such behaviour is declared by women, while also people aged 55 or more, those with medium level education, as well as those living in cities between 100,000 and 199,000, while also between 200,000 and 499,000 inhabitants.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the dimensions of socially responsible consumption, namely, the acquisition of products connected with social goals, while also the acquisition of products with an ethical element, making purchases in small firms, as well as purchases on the basis of the geographical origin of the product and activities based on the protection of the environment indicates its great potential for development for Poland. The geographical dimension of products was highly rated. The majority of Polish people indicated that in terms of purchasing decisions, they take into account the goods manufactured in Poland, among others, cosmetics, clothing, footwear and food, namely fruit and vegetables. The second important dimension of CSR is the acquisition of products associated with the social goals, namely, the purchase of products of firms that respect their employees, while also do not employ children and do not damage the natural environment. A significant dimension of CSR for Polish people is the restriction of the consumption of products that endanger the natural environment. Research indicates that consumers may display socially responsible attitudes in terms of consumption in varied ways.

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