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SCIENTIFIC MONOGRAPH

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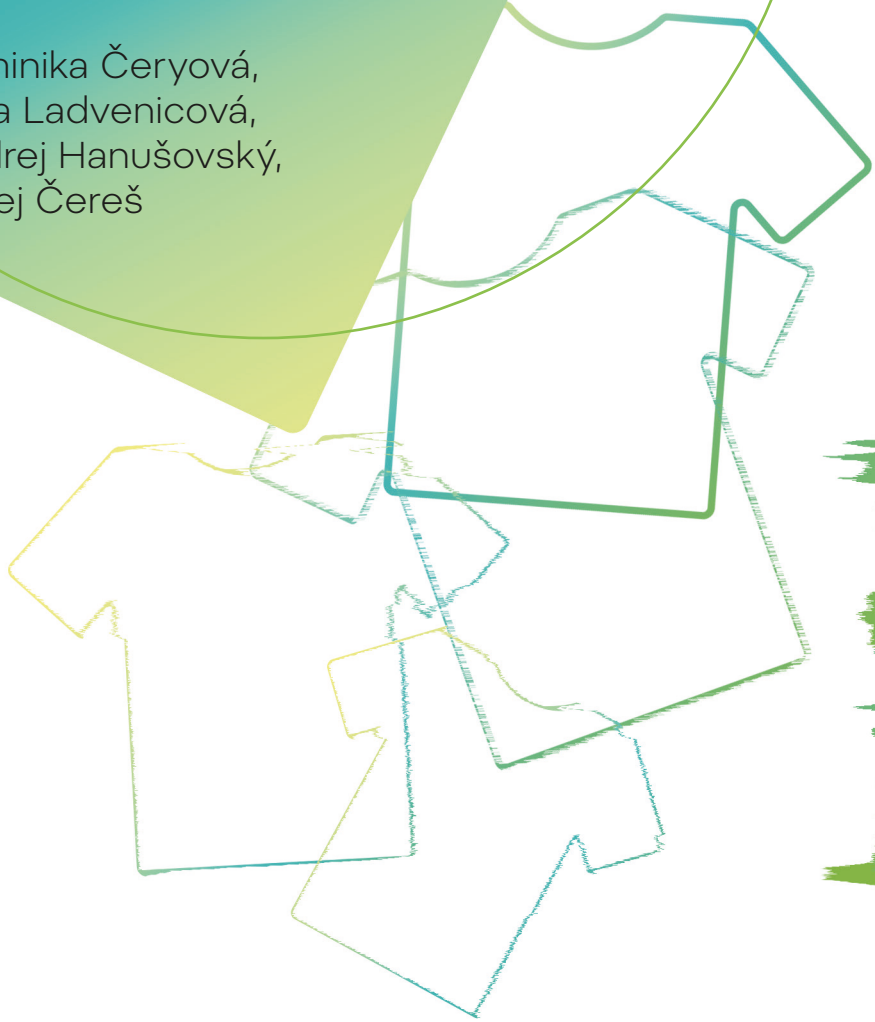

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Abstract

The study addresses consumer behaviour in relation to the phenomenon of fast fashion, which currently represents a significant economic, social, and environmental issue. The main aim of the study was to analyse consumer behaviour in relation to fast fashion, identify the factors influencing consumer decision-making when purchasing clothing, and assess the extent to which the social, economic, and environmental impacts of fast fashion are perceived. At the same time, the research sought to verify whether respondents' attitudes and purchasing behaviour differ statistically significantly according to selected socio-demographic and economic characteristics. To achieve the stated aim, a quantitative research method was employed, specifically a questionnaire survey conducted through an online questionnaire created in Microsoft Forms. The research sample consisted of 577 respondents. The collected data were pre-processed in Microsoft Excel and subsequently analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics. The analysis included descriptive statistical indicators and one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANO-VA), complemented by Tukey's post hoc tests. The results showed that respondents attach the greatest importance to quality, price, and design/style when purchasing clothing, whereas less importance is assigned to brand, country of origin, and fashion trends. At the same time, the findings confirmed that respondents perceive mainly the environmental and social impacts of fast fashion relatively intensively, particularly textile waste, low wages, exploitation of employees, water pollution, and human rights violations. The research also pointed to a certain dicrepancy between awareness and purchasing behaviour, as respondents who had heard of fast fashion perceived its negative consequences more intensively, while respondents who purchase it held a less negative attitude towards it. Statistical testing of the hypotheses confirmed significant differences according to gender, awareness of fast fashion, declared fast fashion purchasing, personal income, household income, generational affiliation, and education. The findings indicate that fast fashion cannot be understood as a uniform consumer phenomenon, but rather as a complex issue intertwined with consumers' values, awareness, economic situation, and lifestyle.

Keywords: fast fashion, consumer behaviour, sustainability, purchasing decision-making, social impacts, environmental impacts, one-way ANOVA

Abstrakt

Práca sa zaoberá problematikou spotrebiteľského správania vo vzťahu k fenoménu fast fashion, ktorý v súčasnosti predstavuje významný ekonomický, sociálny aj environmentálny problém. Hlavným cieľom práce bolo analyzovať spotrebiteľské správanie vo vzťahu k fast fashion, identifikovať faktory ovplyvňujúce rozhodovanie spotrebiteľov pri kúpe oblečenia a posúdiť mieru vnímania sociálnych, ekonomických a environmentálnych dopadov fast fashion. Súčasne sa výskum zameral na overenie, či sa postoje a nákupné správanie respondentov štatisticky významne líšia podľa vybraných socio-demografických a ekonomických charakteristík. Na dosiahnutie stanoveného cieľa bola použitá kvantitatívna metóda výskumu, konkrétne dotazníkový prieskum realizovaný prostredníctvom online dotazníka v prostredí Microsoft Forms. Výskumný súbor tvorilo 577 respondentov. Získané údaje boli predspracované v programe Microsoft Excel a následne analyzované v programe IBM SPSS Statistics. V rámci spracovania boli použité deskriptívne štatistické ukazovatele a jednofaktorová analýza rozptylu (One-Way ANOVA), doplnená o Tukeyho post hoc testy. Výsledky ukázali, že respondenti pri kúpe oblečenia pripisujú najväčší význam kvalite, cene a dizajnu/štýlu, zatiaľ čo menší význam pripisujú značke, krajine pôvodu a módnym trendom. Súčasne sa potvrdilo, že respondenti relatívne intenzívne vnímajú najmä environmentálne a sociálne dopady fast fashion, najmä textilný odpad, nízke mzdy, vykorisťovanie zamestnancov, znečistenie vody a porušovanie ľudských práv. Výskum zároveň poukázal na určitý nesúlad medzi informovanosťou a nákupným správaním, keďže respondenti, ktorí o fast fashion počuli, intenzívnejšie vnímajú jej negatívne dôsledky, no respondenti, ktorí ju nakupujú, majú k nej menej negatívny postoj. Štatistické testovanie hypotéz potvrdilo významné rozdiely podľa pohlavia, znalosti fast fashion, deklarovaného nákupu fast fashion, osobného príjmu, príjmu domácnosti, generačnej príslušnosti a vzdelania. Výsledky poukazujú na to, že fast fashion nemožno chápať ako jednotný spotrebiteľský jav, ale ako komplexný fenomén, ktorý sa prelína s hodnotami, informovanosťou, ekonomickou situáciou a životným štýlom spotrebiteľov.

Kľúčové slová: fast fashion, spotrebiteľské správanie, udržateľnosť, nákupné rozhodovanie, sociálne dopady, environmentálne dopady, jednofaktorová ANOVA

OBSAH

INTRODUCTION

Fast fashion currently represents one of the most prominent phenomena of the fashion industry and, at the same time, one of the most widely discussed problems of contemporary consumer society. Its essence lies in the rapid production and distribution of affordable clothing that responds to current fashion trends and encourages a high frequency of purchases. This consumption model has become an important part of the everyday lives of broad groups of consumers, particularly younger generations. Despite its accessibility and attractiveness, however, fast fashion is increasingly associated with a number of negative consequences, not only at the environmental level, but also in the social and economic spheres.

From an environmental perspective, fast fashion is associated with the excessive consumption of natural resources, a high volume of textile waste, water pollution, and an increasing carbon footprint. From a social perspective, the issue involves low wages, poor working conditions, the exploitation of employees, and child labour. The economic dimension of fast fashion is mainly connected with pressure to reduce production costs, shorten production cycles, and support a model of continuous consumption. As a result, fast fashion has become not only a matter of fashion preferences, but also a subject of broader academic discussion concerning responsible consumption, sustainability, and ethics.

Consumers play a key role in this process. Their preferences, attitudes, level of awareness, and specific purchasing decisions significantly influence the functioning of this market. On the one hand, consumers often declare sensitivity to environmental and social problems; on the other hand, their actual purchasing behaviour remains largely oriented towards price, availability, and design. This ambivalence creates space for a deeper examination of the relationship between awareness, value orientation, and consumer practice.

The present study therefore focuses on the analysis of consumer behaviour in relation to fast fashion, on the identification of factors influencing decision-making when purchasing clothing, and on the assessment of the extent to which the negative impacts of this phenomenon are perceived. Special attention is also paid to whether respondents' attitudes and purchasing behaviour differ according to selected socio-demographic and economic characteristics. The study thus contributes to a better understanding of how consumers perceive fast fashion, what role they assign to it in their purchasing behaviour, and to what extent environmental and social awareness is reflected in their decision-making.

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 FASHION AND FAST FASHION

Fashion is not a purposefully created, ambitious image understood as a traditional value with a precisely defined function or purpose. On the contrary, it represents a stimulating and refreshing concept that is significant enough to attract social appreciation, while at the same time deepening our instinctiveness. Fashion itself reflects social, economic, political, and cultural developments, while also expressing modernism and the spirit of its time. The product no longer constitutes the main object of interest; this position has been assumed by the brand that gives it value (Kaur & Singh, 2024).
The emergence of the clothing industry dates back to the late seventeenth century in Great Britain. With the development of trade, people no longer wanted to make their own clothes. The fashion industry was once accessible only to the wealthy. Socioeconomic and demographic changes led to the differentiation of clothing and consumer types. Product variety was limited (Linden, 2016).

The apparel industry has evolved significantly, especially over the last 20 years. The changing dynamics of the fashion industry have forced retailers to strive for low costs, flexibility in design, quality, and speed to market, which are key strategies for maintaining a profitable position in the current market (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2009).

The apparel industry has been fundamentally influenced by technological advances, changing consumer behaviour, and globalisation. Such developments have led to an increase not only in the production but also in the consumption of clothing. Global clothing production more than doubled between 2000 and 2014, reaching more than 100 billion pieces of clothing annually (Markandeya & Gon, 2025).

The garment industry is important for many countries in terms of various indicators, such as employment, gross domestic product, and foreign trade. It is especially important in developing countries, which provide cheap labour. Its importance is not only economic, but also social, as it provides jobs and income for workers. Its potential contributes to the long-term growth and development of the country (Keane & Velde, 2008).

The role of the textile industry is to produce various fabrics, yarns, and other products from various plant and synthetic fibers, as well as wool. It primarily processes textile raw materials, hemp, silk, wool, linen, yarn, non-woven fabrics, knitwear, textiles, etc. Its products are used in the production of clothing, footwear, and in other industries (Normuminovich *et al*., 2021).

The fast fashion industry has been the most dynamic fashion sector since the late 1990s. This business model has grown faster than the fashion industry itself, and its market share has increased, mainly due to the international expansion of companies such as Inditex, H&M, Gap, Primark, Topshop, etc. (Miranda & Roldán, 2023), which have used innovative supply chain management techniques that have enabled them to respond quickly to market demands (Ahmad, 2024).

Fast fashion is a term characterized by rapid clothing production cycles designed to meet the latest trends while remaining affordable to a broad consumer base. It is characterized by a business model that prioritizes cost efficiency and a rapid response to changing consumer preferences (Camargo *et al*., 2020).

Fast fashion supports a cycle of hyperconsumption, meaning that clothes are bought quickly, worn briefly, and then discarded, thereby fostering a culture of disposability (Barnes *et al*., 2006). Its dynamic nature is driven by microseasons, in which brands release new collections virtually every two weeks in order to respond quickly to changing consumer preferences and trends. The emergence of microseasons has disrupted the traditional seasonal cycle of the fashion industry. Consumers are no longer satisfied with the two-season model of spring/summer and autumn/winter but demand new products every few weeks. This presents a significant challenge for the industry, both from the perspective of manufacturers, who must be able to produce products, and from the perspective of suppliers, who must deliver products to the market quickly and efficiently while ensuring their quality (Alam *et al*., 2023).

The concept of fast fashion implies short delivery times, but it also focuses on disposable clothing—products that are intentionally designed to have a short life cycle. This disposable nature reflects the increasing consumer desire for new fashion at lower prices (Gabrielli *et al*., 2013). Large brands such as Zara and H&M are examples of this approach. They frequently update their inventory with new styles that reflect current trends, thereby encouraging consumers to make repeat purchases (Draskovic *et al*., 2018).

Fast fashion refers to cheap clothing collections that imitate current luxury fashion trends. Fast fashion embodies unsustainability. It satisfies the desires of young consumers for luxury fashion. The latest fashion styles quickly displace previous ones, which often end up in the trash (Joy *et al*., 2015).

The main goal of fast fashion is to satisfy consumer demand for new and attractive pieces of clothing, which leads to frequent shopping and the subsequent disposal of clothing. This approach reinforces a culture of overconsumption, in which clothing and accessories are perceived as disposable items that are quickly replaced (Hackett, 2019).

The term ultra-fast fashion can be described as an extreme iteration of the fast fashion model, characterized by accelerated production and distribution cycles, a rapid response to market trends, and a focus on creating affordable and trend-oriented garments in a fraction of the time traditionally required. This phenomenon leverages

advances in technology and digital platforms to satisfy consumers' insatiable demands for novelty and variety (Ertekin & Atik, 2014; Qu, 2024).

The concept of ultra-fast fashion builds on the foundations laid by fast fashion retailers such as H&M and Zara, which revolutionized the garment life cycle from design to retail (Bick *et al*., 2018).

The fast fashion segment is also influenced by social media. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have changed the retail landscape by creating a culture of immediacy and responsiveness to trends, which has exposed fashion-conscious consumers to new styles. This rapid communication and the global reach of digital platforms have led to a significant increase in consumption in this segment (Elram & Orna, 2015).

Soni (2024) examines the relationship between social media marketing, Generation Z consumers, and the fast fashion industry. He analyses the impact of social media platforms on the fast fashion industry. Marketing exploits the power of social media, making use of trends and facilitating direct connections with consumers. Social media accelerates fashion trends and consumption patterns.

The fast fashion industry is projected to reach a value of $29.1 billion by 2032, with a year-on-year growth rate of 10.7%. The use of celebrities and deceptive marketing strategies (greenwashing) is effective in creating protective barriers around fast fashion companies (Chung, 2025).

Social media plays a key role in the fast fashion industry. The fashion industry has social and economic consequences around the world. Marketing techniques in the fast fashion industry also focus on the use of platforms such as Instagram, which is revolutionary for clothing sales because it allows rapid interaction, especially with the younger generation (Park *et al*., 2016).

Consumer decisions in the fast fashion industry to purchase large quantities of clothing are supported by advertising on social media. Influencers and fashion bloggers shape consumer decisions, thereby increasing demand in fast fashion. The study examines the correlation between positive and negative social media conversations, consumers, and increases and decreases in purchase intention. The research confirmed the hypothesis that fashion-oriented consumers are more influenced by buyer reviews on social media (Elram & Steiner, 2015).

Duffy & Hund (2015) present fashion blogging as one of the most commercially successful and publicly visible forms of digital cultural production. The authors conducted a qualitative analysis of textual and visual content published by leading bloggers, supplemented by interviews with bloggers.

Studies show that an online presence and customer engagement through social media increase brand awareness and customer loyalty, which directly affects sales growth. The survey was conducted with 150 participants, and the data were analysed using Pearson's correlation coefficient (Sudirjo *et al*., 2023).

Park & Kim (2016) argue that the influence of social media leads to a faster product life cycle, as consumers are constantly exposed to new trends and pressure to make quick decisions. The effectiveness of social marketing also affects the extent to which consumers are able to change their preferences and behaviour on the basis of the latest trends published online.

Fitriana *et al*. (2025) studied the impact of fast fashion on students' consumer culture. They analysed the data using a Likert scale. They found that students prefer fast fashion products, and that their purchase decisions are influenced by factors such as lower prices and the ability to buy goods online. Students' economic situation also plays a role, as many of them are financially supported by their parents.

Similar research was conducted by Stachowiak-Krzyźan (2021). She states that social media platforms are a key marketing communication channel for clothing companies in the purchasing decision-making process of young consumers. They generate needs, but they are also a valuable source of inspiration during the phase of searching for opportunities to satisfy those needs. Women are more active on clothing brand profiles on social networks, using discount coupons, commenting on content, liking and sharing it, and participating in competitions.

1.2 FAST FASHION VERSUS SLOW FASHION

Fashion in the 21st century is typically associated with fast fashion, characterized by mass production, high turnover, and short product life cycles. In the current global fashion market, however, there is a growing trend towards slow fashion, which involves longer production times, the use of local materials, and a focus on quality and sustainability (Hall, 2017).

Slow fashion can be understood as a holistic approach that integrates social, economic, and environmental sustainability into the life cycle of clothing. It emphasises sustainable quality, ethical production, and conscious consumerism. Seock *et al*. (2023) state that slow fashion promotes an environmentally conscious mindset and encourages individuals to engage in practices such as buying second-hand clothing, upcycling, and choosing ethically produced garments.

The term slow fashion is often equated with the phrase slow food, which emphasises the importance of local materials and traditional techniques in fostering a more sustainable lifestyle (Ramonienė, 2023).

Consumers of slow fashion tend to identify more strongly with sustainability, and even fast fashion brands can benefit from incorporating sustainability in order to improve consumer perceptions (Venciute *et al*., 2025).

As an alternative approach, slow fashion prioritizes quality over quantity. It encourages consumers to invest in durable clothing and to avoid being driven by constant

trends and repeated purchases (Stenton *et al*., 2021). There is a growing willingness among consumers to change their purchasing behaviour in order to embrace sustainability, which highlights the emerging readiness to adopt the principles of slow fashion (Castro-López *et al*., 2021).

However, many consumers still gravitate towards fast fashion, mainly because of its affordability and accessibility, which creates competitive pressure on slow fashion brands (Skinner *et al*., 2021).

Aesthetics and craftsmanship are also integral components of slow fashion. They satisfy consumers' desire for pleasure and self-definition, while enhancing the overall experience of wearing sustainably produced clothing. This understanding extends the concept of slow fashion beyond environmental sustainability and links it to the cultural and psychological dimensions of consumer behaviour (Jung & Jin, 2016).

A key aspect of slow fashion is the significant shift in consumer attitudes towards sustainability. Consumers are increasingly aware of the ethical implications of their purchasing habits, leading to a growing preference for brands that align with sustainable practices. Consumers who favor slow fashion feel connected to sustainability values, which results in behaviours that support environmentally conscious initiatives (Shin & Seock, 2020).

The slow fashion model closely connects producers, suppliers, and consumers, thereby strengthening corporate responsibility and sustainability. The profitability of slow fashion can be supported by limited production runs, ethical working practices, and support for local artisanal skills, all of which contribute to a more resilient and sustainable market (Brewer, 2019).

The development of slow fashion depends on addressing existing barriers while simultaneously promoting awareness and education. This concept must be clearly communicated and integrated into educational frameworks that inform consumers about the benefits of sustainable practices and the environmental consequences of their choices (Štefko & Steffek, 2018).

Slow fashion, as part of sustainable fashion, represents a growing trend that responds to the negative aspects of fast fashion while emphasizing ethical and ecological production. Its importance is increasing not only in the Czech market. Research by Švajdová & Mikolašová (2023) showed that consumers have a positive attitude towards fashion made from recycled materials, perceiving it as modern. Among women, a stronger connection was demonstrated between ecological behaviour and a preference for this type of fashion.

The understanding of the dimensions associated with the behaviour of slow fashion consumers, including their values, motivation, and attitudes, was addressed by Domingos *et al*. (2022). They identified five main dimensions related to consumer behaviour, namely ethical values, sustainability awareness, motivation, consumer attitudes, and sustainable consumption. At the end of the article, they recommend that

future research adopt both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection through questionnaire surveys administered to consumers. From a managerial perspective, it is important to understand the behaviour of slow fashion consumers, as well as their motivation, attitudes, and values.

It is also important to consider the implications of slow fashion for brand loyalty and consumer well-being. Consumers who consciously engage in slow fashion practices report higher levels of well-being and satisfaction, suggesting that ethical consumption can lead to positive psychological outcomes. The link between customer satisfaction and slow fashion highlights the potential for businesses to cultivate a loyal customer base by aligning their practices with ethical values and sustainability goals (Liu *et al*., 2022; Cavender *et al*., 2020).

Despite the benefits of slow fashion, several challenges remain. One of the main obstacles is the deeply entrenched nature of fast fashion, which is supported by significant marketing and economic incentives aimed at maintaining consumer demand for cheap, trendy clothing (Brewer, 2019; Iannili & Spagnoli, 2024). Companies operating in the fashion industry have long been oriented towards fast cycles that generate short--term profits, and for many of them, the transition to a slow fashion model is very difficult (Leslie *et al*., 2014).

One of the main problems of slow fashion is the lack of communication and marketing. Many brands do not have a clear strategy for communicating their values and explaining what slow fashion means in practice. Studies show that consumers often do not understand the differences between concepts such as ethical fashion, circular fashion, and slow fashion, which complicates their decision-making (McNeill & Moore, 2015; Morais & Fernandes, 2023). Brands therefore need to improve their communication strategies in order to educate the public and stimulate demand for sustainable alternatives.

Implementing initiatives that promote sustainable purchasing behaviour, such as recycling, upcycling, and clothing swapping, can help reduce reliance on conventional shopping. Such activities can increase awareness and motivation among consumers and support the transition to slow fashion (Kemi & Zilahy, 2023). Collaboration between independent designers and consumers, as well as among different slow fashion brands, can create strong communities and networks that support this initiative (Chhabra *et al*., 2022). These networks can help to share best practices and innovations in the design and marketing of slow fashion products.

1.3 ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF FAST FASHION

The textile industry is estimated to be worth $0.79 trillion in 2025 and is expected to reach $1.02 trillion by 2031. Increasing capacity in recycled polyester, traceability requirements, and geopolitical shifts are changing the structure of investments, resources, and profits across the entire industry market. The Asia-Pacific region accounted for 54.06% of production in 2025. The Middle East and Africa represent the fastest-growing region, with a year-on-year growth rate of 5.8%. Europe accounts for one-fifth of demand (The Textile Market Report, 2026). The report identifies the five largest textile leaders:

- Toray Industries Inc. – currently the world's largest producer of carbon fiber and Japan's largest producer of synthetic fibers,
- Weiqiao Pioneering Group Co. Ltd. – one of the largest producers of cotton and aluminium in the world,
- Texhong Textile Group Ltd. – a leading global manufacturer and distributor of high-quality textile products, whose core activity is the production and sale of yarns, grey fabrics, and apparel fabrics,
- Inditex SA – a leading global multinational clothing group engaged in the design, production, and retail sale of fashion, and one of the largest fast-fashion retailers in the world,
- Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail Ltd. – a leading Indian fashion and retail company engaged in the design, production, and sale of apparel, accessories, and footwear.

Fast fashion provides economic benefits primarily through mass production and the outsourcing of production processes, often to countries with low labour costs. It allows companies to relocate production to regions where labour costs are significantly lower, which may have a negative impact on local economies (Camargo *et al*., 2020). In developed countries, consumers purchase more clothing for less money, while companies selling fast fashion increase their profits. Developing countries are improving the infrastructure that enables businesses to begin operating, which is beneficial from the perspective of economic growth and, consequently, improves the quality of life of the people living there (Williams, 2022). This trend strengthens the competitiveness of fast fashion in the global market (Koszewska, 2013).

Medcalfe & Miro (2021) analyse the relationship between sustainable practices and the financial performance of companies operating in the fast fashion industry. Their findings support the view that firms with better sustainable practices achieve higher performance, highlighting the importance of integrating sustainability into business strategies. Their research underscores the importance of sustainable approaches for the competitiveness of fast fashion.

The relationship between sustainability and the financial performance of firms was also examined by Goyal *et al*. (2013). They identify a positive relationship between these two categories, supporting the idea that investments in sustainability can lead to improved economic performance.

With the growth of the fast fashion industry, consumer demands are changing. The production of affordable and trendy clothing represents a cost-effective solution. Manufacturers produce garments across many categories in order to satisfy consumer demand (Gargi & Babel, 2025).

In addition, fast fashion generates economic profits for brands that benefit from low production costs and the rapid turnover of goods. Studies have shown that fast fashion business models are able to generate higher profits compared to traditionally oriented brands (Hayes & Jones, 2006). However, rapid production leads to garment quality that often does not correspond to longer life cycles, thereby promoting a culture of waste and unsustainable consumer behaviour (Burklin, 2019).

The rapid growth of fast fashion has stimulated the economies of many developing countries where clothing is produced. The number of jobs created by this industry is often presented as a positive aspect. For example, in Bangladesh, the textile and garment industry accounted for approximately 84% of total exports in 2020 (Williams, 2022). Goel & Michalides (2022) hold a similar view. In addition to increasing income from clothing sales in developing countries, the industry contributes to job creation and provides livelihoods for millions of people around the world who have received at least a basic income thanks to the growth of fast fashion.

In addition to employment, there is also an impact on local businesses. The rapid renewal of collections and the focus on repeat purchases contribute to increased demand for cheap goods, but often at the expense of local producers and traders who are unable to compete with the prices and delivery speed of large fast-fashion brands (Gazzola *et al*., 2020). In this way, fast fashion creates conditions for economic dependence on this consumer model rather than on stable long-term economic systems (Knošková & Garasová, 2019).

1.3.1 SUPPLY CHAINS

The authors' study analyses the problem of multi-layer supply chains involving manufacturers, suppliers, wholesalers, and retailers. In formulating supply chain policies, a mathematical model is developed that is capable of optimizing the supply chain distribution network (Fares *et al*., 2023).

Supply chain management plays a significant role in maintaining the competitive advantage of the fast fashion industry. Technology, real-time data analysis, and advanced logistics systems are becoming increasingly important. The supply chain in

this industry is characterized by an emphasis on responsiveness and agility, that is, the ability to respond quickly, flexibly, and efficiently to new market demands. Traditional supply chains tend to emphasize long-term planning and cost-effectiveness (Paul, 2024).

Pavlidou & Tsami (2025) analysed key supply chain strategies in the fast fashion industry and their contribution to growth, resilience, and sustainability. Based on an extensive literature review and a comparison of six leading brands such as Zara, Benetton, H&M, Mango, Shein, and Uniqlo, they evaluate fifteen strategic aspects of the supply chain and the way in which companies cope with the challenges of global sourcing, time and quality competition, and environmental uncertainty. A deeper analysis of two brands shows that the effective alignment of supply chain strategies with market and product conditions, together with an emphasis on sustainability, significantly contributes to market success.

Supply chain management is essential in today's competitive, large-scale, fast, and profitable market, such as fast fashion. It ensures that the brand moves towards success. It plays a significant role in the rapid diffusion of the latest fashion trends and styles. A supply chain involves the management and movement of products and resources between two locations. It is concerned with the timely management of resources, their delivery to a specific place, and in sufficient quantity (Lakshmi *et al*., 2023).

Arrigo (2020) assesses the economic trade-offs faced by fast fashion retailers when choosing sourcing locations. The article outlines how companies must balance cost efficiency with the growing need for sustainability in their supply chains, reflecting on the economic structures that govern global trade in the fashion industry. This work is crucial for understanding how sourcing decisions can affect both profitability and ethical production practices.

Camargo *et al*. (2020) compared strategic differences in supply chain management between fast and ultra-fast fashion on the basis of qualitative document analysis and expert interviews. Their findings show that ultra-fast fashion is characterized by inventory minimization, local and flexible on-demand production, very short lead times, and a combination of lean and agile strategies. Ultra-fast fashion places pressure on traditional fast fashion retailers to accelerate production and launch more collections, while new start-ups build their competitiveness on the development of technological capabilities.

This hybrid model allows companies to streamline their operations and optimize inventory management, which directly affects their ability to deliver products promptly. Furthermore, the integration of real-time data analytics into supply chain processes has become a key aspect of ultra-fast fashion, increasing the accuracy of demand forecasting and facilitating dynamic inventory management (Alonge *et al*., 2021; Meda & Pamisetty, 2023).

Companies such as Zara and H&M have implemented lean supply chain strategies that focus on minimizing inventory costs through just-in-time production. This operating model requires fast production cycles and strong connections between design, manufacturing, and retail processes, allowing these companies to introduce new styles within weeks of the initial design concepts. The integration of digital technologies is

fundamental to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of supply chain management in fast fashion. By leveraging big data analytics, the Internet of Things (IoT), and cloud computing, companies can create integrated value chains that are highly demand--driven and cost-effective. This digital transformation is essential for real-time data exchange, which is crucial for maintaining the speed and responsiveness of the supply chain (López *et al*., 2021).

Research suggests that the adoption of technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) can significantly optimize supply chain management in the fast fashion sector. AI can streamline operations by improving demand forecasting, optimizing inventory management, and increasing production efficiency. For example, Zara's use of AI to facilitate rapid response mechanisms enables a more agile supply chain, ultimately mitigating inventory risks and increasing value creation (Cao, 2024).

In addition, newer models are being explored for circular supply chain management that involve tracking material reuse across multiple life cycles. Block-chain technology appears promising for managing the complexity associated with circular supply chains in the fast fashion industry, enabling better traceability and sustainability (Wang *et al*., 2020).

As the fast fashion industry faces pressure regarding its environmental impact, strategies for sustainable supply chain development are becoming increasingly important. The industry faces criticism for its significant consumption of resources and generation of waste, which is forcing companies to adopt sustainable practices in their supply chains. Many fast fashion brands, emphasizing the need for green practices, are restructuring their supply chains in order to mitigate negative environmental impacts, focusing on aspects such as sustainable sourcing and compliance monitoring (Soni & Baldawa, 2023; Yuan, 2024; Hu *et al*., 2014).

A systematic review of sustainable practices among fast fashion leaders suggests a significant shift towards integrating sustainability into supply chain management (SCM). This includes the adoption of environmentally conscious practices that not only address regulatory compliance but also improve overall supply chain performance (Soni & Baldawa, 2023; Lakshmi *et al*., 2023).

Rapidly evolving consumer demand continues to present challenges for supply chain management. Brands must remain vigilant regarding their ability to adapt to societal and market trends while maintaining operational efficiency. This requires a robust strategy that includes flexibility, collaboration, and innovative technologies to support resilience in supply chains (Moon *et al*., 2017).

Transportation is essential for connecting different nodes within supply chains, such as suppliers, manufacturers, and consumers. In assessing these roles, studies emphasize the complexity of the transportation network and its impact on efficiency. Ma *et al*. (2023) discuss the interactions between shipping companies and freight forwarders and assess how competition affects the overall efficiency of the supply chain.

The need for financial credit systems that support logistics operations is highlighted by Xu *et al*. (2024). In their article, the authors examine highway transportation. Transportation affects not only the physical flow of goods, but also financial and operational decision-making.

Transportation cost optimization is essential for improving supply chain performance. Khan (2025) highlights a mixed-integer linear programming model aimed at reducing total transportation costs within supply chains. This model considers factors such as storage costs, transportation rates, and transportation capacity.

The implementation of optimization models demonstrates a multifaceted approach to improving transportation efficiency. Golabek *et al*. (2021) developed algorithms specifically designed to optimize logistics and distribution while minimizing transportation costs and delivery times, thereby improving strategic decision-making within the supply chain.

Transportation plays a key role in the fast fashion supply chain by enabling brands to respond quickly to changing consumer preferences. A study by Li *et al*. (2024) examines Zara and its effective supply chain management and digital transformation, which enable rapid product rotation and are essential for capturing emerging fashion trends. The authors' article highlights the importance of an integrated transportation system that effectively connects suppliers, manufacturers, and retailers.

Despite these advances, supply chain transportation faces significant challenges. The fragmentation of the container shipping supply chain leads to inefficiencies that hinder smooth operations (Song, 2021).

Air freight is an important part of the fast fashion supply chain due to its speed and reliability. Companies often rely on air freight to deliver products within a short timeframe and meet dynamic consumer demands. Kulpa *et al*. (2024) discuss how air freight can help companies respond quickly to supply chain disruptions, highlighting its role as a key mode of transport in global supply chains.

Li *et al*. (2022) highlighted in their article that external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic have led to unprecedented disruptions in freight transport and logistics, necessitating the need for adaptive strategies within supply chains. This points to the dynamic nature of transport-related challenges and the need for continuous research and innovation.

Decisions about the mix of transport modes, including the extensive use of air freight in the manufacturing industry, are influenced by factors such as delivery speed and inventory management. This trend is particularly significant in fast fashion, where delays can lead to missed sales opportunities and excessive unsold inventory (Ke *et al*., 2015).

Rail transport offers distinct advantages in the fast fashion supply chain. With the advent of high-speed rail systems around the world, rail transport has become a more viable option for transporting goods over long distances and offers a promising alternative for brands seeking to reduce costs and environmental impact. Trains can transport large

volumes of goods over land more efficiently than trucks, which can significantly reduce per-unit transportation costs, especially for bulk and heavy shipments (Liu *et al*., 2021).

As Havenga and Pienaar (2011) point out, existing rail networks may not be sufficiently developed to meet the rapid demands of fast fashion. Dependence on road transport in some regions is placing strain on transport infrastructure, thereby requiring revitalization and investment in rail freight systems. Moreover, the infrastructure sometimes lacks the flexibility needed for just-in-time deliveries, which are crucial for the fast fashion industry.

Innovative approaches are being implemented to increase the capacity and efficiency of rail transport within the fast fashion supply chain. The incorporation of digital technologies and intelligent transport systems can significantly improve operational efficiency (Kolář *et al*., 2020).

Adapting the railway network to enable high-capacity container transport offers a way to improve logistics and operational responsiveness during peak periods, especially in light of challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Vida *et al*., 2020; Antonowicz, 2024).

Aggour *et al*. (2016) analyse the challenges faced by fast fashion brands, particularly in Morocco, where demand uncertainty and rapid style changes complicate logistics operations. The authors suggest that transportation strategies need to be agile and adaptive in order to reduce delivery times and increase responsiveness to market changes.

Innovations in technology are shaping the future of fast fashion transportation. Ravi *et al*. (2019) propose an automated system for exploring and synthesizing fashion trends that could lead to more efficient logistics processes by aligning production with market demand in real time. Incorporating data analytics and artificial intelligence into transportation logistics enables better forecasting and more responsive supply chains.

A bibliometric review of sustainable supply chain management within the circular economy was conducted by Theeraworawit *et al*. (2022). Their work identifies four schools of thought regarding sustainable supply chain management, highlighting the central role of sustainable practices as a foundation for the supply chain management literature.

Genovese *et al*. (2017) further explored the intersection of sustainable supply chain management and the circular economy and present empirical evidence through case studies that highlight the efficiency of circular systems compared to traditional models.

Zhang *et al*. (2024) offer a contemporary perspective on digital supply chain management and discuss its implications for industry and academia. Their research highlights the importance of digital transformation in increasing operational efficiency and responsiveness within supply chains.

Similarly, Tyagi & Bhattacharya (2025) examine the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in supply chains and shed light on both the benefits and challenges of its adoption in this context. Their findings highlight the transformative potential of integrating new technologies, such as blockchain and the Internet of Things, into supply chain management.

Sinha & Chowdhury (2021) provide a framework for understanding the role of blockchain in international trade and supply chains, highlighting how this technology can streamline processes and improve contract management.

Blockchain technology has established itself as a transformative solution for improving supply chain transparency. However, its potential has not yet received sufficient attention in the fast fashion industry (Covington & Soltanisehat, 2025).

Designing resilient supply chains is a critical challenge for managers. Makhashen *et al*. (2020) present in their research a comprehensive set of management practices for proactive and informed decision-making. This study reveals how collaboration between competing firms can increase adaptability and responsiveness, thereby creating value amidst uncertainty.

Global supply chains are not only tools of economic exchange, but also spaces of intense social connectivity across cultural and societal boundaries. They create socially embedded networks of relationships, which have received limited attention in existing labour theories, which focus mainly on the level of individual corporations (Reinecke *et al*., 2018). The authors' article emphasises the need to view global supply chains from a social perspective and highlights the importance of the role of intermediaries and boundary workers in shaping social relationships within these networks.

Companies and industry associations should rethink production patterns and supply chain architecture by integrating the framework of the circular economy and more sustainable products with a longer life cycle, based primarily on local resources and social systems, process transparency, and a direct connection between producers and customers from an eco-humanistic perspective (Dragomir & Dutescu, 2026).

1.4 SOCIAL IMPACTS

Fast fashion is socially associated with labour exploitation, poor working conditions, wage inequality, and violations of workers' rights, especially among women in developing countries. The cooperation of multiple stakeholders, namely industries, governments, NGOs, and consumers, plays an important role in addressing these issues (Sormin & Albar, 2025).

One of the most serious social impacts of fast fashion is labour exploitation. Fast fashion brands such as Primark and Boohoo have faced criticism regarding the employment conditions of their workers, who often do not receive fair wages and whose labour rights are disregarded (Haines & Lee, 2021; Stringer *et al*., 2020).

At the same time, fast fashion practices contribute to the deepening of social inequality in developing countries, where labour and raw materials are often sourced extremely cheaply (Bick *et al*., 2018).

The wages of workers in the fast fashion industry are at or below the minimum wage in most countries where factories are located, such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Vietnam. For example, in Bangladesh, wages in the textile sector are considered very low, with many workers not even receiving the minimum wage to which they are entitled (Gunawan *et al*., 2023). These wages usually cover only basic living expenses, with many employees working overtime to meet ever-increasing production demands (Sant'Ana & Kovalechen, 2012).

According to a study conducted to accurately map the situation within the textile industry in Cambodia, workers in large factories experience intimidation, long working hours, and inadequate wages. Fashion accessories are produced in large factories, NGOs, and private enterprises. NGOs recruit their employees from the most disadvantaged sections of the population, such as homeless children, disadvantaged youth, and unemployed people from rural areas (Medvedev, 2017).

Added to all this is the lack of social security and healthcare, as reported by Melo *et al*. (2022). The values of the social economy, such as the holistic development of the human being, the social development of the people involved, the development of communities, and the spread of feelings of cooperation, respect, solidarity, and ethical behaviour, formed the basis of their study.

In the garment industry, women are more likely to be employed than men. Female employees play a significant role in this industry by preparing materials, cutting, sewing, ironing, and participating in various production processes. The exploitation of workers in the fast fashion industry is often associated with extremely poor working conditions. Many workers in the textile industry face psychological and physical violence, with women often suffering from gender inequality and unlawful treatment (Febrilly & Siscawati, 2023).

The fashion industry is a key pillar of Bangladesh's economy. Approximately 80% of the workforce is made up of women from lowincome backgrounds. Women's wages in the fast fashion industry are chronically low. In many cases, they do not cover the basic costs of living and are often associated with long working hours (Datta, 2024). The author visited three garment factories and observed the working environment. Her findings highlight workplace vulnerabilities, including verbal abuse, physical abuse, discrimination, pregnancy-related discrimination, and generally unsafe working conditions.

Haryani & Koestoer (2023) further state that women often work up to 16 hours a day, with minimal breaks, sometimes seven days a week, in order to secure a minimum level of survival. Adverse working conditions lead to physical and mental illness. The authors compared occupational safety and health protection in the garment industry in Bangladesh and Indonesia. Workers can be protected through training in this area, the provision of personal protective equipment, medical examinations, and social security.

In the fast fashion industry, women face various forms of discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. Many studies show that women working in textile factories are exposed to gender inequality and may face intimidation from superiors. These

problems are often exacerbated by patriarchal norms that dominate working environments (Boote & Lotfi, 2023). Vijeyarasa & Liu (2021) suggest greater accountability, which could be achieved by applying a human rights-based understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals in order to promote gender justice in the fashion industry.

Women experience not only discrimination at work due to their employment status, but also pressure to conform to traditional gender roles, which exposes them to further abuse (Çavuşoğlu & Üner, 2025). Their study concluded that the experiences of women working in the textile sector continue to be shaped by gender norms, low wages, and difficult working conditions. In total, the authors conducted three separate focus group interviews with women, which provided deeper insight into women's views, pay gaps, and the obstacles they face in the workplace.

Particularly alarming is the fact that women are in most cases without practical and legal resources to protect their rights. As many of these workers are migrants, they have limited access to genuine employment intermediaries and face complex legal systems (Andersson *et al*., 2018).

These problems are compounded by pressure to increase productivity, with workers being forced to face excessive stress and high performance standards. The physiological and psychological effects on workers are routinely ignored. Many brands avoid responsibility and create supply chains with practices that enable wage reductions and deteriorating working conditions (Karaosman & Marshall, 2023).

The fast fashion sector relies heavily on global supply chains that can obscure working conditions, leading to the employment of children in hazardous environments. The structure of the industry, characterized by high labour intensity and economic pressures, facilitates the use of factories in areas affected by unemployment, where child labour is widespread (Wei & Jung, 2021).

The garment industry in Bangladesh is a pillar of its economic growth and is proving indispensable for the future. The industry contributes to the economic stability of the nation. One of its shortcomings, however, is the presence of child labour in garment factories. Child labour is most widespread at the informal subcon-tracting level. Garment factories fail to pay wages, refuse to pay overtime, exceed legal working hours, and often physically abuse children. Children are placed at risk and sent to work without supervision. This is not only the case in Bangladesh, but the problem is present throughout the entire South Asian region. The most common reasons why children work are the poverty in which they live and the lack of suitable job opportunities (Malinowski, 2025).

Child labour is a serious problem, as it disrupts children's normal developmental processes and prevents them from leading a healthy, safe, and educated life. Child labour is a violation of basic human rights, yet it remains a significant social phenomenon. It is a global problem (Yalçın Sarıbey & Tuncay, 2025).

The garment and footwear industry employs more than 60 million workers worldwide. UNICEF estimates that more than 100 million children work in this industry. Children are a vulnerable group not only in this industry, but also in many other sectors. Child labour and exploitative conditions are particularly serious problems in the lower social strata (UNICEF, 2020).

The issue of child labour and exploitation in the fashion industry was addressed in a study by Smestad (2009). He examines the various factors that influence child labour and exploitation. The emphasis is placed on identifying the issues that affect the decision to work in an unhealthy environment, as well as on examining the nature of work and economic realities around the world. Despite these challenges, it has not been possible to reduce child labour to the desired level.

Child labour has been recorded for a long time. The perception of child labour may vary across different societies and regions. Child labour is one of the most significant risks that children can face. Organizations such as UNICEF and the ILO are attempting to eliminate child labour worldwide by calling on countries to fight against it (Başaran, 2025).

In countries where fast fashion is predominantly produced, such as India, Bangladesh, and China, legislative frameworks aimed at alleviating child labour often fail to provide real solutions. For example, India's Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act of 1986 was intended to reduce child labour but paradoxically led to increased reliance on it, as families facing economic hardship often resorted to sending their children to work (Gómez-Paredes *et al*., 2016; Bharadwaj *et al*., 2013). This phenomenon reflects a broader trend observed worldwide, where economic pressures lead to the continued exploitation of children in labour markets dominated by fast fashion.

The Sustainable Development Goal is to eliminate child labour in all its forms by 2025. Ten years before that date, this goal was still far from being met. In 2016, approximately one in ten children aged 5–17 were involved in child labour worldwide. Almost half of these children performed hazardous work and were exposed to health and safety risks. Approximately one-third of working children do not attend school. The OECD document highlights the efforts of countries to combat child labour, whether by strengthening social protection to reduce poverty, investing in education as an alternative to child labour, or supporting the spread of technologies that can perform work without child labour. Countries can enforce various laws and regulations, strengthen labour inspections and monitoring systems, and promote responsible business practices (Thévenon & Edmonds, 2019).

1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

In the current period, a shift in the direction of the fashion industry towards sustainability and environmental responsibility is of great importance. This sector generates billions of dollars annually and employs a large number of workers worldwide. The rapid pace of new clothing collections and uncompromising trends in this sector are having an increasingly significant impact on the environment (Gundová & Volovská, 2024).

The irresponsible way of life shaped by current trends may deprive us of tomorrow's future. Fast fashion is wasteful, environmentally harmful, and entirely unsustainable. Its negative impacts are not related solely to the overproduction of clothing. Slowing down fast fashion is an effort that everyone can make (Ting & Stagner, 2023).

The fast fashion industry, with its characteristic features, raises concerns regarding excessive consumption, resource use, waste generation, and increased clothing disposal rates. The circular economy, by promoting waste minimization, regeneration, and the circulation of resources, appears to be a viable solution (Xu & Trindale, 2024).

Fast fashion's linear business model and the consumer practices associated with it have numerous environmental consequences. Olivar Aponte *et al*. (2024) focused their article on a thorough quantitative analysis of the fashion industry and its impact on the environment. They reviewed 119 articles using the rigor of a scientometric approach. Measuring environmental impacts and implementing strategies to mitigate consumer--induced impacts are key to developing sustainable solutions.

To facilitate the transition to more sustainable fashion consumption, it appears promising to provide clear information about the environmental and social impacts of products and to create strong awareness among consumers (Papasolomou *et al*., 2022).

The fast fashion industry is under scrutiny for its environmental and ethical challenges. Some argue that fast fashion democratizes style by making it accessible to a wider group of consumers, while others question its legitimacy (Talwar *et al*., 2025).

Textile consumption in the EU increased from 17 kg per person in 2019 to 19 kg per person in 2022. At the same time, around 12 kg of clothing per person in the EU is discarded every year. The EU is adopting legislation to reduce textile waste and increase the life cycle and recycling of textiles. Improving the sustainability of the fashion industry is part of the plan to achieve a circular economy by 2050. Textile production requires a large amount of water, and cotton cultivation requires extensive land use. The textilesector was the third largest source of water degradation and land use in 2020. It is estimated that textile production is responsible for around 20% of global freshwater pollution, mainly due to the dyeing process (European Parliament, 2020).

The water consumption of fast fashion is staggering, with the industry responsible for approximately 20% of global textile wastewater (Bailey *et al*., 2022). Such practices not only deplete freshwater resources but also lead to serious water pollution. Highly

toxic chemicals used in textile processing often contaminate local water sources, adversely affecting ecosystems and human health (Anisah *et al*., 2024).

Similarly, Verma *et al*. (2011) state in their article that the textile industry is one of the most chemically intensive industries and a major source of water pollution. Textile processing generates chemicals, including dyes, in the form of wastewater.

Zhai *et al*. (2022) discuss how the rapid expansion and overproduction of the textile industry directly contribute to the worsening water contamination crisis and highlight the urgency of addressing these issues. Similarly, Ahmed *et al*. (2025) point out that the fashion sector consumes 93 billion cubic meters of water annually, a figure that reflects not only the volume of production itself but also the environmental costs of these practices.

The intensification of cotton cultivation, which is often used to produce fast--fashion clothing, also exacerbates water scarcity, as this crop is notoriously water-intensive (Moretto *et al*., 2018).

In a comprehensive study by Liu (2025), the extensive resource use associated with fast fashion production highlights the serious implications for water scarcity and ecosystem degradation, as industry practices often prioritize rapid production over sustainable resource management. The cascading effects of this high water consumption affect both local communities and global ecological systems, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities in regions already struggling with water scarcity (Asgarali, 2024).

Environmental sustainability is an increasingly important topic for managers in sectors with negative environmental impacts, including the fashion industry. The industry produces more than 92 million tons of waste annually and consumes approximately 79 trillion liters of water. From the demanding cultivation of cotton to the pollution of water resources by dyes, textile production has significant environmental and social consequences throughout the product life cycle. Growing public awareness over the past decade has therefore forced clothing manufacturers and retailers to implement more sustainable practices and reduce negative environmental impacts (Rukhaya *et al*., 2021).

Bailey *et al*. (2025) state in their paper that the growth of the fast fashion industry is accelerating, leading to large-scale production of wastewater and green-house gases. The fashion industry is attributed with 20% of global wastewater and 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. In their article, they addressed the following questions:

- what are the prevailing environmental impacts in countries such as China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Turkey, India, and Indonesia, which represent the countries with the largest number of producers,
- what knowledge gaps prevent the improvement of environmental practices,
- what are the main obstacles to implementing sustainable clothing production in the countries mentioned?

The authors conclude by identifying key research areas in all the countries listed, namely policy, sustainability, and wastewater. The main knowledge gaps hindering improvements in environmental practices are the lack of empirical research methods and insufficient consumer knowledge. It is worth investing in education and infrastructure in order to make the garment industry more sustainable.

Overconsumption is a major driver of climate change, with fast fashion playing a significant role. Flachs *et al*. (2026) tested a "go/no-go" training intervention to reduce consumers' purchases of fast fashion. The training was found to reduce fast fashion consumption. The article highlights the value of training in promoting pro-environmental consumer behaviour.

The fast fashion industry has a significant carbon footprint, high water consumption, and substantial waste generation. Fast fashion contributes to the growth of textile waste, with approximately 92 million tons of discarded clothing generated each year (Bick *et al*., 2018). This is compounded by low recycling rates, as 80% of fast fashion clothing ends up in landfills, especially in developing countries where waste management systems are not adequately equipped to handle such large quantities of waste (Pal *et al*., 2019; Andreadakis & Owusu-Wiredu, 2023).

The rise of fast fashion is inextricably linked to a culture of disposable waste, in which clothes are worn only a few times before being discarded. It is estimated that a truckload of clothing is thrown away or burned every second (Mandarić *et al*., 2022).

Furthermore, the practice of burning textiles not only results in the loss of valuable resources but also releases significant amounts of carbon dioxide and other harmful pollutants into the atmosphere (Yuan, 2024). This highlights the urgent need for more sustainable waste management solutions and circular economy models within fast fashion (Anil *et al*., 2022).

The textile industry in India is highly developed, second only to China in terms of the number of producers. India produces one million tons of textile waste per year. If more is produced than consumers buy, many brands burn their production, which leads to a larger carbon footprint on the one hand and losses from the seller's point of view on the other (Bhattacharya, 2021).

Textile waste is a significant problem, whether it arises during textile production or after the end of the product's life cycle. While pre-consumer textiles are easier to recycle due to their known composition, post-consumer textiles are materially diverse and their processing is more demanding, leading to the loss of valuable resources. Since approximately half of the collected clothing is reusable and the rest recyclable, it is essential to develop efficient recycling processes and new production methods. The reuse and recycling of textiles reduce the environmental burden compared to incineration or landfilling. Waste recovery technologies enable the conversion of textile waste into secondary raw materials, support the circular economy, and also find application in composite materials (Todor *et al*., 2022).

Florea-Burduja *et al*. (2025) focus on the concept of zero waste in the fashion industry and highlight the need for its implementation in the current context. They explore strategies and benefits related to the implementation of these practices in order to reduce the environmental impact of one of the most polluting industries. They emphasize the importance of sustainable and innovative practices that reduce textile waste, promote a circular economy, and highlight the role of consumer education in ensuring their long-term sustainability.

Seifali Abbas-Abadi *et al*. (2025) write about modern methods of managing industrial waste in their study. They address innovations that reduce dependence on landfill and incineration and promote the circularity of materials. Smart collection systems use tags and sensors, while logistics are made more efficient through route automation. Near infrared and hyperspectral imaging are used in textile sorting.

The growth of the clothing and textile industry, together with the rise of fast fashion, has significantly increased the amount of textile waste in municipal waste streams. Worldwide, approximately 75% of textile waste is landfilled and only 25% is recycled or reused, with landfilling considered an unsustainable solution. Reducing this proportion requires the development of effective reuse and recycling technologies, with reuse taking precedence over recycling. Technologies in this area are constantly being innovated, especially with the aim of processing mixed fabrics (Juanga-Labayen *et al*., 2022).

The fashion industry is the second largest contributor to environmental pollution, accounting for 10% of all carbon emissions, 20–25% of global waste, and an estimated 50% increase in greenhouse gas emissions by 2032. Despite constant media coverage of the environmental impacts of the fashion industry, the sector continues to grow (Fobiri *et al*., 2026).

The manufacturing process often involves the combustion of fossil fuels, resulting in significant carbon footprints throughout the supply chain, including manufacturing, transportation, and retail (Fang, 2023). His study highlights the environmental impact of fast fashion and seeks to inspire positive changes in consumer behaviour and contribute to the protection of ecosystems. In addition to consumers, efforts must also be made on the part of brands, manufacturers, and policymakers to create a fairer and more environmentally friendly fashion industry.

Emissions arise from various manufacturing activities, including dyeing, finishing, and the energy-intensive processes required to produce synthetic fibers. High greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution, excessive water consumption, and the generation of non-biodegradable waste undermine environmental sustainability (Anisah *et al*., 2024).

The decolorization of textile waste is a key recycling step that enables the removal of dyes and the efficient reuse of fibers. This review focuses on the importance of decolorization in the circular economy, as well as on the challenges associated with different types of dyes and techniques used. Traditional methods often employ harsh chemicals, and attention is therefore shifting to advanced solutions such as oxidative processes,

photocatalysis, supercritical CO_2 methods, and enzymatic decolorization. Although these approaches represent promising alternatives, they also present technical and economic challenges (Periyasamy & Harlin, 2025).

The fashion industry is known for its environmental problems, but the health risks associated with textile toxicity are still poorly understood. Modern clothing often contains dangerous chemicals, such as dyes with heavy metals, antimicrobials that promote bacterial resistance, and synthetic fibers that release microplastics, which can contribute to skin diseases, hormonal disorders, and increased carcinogenic risk. Synthetic materials also promote the spread of bacteria, and globalized production conceals health risks transmitted between countries. Pinto & Peleg Mizrachi (2025) therefore emphasize in their study the need for stricter regulation, scientific innovation, consumer awareness, and the introduction of safer, more sustainable, and more transparent practices so that fashion protects human health as well as the environment.

A study by Hsu & Su (2025) points out that the foundation of sustainable enterprise development should be the systematic management of carbon emissions and the active implementation of measures to reduce them in order to limit negative environmental impacts. Such an approach not only ensures compliance with international environmental regulations but also contributes to strengthening the competitiveness of the enterprise, building an ecological brand image, and reaching environmentally conscious consumers, thereby supporting long-term brand loyalty.

Investments in environmental practices have a positive impact on corporate performance. Taking environmental responsibility into account in fast fashion can help companies not only improve their image but also optimize costs (Gao & Wan, 2022).

In order to contribute to environmental sustainability, companies operating in the textile industry have adopted environmental management systems. Companies that have adopted environmental management systems such as ISO 14001 demonstrate more significant improvements in performance than companies that have not adopted these systems (Ali *et al*., 2020).

It is essential to be aware of where clothes come from. For the sake of the environment, it is important to ask whether a given piece of clothing is truly necessary. Zabors & Huun (2023) offered several tips for sustainable fashion:

- invest in clothes that last longer,
- sell clothes online,
- donate clothes to second-hand stores or buy clothes there,
- buy clothes from sustainable brands,
- explore slow fashion brands,
- do not throw away clothes, but focus on donating, reselling, or exchanging them,
- do not discard damaged clothing, but focus on its modification and repair,
- reuse items,
- use textiles for cleaning and wiping.

Sustainable fashion is an approach to the design, creation, use, and distribution of clothing that is environmentally friendly. In practice, this means:

- using renewable energy during production,
- producing clothing that is durable and recyclable,
- providing fair working conditions,
- reducing waste and pollution (Foster, 2026).

Material innovations in the fashion industry play a significant role in achieving a sustainable future for fashion. The transition to more sustainable and environmentally friendly production and consumption is necessary in view of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Tawiah *et al.*, 2026).

2 AIM AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 AIM

The main aim of the study is to analyse consumer behaviour in relation to the fast fashion phenomenon, identify the factors influencing consumer decision-making when purchasing clothing, and assess the extent to which the social, economic, and environmental impacts of fast fashion are perceived. At the same time, the research seeks to examine the extent to which respondents' attitudes and purchasing behaviour differ according to selected socio-demographic and economic characteristics.

In line with the main aim, the following partial objectives were also formulated:

- to determine the level of respondents' awareness of the concept of fast fashion,
- to identify which factors respondents consider most important when purchasing clothing,
- to analyse respondents' attitudes towards fashion consumption and their purchasing behaviour,
- to examine the extent to which the negative social, economic, and environmental consequences of fast fashion are perceived,
- to verify whether selected attitudes and forms of consumer behaviour differ statistically significantly according to gender, generation, education, income, awareness of the concept of fast fashion, and declared fast fashion purchasing.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

2.2.1 NATURE OF THE RESEARCH AND APPLIED METHOD

To achieve the stated aim, a quantitative research method was employed, specifically a questionnaire survey. The collection of primary data was carried out through an online questionnaire created in Microsoft Forms. The questionnaire survey was anonymous and voluntary. The research focused on respondents of different ages, genders, levels of economic activity, income situations, and places of residence, with emphasis placed on capturing their attitudes towards fast fashion, purchasing preferences, and perception of its impacts. From a methodological point of view, this is a cross-sectional study, as the data were collected at a single point in time. The results therefore reflect the state of respondents' opinions and declared behaviour at the time of the survey.

2.2.2 RESEARCH SAMPLE

The research sample consisted of 577 respondents. In terms of gender, women predominated, accounting for 418 respondents (72%), while men represented 153 respondents (27%), and 6 respondents (1%) did not specify their gender. In terms of age, younger age groups predominated, particularly respondents aged 20–24, who accounted for 380 individuals (66%), and the 15–19 age group, which included 98 respondents (17%). Altogether, respondents aged up to 24 years represented 83% of the total sample.

From a generational perspective, Generation Z clearly predominated, represented by 514 respondents (89%). Generation Y accounted for 39 respondents (7%), Generation X for 20 respondents (3%), and Baby Boomers for 4 respondents (1%). In terms of economic activity, students predominated, accounting for 463 respondents (80%), which corresponds to the age and generational structure of the sample under study.

From a geographical perspective, most respondents came from the Slovak Republic (491 respondents; 85%), followed by the Czech Republic (77 respondents; 13%). The remaining countries were represented only marginally. According to the type of settlement, the largest shares were represented by respondents from rural areas (45%) and medium-sized towns (31%).

2.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The research instrument was a standardized online questionnaire consisting of several thematic blocks. Its structure was designed to capture the socio-demographic profile of respondents, their awareness of the fast fashion phenomenon, purchasing preferences, attitudes towards fashion consumption, and perception of the negative impacts of fast fashion.

The questionnaire was thematically divided into the following sections:

- **Socio-demographic and economic characteristics of respondents**
  This section included questions focused on gender, age, generational affiliation, education, economic activity, employment sector, personal income, household income, number of household members, country of origin, and type of settlement.
- **Awareness and general relationship to fast fashion**
  This section examined whether respondents were familiar with the concept of fast fashion, whether they purchase fast fashion products, and what their overall attitude towards this phenomenon is.
- **Factors influencing clothing purchases**
  Respondents evaluated the importance of selected factors when purchasing clothing, such as price, quality, design/style, material composition, brand, sustain-ability, availability, country of origin, fashion trends, comfort, material durability/resistance, functionality, and guarantee.
- **Consumer attitudes towards fashion and fashion consumption**
  This section was aimed at determining the degree of agreement with statements capturing the emotional relationship to fashion, impulsivity, the self-presentational dimension of clothing, and the social aspects associated with fashion consumption.
- **Purchasing behaviour when buying clothing**
  This section examined how often respondents purchase clothing for various reasons, for example according to their financial means, on sale, out of necessity, to improve their mood, or as a way of spending free time.
- **Perception of the negative impacts of fast fashion**
  Respondents evaluated the intensity of their perception of the social, economic, and environmental consequences of fast fashion, such as child labour, human rights violations, exploitation of employees, low employee wages, job instability, water pollution, high water and energy consumption, textile waste, and carbon footprint.

2.2.4 TYPES OF QUESTIONS AND APPLIED SCALES

The questionnaire included a combination of closed-ended questions, semi-closed identification questions, and statement-based items assessed using Likert scales.

The following response types were mainly used:

- nominal questions
- ordinal questions
- items evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Several 5-point scales with different semantic anchors were used in the questionnaire:

- **Evaluation of the importance of factors when buying clothes (Q16)**
  1 = Very important
  2 = Rather important
  3 = Neutral
  4 = Rather unimportant
  5 = Not important at all

- **Evaluation of the intensity of perception of the negative impacts of fast fashion (Q17)**
  1 = I perceive them very strongly
  2 = I perceive them strongly
  3 = I perceive them moderately
  4 = I perceive them very little
  5 = I do not perceive them at all

- **Evaluation of the degree of agreement with statements related to attitudes towards fashion (Q18)**
  1 = Strongly agree
  2 = Agree
  3 = Neutral
  4 = Disagree
  5 = Strongly disagree

- **Evaluation of the frequency of purchasing behaviour (Q19)**
  1 = Always
  2 = Often
  3 = Sometimes
  4 = Rarely
  5 = Never

When interpreting the results, it was essential to take the direction of the scales into account. In most cases, a lower mean value indicated a higher intensity of the observed phenomenon, that is, greater importance, stronger agreement, more frequent behaviour, or a more intensive perception of negative impacts. This fact was particularly important in the interpretation of mean values and inferential statistical results.

2.2.5 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

After the data collection had been completed, the obtained data were exported from Microsoft Forms and preprocessed in Microsoft Excel, where they were checked, cleaned, organized, and prepared as a data matrix for statistical analysis. Subsequently, the data were processed in IBM SPSS Statistics, in which both descriptive and inferential evaluation was carried out.

Within descriptive statistics, the following indicators were used:

- absolute frequencies (n),
- relative frequencies (%),
- arithmetic mean,
- standard deviation.

These indicators made it possible to describe the basic structure of the research sample and, at the same time, to evaluate the distribution of responses for individual questionnaire items.

2.2.6 STATISTICAL METHODS

To verify differences between groups of respondents, one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) was used. This method was chosen in order to compare the mean values of the examined variables across several independent groups, for example according to gender, generation, education, income, awareness of the concept of fast fashion, or declared fast fashion purchasing.

Testing was conducted at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. In interpreting the results, the following applied:

→ if $p < 0.05$, the difference between groups was considered statistically significant,

→ if $p \geq 0.05$, the difference between groups was not considered statistically significant.

For variables with three or more categories, in cases where ANOVA showed a statistically significant result, post hoc tests were also applied, specifically Tukey's HSD test, which made it possible to identify between which specific pairs of groups a statistically significant difference occurred.

To increase the interpretative value of the results, effect size was also monitored in ANOVA by means of etasquared (η^2). This indicator expresses the proportion of the variability of the dependent variable explained by the given grouping factor. Under the conditions of social science research, the identified effects were predominantly small to medium, which is common in the study of attitudes and consumer behaviour.

In the analytical part, descriptive rankings of factors according to mean values were also used. This procedure was applied particularly to:

- factors influencing clothing purchases (Q16),
- attitudes towards fashion consumption (Q18),
- respondents' purchasing behaviour (Q19),
- perception of the negative impacts of fast fashion (Q17).

The analysis also included the construction of a summary index of the perception of fast fashion impacts and the subsequent division of the perceived impacts into three basic dimensions:

- environmental dimension,
- social dimension,
- economic dimension.

This procedure made it possible to assess more comprehensively the area in which respondents perceived the consequences of fast fashion most intensively.

2.2.6.1 Research hypotheses

With regard to the focus of the research, seven research hypotheses were formulated and subsequently tested by means of one-way analysis of variance:

- H1: Women assign greater importance to sustainability when purchasing clothing than men.
- H2: Respondents who have already heard of fast fashion perceive the negative social impact in the form of child labour more intensively.
- H3: Respondents who declare purchasing fast fashion have a more favourable attitude towards fast fashion than respondents who do not purchase it.
- H4: The importance of the design/style factor when purchasing clothing differs according to the level of personal net monthly income.
- H5: The degree of agreement with the statement that the respondent purchases fashion in order to improve their mood differs according to household income.
- H6: Generations differ in the degree of fashion impulsivity expressed by the statement that the respondent cannot stop thinking about a fashion item that appeals to them.

– H7: The overall attitude towards fast fashion differs according to the highest level of education attained by respondents.

For each hypothesis, a null hypothesis was formulated stating that there was no statistically significant difference between the compared groups, and an alternative hypothesis was formulated stating that such a difference did exist.

When interpreting the results, it was necessary to take several methodological aspects into account. First of all, it was important to respect the direction of the scales, since lower mean values in most cases did not indicate a more negative result, but rather a higher intensity of the examined phenomenon. For this reason, in the analytical evaluation, mean values always had to be interpreted in the context of the specific scale.

Another important aspect was the uneven structure of the sample. Some respondent categories were represented by only a very small number of individuals, for example the category "prefer not to say" in relation to gender, certain levels of education, or older generational groups. In interpreting inferential results, it was therefore not sufficient to follow only the p-value, but also the size of the groups and the substantive adequacy of the conclusions.

2.2.7 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

A limitation of the research may primarily be considered the research sample itself, which had a markedly uneven structure, especially in terms of age, generation, economic activity, and country of origin. When interpreting the results, it is therefore necessary to consider that the obtained conclusions more strongly reflect the opinions of younger respondents, especially students and members of Generation Z. For this reason, the results cannot be generalized to the entire population without further consideration.

Another limitation is the fact that the data were based on respondents' self-assessment and therefore capture declared attitudes and behaviour, which may not always fully correspond to actual purchasing behaviour. Nevertheless, the questionnaire survey provides a relevant empirical basis for identifying the main trends, relationships, and differences in the perception of the fast fashion issue.

3 RESULTS

3.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

Tab. 1 and Fig. 1 present the gender structure of the respondents. Of the total number of 577 respondents, the majority were women, accounting for 72% of the sample (418 respondents). Men were represented to a considerably lesser extent, making up 27% of the sample (153 respondents). Only a small proportion of respondents, 1% (6 respondents), chose not to state their gender.

This marked predominance of women suggests that the questionnaire results may have been influenced to some extent by the perspectives of female respondents on the fast fashion issue under study. This aspect should be considered when interpreting the findings, as women are more frequently the target group of the fashion industry and may therefore be more engaged with this topic. In contrast, the lower representation of men may indicate that their attitudes and opinions are not sufficiently reflected in the sample. The proportion of respondents who did not disclose their gender was very low and therefore did not have a significant impact on the overall results.

The following figure complements the tabular data and provides a clear overview of the distribution of the individual respondent groups.

Another characteristic examined was the age distribution of the respondents. In terms of the age structure of the respondents, it can be stated that most of them belong to younger age groups, which may reflect a greater interest in the issue of fast fashion among the younger population. The largest age category consists of respondents aged 20–24, who account for 380 respondents, i.e. 66% of the total sample. The second most significant group is made up of respondents aged 15–19, representing 17% of the sample (98 respondents). Together, these two age categories account for as much as 83% of all respondents. The other age groups are represented to a much lesser extent,

Tab. 1: Structure of respondents by gender

Gender	Number	Share (%)
man	153	27
woman	418	72
not specified	6	1
total	577	100

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

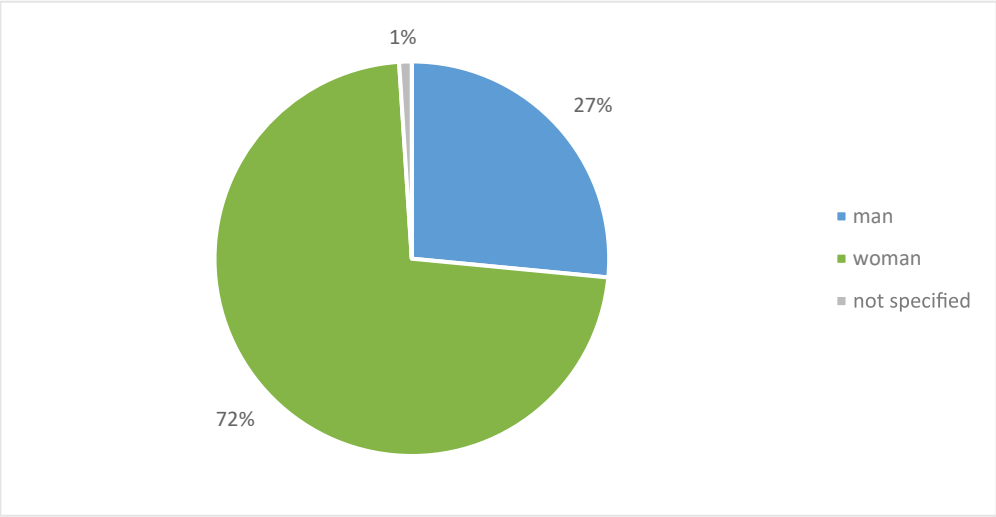

Fig. 1: Structure of respondents by gender
Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

with the categories 25–29, 30–34, and 35–39 years together accounting for approximately 11% of the sample. Respondents over 40 years of age represent only a small proportion, not even reaching 10%, which indicates a lower level of representation of older age groups in the research. Such a distribution suggests that the environmental, economic, and social aspects associated with fast fashion are most strongly perceived by people under the age of 25. At the same time, it is necessary to consider that the research results may be influenced to some extent by the preferences and attitudes typically associated with this age group (Tab. 2, Fig. 2).

Tab. 2: Structure of respondents by age category

Age	Number (n)	Share (%)
15-19	98	17
20-24	380	66
25-29	36	6
30-34	15	3
35-39	12	2
40-49	20	3
50-59	12	2
60+	4	1
total	**577**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

Tab. 3: Structure of respondents by generation

Generation	Number (n)	Share (%)
Generation Z	514	89
Generation Y	39	7
Generation X	20	3
Baby Boomers	4	1
total	**577**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

From a generational perspective, the situation is even more pronounced. Generation Z (aged approximately 15–29) accounts for 89% of respondents (514 people), clearly dominating the sample. Generation Y is represented by 7%, while Generation X and Baby Boomers together account for only 4% of respondents. These findings indicate that the survey results largely reflect the opinions and responses of Generation Z, which is among the groups most strongly associated with fast fashion consumption and may also show greater sensitivity to current trends, as well as to the environmental and social issues associated with the fashion industry (Tab. 3, Fig. 2).

For a better understanding of the above findings, the age and generational structure of the respondents is also presented graphically.

Following the demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as age and generational affiliation, the next part of the analysis focuses on their employment status, specifically their economic activity and position in the labour market (Tab. 4).

In terms of the economic activity of the respondents, a significant predominance of students can be observed, representing as much as 80% of the total sample (463 respondents). This result is consistent with the previous findings on the age and generational structure, as the majority of respondents belonged to younger age categories, especially

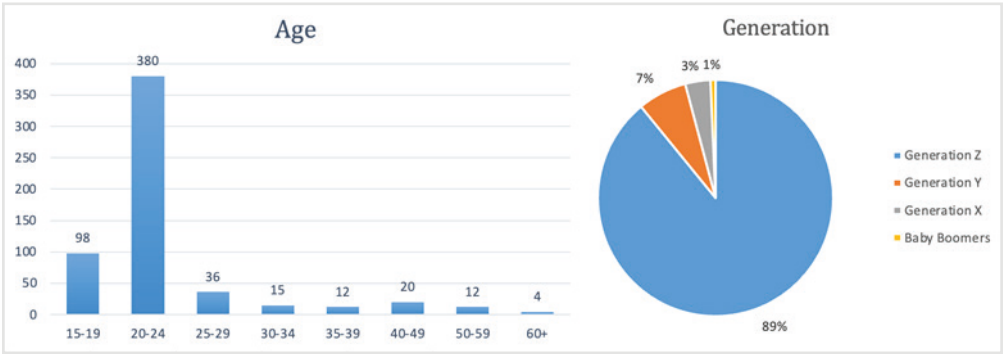

Fig. 2: Age and generational structure of respondents
Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

Tab. 4: Structure of respondents by employment status and economic activity

Age	Number (n)	Share (%)
Student	463	80
Employed	81	14
Unemployed	4	1
Pensioner (old-age or disability pension)	2	0
On maternity/parental leave	7	1
Self-employed (sole trader)	9	2
Entrepreneur – legal entity (business owner / company owner)	6	1
Student + Employed	5	1
total	**577**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

those aged 20–24 and Generation Z. The second largest group consists of employed respondents, who make up 14% of the sample (81 respondents). This group represents the economically active part of the population with its own income, which may have a direct impact on consumer behaviour in the area of fast fashion. The other categories of economic activity are represented only marginally. Self-employed persons account for 2% of the sample (9 respondents), entrepreneurs – legal entities represent 1% (6 respondents), and the category "student + employed" includes 1% of respondents (5 people), which points to transitional phases between studies and working life. Unemployed respondents account for 1% (4 people), respondents on maternity or parental leave also represent 1% (7 people), and pensioners are represented only minimally (2 respondents, less than 1%). Such a concentrated representation of students suggests that the research results largely reflect the attitudes and consumer behaviour of young people, many of whom may not yet be fully economically independent. As a specific group, students often have lower disposable income, which may influence their decisionmaking when purchasing clothing, particularly in terms of the price and availability of fast fashion products. At the same time, this group is often strongly influenced by fashion trends, social media, and the marketing activities of fashion brands. It may also be assumed that some respondents in this group show greater sensitivity to environmental and social issues, which may shape their attitudes towards sustainability and ethical consumption. This sample structure may therefore place greater emphasis on views typical of younger consumers, especially in relation to affordability, trends, and value-based purchasing behaviour. At the same time, the low representation of economically active groups and older respondents means that the survey results are

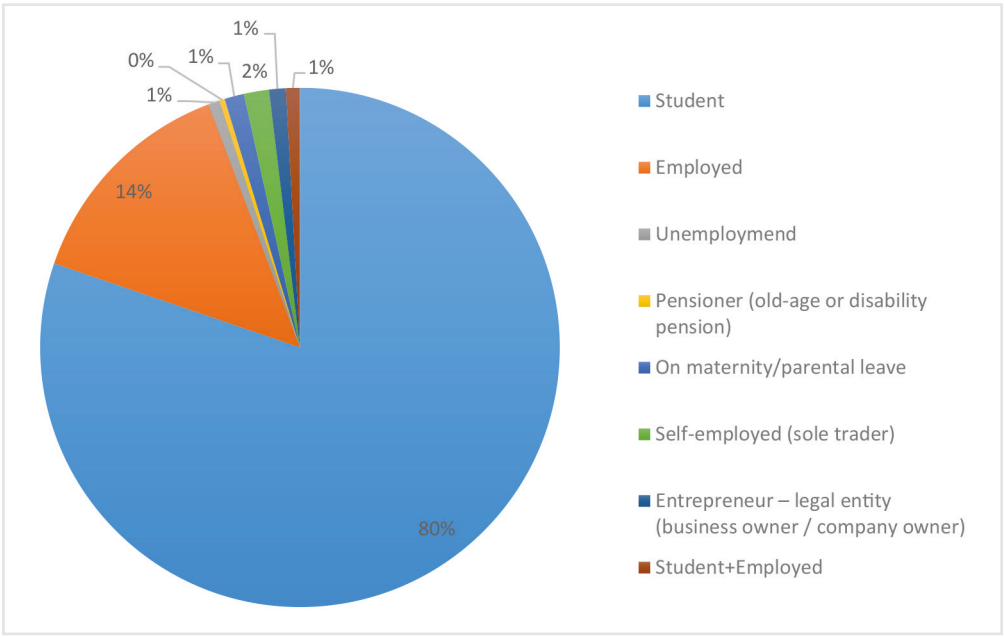

Fig. 3: Structure of respondents by employment status – economic activity
Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

less representative of the population as a whole, particularly from the perspective of groups with higher purchasing power and potentially different consumer habits.

To provide a clearer view of the structure of respondents according to employment status and economic activity, the data is also presented graphically (Fig. 3).

Following the previous analysis of the respondents' employment status and economic activity, the next section focuses on the sectoral distribution of those respondents who are economically active (Tab. 5, Fig. 4).

Tab. 5: Structure of respondents by sector of activity

Employment Sector	Number (n)	Share (%)
primary sector	2	2
secondary sector	14	15
tertiary sector	55	57
quaternary sector	25	26
total	**96**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

In terms of the sectoral distribution of economically active respondents, a total of 96 respondents who indicated their sector of activity can be analysed. This number represents a subgroup of economically active respondents, and it should be noted that 5 respondents from the "student + employed" group did not indicate their sector of employment and were therefore not included in this analysis. The dominant position is held by the tertiary sector (the service sector), in which 55 respondents are active, representing approximately 57% of all respondents who stated their sector of employment. This group mainly includes employees (43 respondents), but also self-employed persons (8 respondents) and entrepreneurs – legal entities (4 respondents). The high representation of the tertiary sector reflects the current structure of the economy, in which services play a dominant role. The second most important sector is the quaternary sector, in which 25 respondents are active (approximately 26%). This sector includes knowledge-intensive activities such as information technology, research, education, and analytical professions. Within this group, employees predominate (24 respondents), while self-employed persons account for only a minimal share (1 respondent). The relatively high representation of the quaternary sector also corresponds to the age and generational structure of the respondents, as they are predominantly young people with the potential to work in the knowledge economy. The secondary sector (industry) is represented by 14 respondents (approximately 15%), the majority of whom are employees (12 respondents), supplemented by 1 self-employed person and 1 entrepreneur. By contrast, the primary sector shows minimal representation, including only 2 respondents (approximately 2%), both of whom are employed persons. In terms of the overall

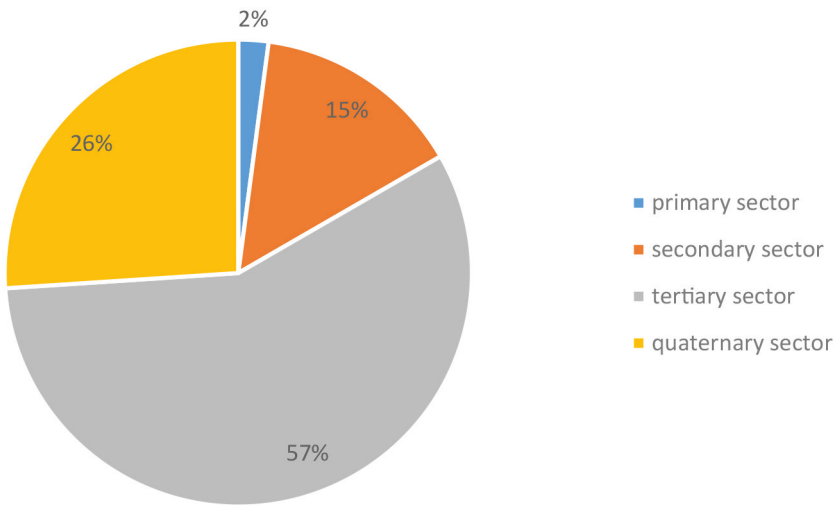

Fig. 4: Structure of respondents by sector of activity
Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

Tab. 6: Structure of respondents by country

Country	Number (n)	Share (%)
Slovak Republic	491	85
Czech Republic	77	13
Poland	4	1
Serbia	3	1
Switzerland	1	0
Ukraine	1	0
total	**577**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

pattern, it can be stated that economically active respondents are concentrated mainly in the tertiary and quaternary sectors, that is, in the areas of services and the knowledge economy. This structure also reflects the age characteristics of the sample under study, as a significant proportion of respondents are students and young people entering the labour market, as confirmed in the previous analysis of economic activity. The low representation of the primary and secondary sectors may indicate a weaker connection of respondents to traditional sectors such as agriculture or industrial production.

The analysis further focuses on the geographical distribution of respondents. Attention is paid not only to the respondents' country of origin, but also to the type of settlement in which they live (agglomeration), as these factors may significantly influence consumer behaviour in the fast fashion sector (Tab. 6, Tab. 7, Tab. 8, Fig. 5).

In terms of the respondents' country of origin, a significant predominance of the Slovak Republic can be observed, with 491 respondents coming from this country, representing 85% of the total sample. The second largest group consists of respondents from the Czech Republic (77 respondents; 13%), while the other countries are represented only marginally. The presence of respondents from the Czech Republic makes it possible to broaden the analytical perspective by adding a comparative dimension within the Central European area, which is characterized by similar socioeconomic and cultural features. Although the representation of other countries is not numerically significant, it indicates a certain degree of sample diversity and at the same time confirms that the issue of fast fashion extends beyond the borders of individual countries and is relevant in a broader international context.

In terms of the type of residence, it can be stated that respondents come from a relatively diverse background, with the largest share consisting of people living in rural areas (45%) and medium-sized towns (31%). Small towns are represented by 19%, while large cities with over 100,000 inhabitants account for only 5% of the sample. This

Tab. 7: Structure of respondents by type of settlement (agglomeration)

Urban Area	Number (n)	Share (%)
rural area (countryside)	261	45
small town (up to 20,000 inhabitants)	110	19
medium-sized town (20,000–100,000 inhabitants)	179	31
large city (over 100,000 inhabitants)	27	5
total	**577**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

distribution suggests that the sample is not concentrated exclusively in urban areas but also includes a significant proportion of respondents from less urbanized areas. Such a structure makes it possible to capture a wider range of consumer habits, which may vary depending on the availability of retail chains, logistical possibilities, and regional specificities. From the perspective of fast fashion, the type of settlement is an important factor, as the availability of fashion brands, frequency of purchases, and exposure to marketing activities tend to be higher in larger cities. By contrast, respondents from rural areas and smaller towns may make greater use of alternative forms of shopping, such as online platforms or occasional shopping trips to cities.

Given the dominant representation of respondents from the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, it is appropriate to analyse the type of settlement in greater detail within these two countries, which together account for 98% of the total sample. Such an approach allows for a more precise identification of differences in urbanization patterns and their potential impact on consumer behaviour. Within the Slovak Republic, respondents from rural areas (49%) and medium-sized towns (32%) predominate, indicating that the sample is oriented more towards a less urbanized environment. Large cities are represented only minimally (1%), which may be related to the nature of data collection or the distribution of respondents. By contrast,

Tab. 8: Structure of respondents by type of settlement (agglomeration)

Urban Area	Slovak Republic (%)	Czech Republic (%)
rural area (countryside)	49	25
small town (up to 20,000 inhabitants)	18	23
medium-sized town (20,000–100,000 inhabitants)	32	23
large city (over 100,000 inhabitants)	1	29
total	**100**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

in the case of the Czech Republic, the structure is significantly different and more oriented towards an urbanized environment. The largest share of respondents comes from large cities (29%), while the other categories are represented relatively evenly. This difference points to a different degree of urbanization between respondents from the two countries. From a comparative perspective, it can be stated that respondents from the Slovak Republic are more closely associated with rural and smaller urban environments, while Czech respondents are more concentrated in large cities. This difference may have a significant impact on access to fashion trends, the availability of fast fashion products, and overall consumer behaviour.

A more detailed view of the geographical structure is provided by the analysis of respondents at the regional level in the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic (Fig. 6). In terms of the regional distribution of respondents within the Slovak Republic, a significant concentration in one region can be observed. The Nitra Region holds a dominant

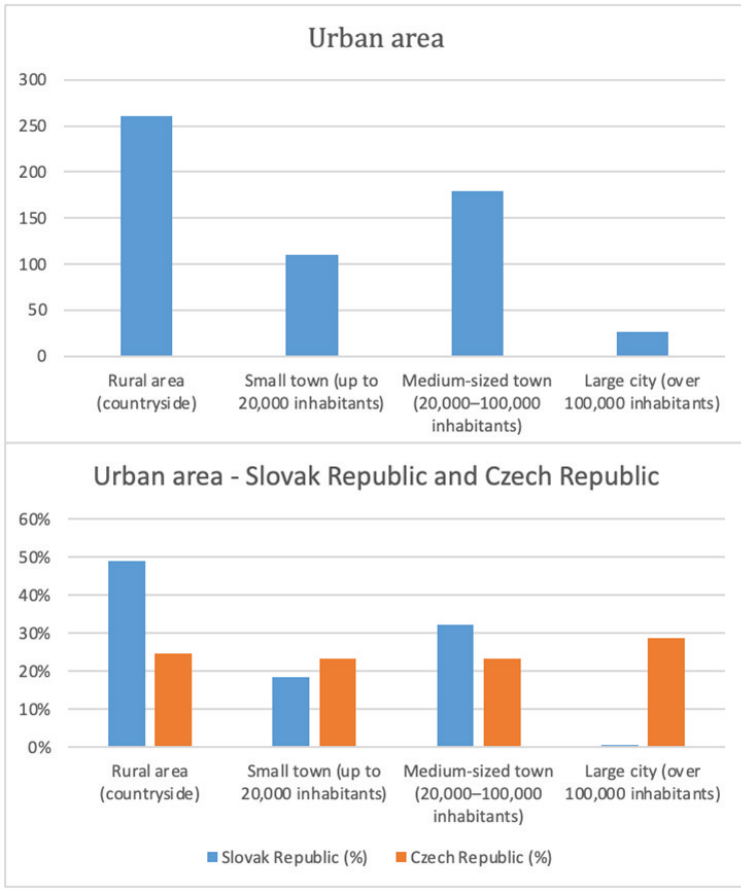

Fig. 5: Structure of respondents by type of residence and its comparison in the Slovak Republic and Czech Republic

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

position, with as many as 325 respondents coming from this region, representing approximately 66% of all respondents from Slovakia. A more notable representation can also be observed in the Trnava Region (13%) and the Trenčín Region (8%), while the other regions are represented only to a lesser extent. The lowest share of respondents comes from the Bratislava and Košice Regions (each 1%). This distribution indicates that the sample of respondents is regionally concentrated mainly in western Slovakia, while the other regions are more complementary in nature. When interpreting the results, it is important to bear in mind that respondents' attitudes and consumer behaviour may be influenced to some extent by the regional environment, particularly by the availability of retail chains, the level of urbanization, and local consumer habits. In the case of the Czech Republic, the regional distribution of respondents is more balanced, although a dominant region can also be identified here. The largest share of respondents comes from the South Bohemian Region, which accounts for approximately 55% of all Czech respondents. The capital city of Prague (18%) and the South Moravian Region (9%) also

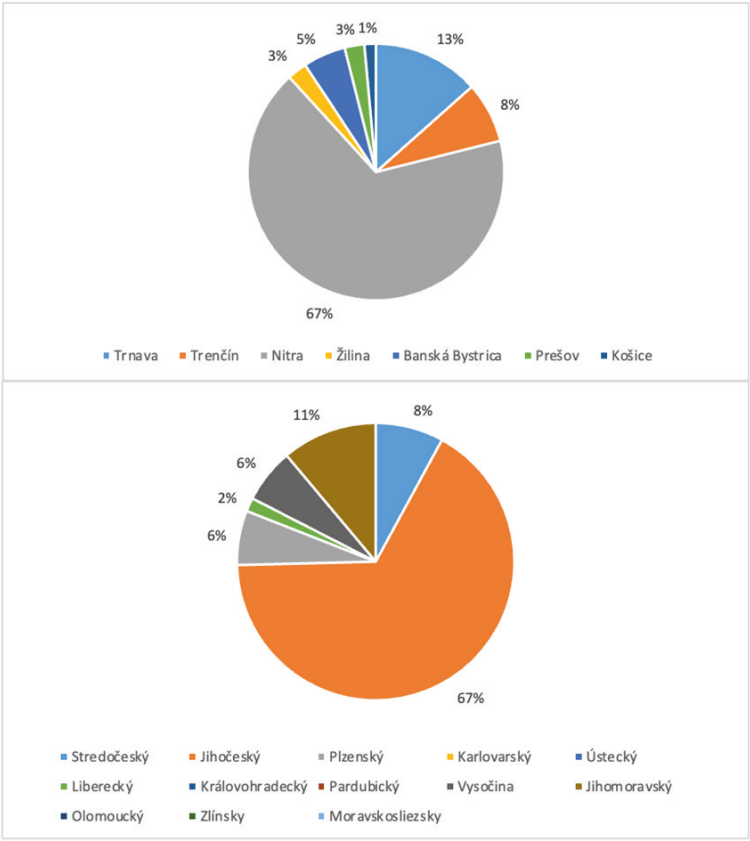

Fig. 6: Regional distribution of respondents in the Slovak Republic and Czech Republic
Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

show notable representation, while the other regions are represented only minimally or not at all. Compared to the Slovak Republic, the Czech sample is smaller, but it shows a higher proportion of respondents from urban areas, especially from the capital.

Building on the previous demographic characteristics, the analysis focuses on respondents' household size and income background. These indicators provide important insights into the economic environment in which individual consumer behaviour is shaped (Tab. 9, Fig. 7).

In terms of household size, it can be stated that the largest group consists of respondents living in four-member households, namely 225 people, which represents 39% of the total number of respondents. The second largest group is made up of three-member households (133 respondents; 23%), followed by households with five or more members (94 respondents; 16%). Two-member households are represented by the same share (16%), while single-member households make up only 6% of the sample. The above distribution indicates a significant predominance of multi-member households, with three- and four-member households together accounting for more than 60% of all respondents. This structure points to a strong representation of the family environment, which may play an important role in shaping consumer behaviour. The income background of respondents is also closely linked to household size. The available data on net monthly income show that the individual incomes of respondents are often lower, which corresponds to the age and economic structure of the sample. In the case of household income, a wider range of values can be observed, most often ranging from approximately €1,500 to €4,000, which reflects the combination of the incomes of several household members. The relationship between household size and income suggests that households with a higher number of members generally have a higher total income, which is, however, also distributed among a larger number of people. Conversely, smaller households may report a lower total income, but potentially a higher income

Tab. 9: Structure of respondents by number of household members

Household Members	Number (n)	Share (%)
1	33	6
2	92	16
3	133	23
4	225	39
5 and above	94	16
total	**577**	**100**

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

per household member. From an interpretative perspective, it can be stated that respondents' economic behaviour is shaped not only by their individual income, but also by the overall financial background of the household. This aspect is particularly important when assessing consumer decisions, as spending on clothing may be influenced by the broader context of the family budget.

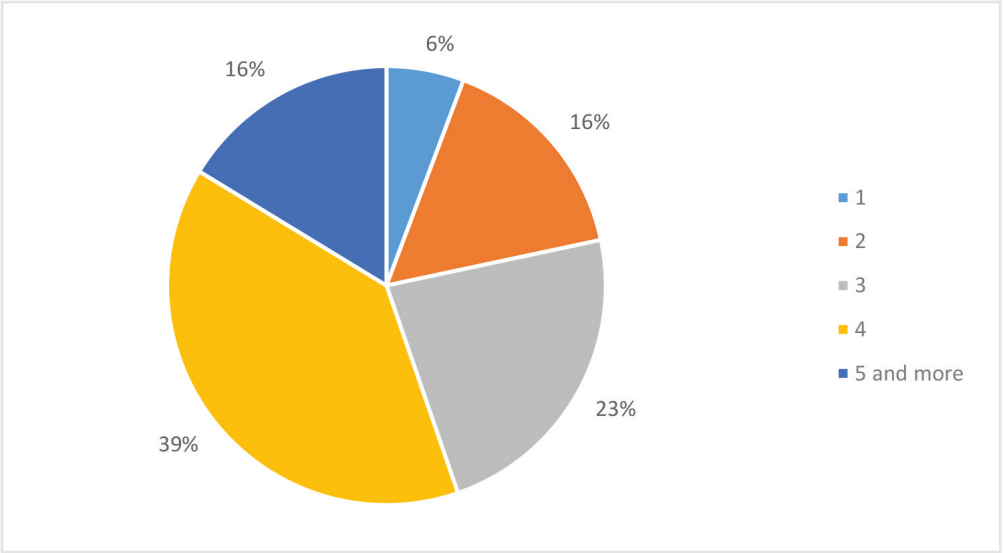

Fig. 7: Structure of respondents by number of household members
Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

3.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER DECISIONS WHEN PURCHASING CLOTHING

In this section, the analysis focuses on identifying and evaluating the factors that influence respondents' decision-making when purchasing clothing.

The results show (Tab. 10) that respondents place the greatest emphasis on quality, price, and product design/style when purchasing clothing. Quality was rated as very or rather important by a total of 485 respondents, representing approximately 84% of the total sample. Similarly, price (452 respondents; 78%) and design/style (444 respondents; 77%) were also rated highly, indicating that both rational and aesthetic factors play an important role in decision-making. Practical aspects of the product are also important, particularly functionality (443 respondents; 77%), material durability/resistance (414 respondents; 72%), and comfort (392 respondents; 68%). These factors suggest that respondents tend to place emphasis on the utility value of the product and its long-term use. Factors such as availability and material composition show a medium level of importance, while in the case of composition, neutral responses predominate (224 respondents; 39%). Sustainability is also frequently rated as neutral (239 respondents; 41%), although a considerable proportion of respondents regard it as important.

Tab. 10: Evaluation of the importance of factors when buying clothes

Household Members	1	2	3	4	5
Price	238	214	86	21	18
Quality	242	243	51	17	24
Design/style	272	172	78	30	25
Composition	102	157	224	69	25
Brand	48	97	187	136	109
Sustainability	76	160	239	67	35
Availability	99	237	190	33	18
Country of origin	31	69	207	129	141
Fashion trends	54	140	183	104	96
Comfort	151	241	130	29	26
Durability/resistance of material	176	238	117	30	16
Functionality	210	233	84	32	18
Guarantee	71	159	208	82	57

1 – Very important; 2 – Rather important; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Rather unimportant; 5 – Not important at all

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

By contrast, the least important factors include country of origin, brand, and fashion trends. These factors show a higher proportion of responses in the categories "rather unimportant" and "not important at all", indicating that they play a more complementary role in clothing purchase decisions.

Based on the descriptive statistics, the ranking of factors according to their importance can be clearly identified (Tab. 11). The lowest mean values, indicating the highest level of importance, were recorded for quality (1.853), design/style (1.898), and price (1.903). These factors also show relatively low standard deviation values, indicating a high degree of agreement among respondents. They are followed by functionality and material durability/resistance, which also represent important determinants of purchasing behaviour. Their mean values are close to 2, confirming their consistently high evaluation. Factors such as comfort, availability, composition, and sustainability reach medium values, indicating their complementary but still relevant role in decision-making. The standard deviation values for these factors are around 1, suggesting slight variability in respondents' opinions. By contrast, the highest mean values were recorded for fashion trends (3.083), brand (3.279), and country of origin (3.485), indicating their lower importance. The higher standard deviation values for these factors also suggest greater differentiation in respondents' opinions. The overall ranking of the factors suggests that consumers' decision-making when purchasing clothing is based primarily on a combination of qualitative, economic, and functional aspects, while factors associated with brand image, fashion trends, and product origin appear to play a less significant role.

Tab. 11: Descriptive statistics of evaluated factors

Rank	Factor	Mean	SD
1	Quality	1.853	0.990
2	Design/style	1.898	1.094
3	Price	1.903	0.990
4	Functionality	1.986	1.007
5	Durability/resistance of material	2.085	0.980
6	Comfort	2.199	1.027
7	Availability	2.366	0.937
8	Composition	2.581	1.048
9	Sustainability	2.697	1.036
10	Guarantee	2.818	1.129
11	Fashion trends	3.083	1.208
12	Brand	3.279	1.190
13	Country of origin	3.485	1.141

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

3.3 CONSUMER ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS FASHION

In this section, the analysis focuses on respondents' attitudes and behaviour in relation to fashion, with the aim of identifying the level of emotional involvement, impulsivity, and the social aspects associated with clothing purchases.

The results show (Tab. 12) that respondents generally do not exhibit strongly impulsive or extreme consumer behaviour in relation to fashion. The highest level of agreement was recorded for the statement "I feel more socially attractive when I am dressed fashionably", with a total of 261 respondents (45%) indicating that they agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This result points to the importance of the social and self-presentational dimension of fashion. A relatively balanced distribution of responses can be observed for statements concerning the emotional relationship to fashion, for example in the case of the statement "If I see a fashion item I like, I can't stop thinking about it", where the responses are distributed across the entire scale, with a slight predominance of disagreement. By contrast, significant disagreement was recorded for statements related to more extreme forms of consumer behaviour. As many as 447 respondents (77%) stated that they were not willing to go into debt for fashion, and 391 respondents (68%) disagreed with hiding their purchases from their loved ones.

Tab. 12: Respondents' attitudes towards fashion

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I am willing to go into debt for fashion	11	20	38	61	447
I often hide my fashion purchases from my loved ones	18	25	50	93	391
If I see a fashion I like, I can't stop thinking about it	50	91	136	139	161
I am not satisfied until I buy the fashion of my dreams	25	49	129	146	228
I also buy fashion that I know I don't need	37	81	106	151	202
I'm afraid I'll be dressed unfashionably	22	59	120	137	239
I change my wardrobe regularly	30	81	174	140	152
I feel more socially attractive when I am dressed fashionably	109	152	164	69	83

1 – Strongly agree; 2 – Agree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Disagree; 5 – Strongly disagree

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

A similarly high proportion of disagreement was recorded for statements concerning impulsive purchases or the need to own a dream fashion item. These results suggest that respondents tend to approach clothing purchases rather rationally, while more extreme forms of consumer behaviour appear to be less typical in their case.

Based on the descriptive statistics (Tab. 13), the statements can be ranked according to the degree of respondents' agreement. The lowest mean value, and therefore the highest degree of agreement, was recorded for the statement concerning social attractiveness (2.766), which suggests the importance of fashion as a tool of self-presentation. This is followed by statements related to the emotional perception of fashion and the frequency of wardrobe renewal, with mean values ranging from approximately 3.4 to 3.5, indicating rather neutral to slightly disagreeing attitudes. The highest mean values were recorded for statements concerning hiding purchases (4.411) and going into debt for fashion (4.582), which clearly indicates a low level of agreement with these forms of behaviour among respondents. In most cases, the standard deviation values are around 1, indicating a relatively balanced distribution of responses without extreme variation. Higher variability is particularly evident in statements related to the social perception of fashion and the emotional relationship to it, which may indicate individual differences among respondents. Overall, respondents appear to perceive fashion primarily as a means of social presentation, but without strong tendencies towards impulsive or risky consumer behaviour.

Tab. 13: Descriptive statistics of statements related to fashion behaviour

Rank	Statement	Mean	SD
1	I feel more socially attractive when I am dressed fashionably	2.766	1.289
2	If I see a fashion I like, I can't stop thinking about it	3.468	1.283
3	I change my wardrobe regularly	3.525	1.171
4	I prefer the company of people who are dressed fashionably	3.674	1.185
5	I also buy fashion that I know I don't need	3.693	1.257
6	I am not satisfied until I buy the fashion of my dreams	3.872	1.155
7	I'm afraid I'll be dressed unfashionably	3.887	1.168
8	I often hide my fashion purchases from my loved ones	4.411	1.025
9	I am willing to go into debt for fashion	4.582	0.902

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

3.4 CONSUMER SHOPPING BEHAVIOR WHEN BUYING CLOTHES

This part of the analysis focuses on identifying respondents' shopping habits, with the aim of assessing the degree of rationality, impulsivity, and emotional motivation associated with clothing purchases.

The results show (Tab. 14) that respondents' purchasing behaviour is predominantly rational and oriented towards their financial means. The highest level of agreement was recorded for the statement "I only buy what I can afford", with as many as 466 respondents (81%) selecting the answer "always" or "often". This result points to a strong emphasis on financial discipline when purchasing clothes. Shopping at reduced prices also plays a significant role, with as many as 371 respondents (64%) stating that they always or often buy items on sale. This result suggests respondents' sensitivity to price and their tendency to seek more affordable purchasing options. A relatively balanced distribution of responses can be observed for the statement "I only shop when I need something for my wardrobe", where the categories "sometimes" (206 respondents; 36%) and "often" (169 respondents; 29%) predominate, indicating a combination of planned and occasional shopping. By contrast, a significantly lower frequency was recorded for statements related to impulsive or emotional shopping. As many as 376 respondents (65%) stated that they rarely or never shop to pass the time, and 258 respondents (45%) reported that they rarely or never shop to feel better. These results suggest a lower importance of hedonic motivations in respondents' shopping behaviour.

Based on the descriptive statistics (Tab. 15), it is possible to rank the individual forms of purchasing behaviour according to their frequency. The lowest mean value was recorded for the statement "I only buy what I can afford" (1.740), which indicates its highest frequency and the dominant role of the financial aspect in purchasing decisions.

Tab. 14: Purchasing behaviour of respondents

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I buy items on sale	100	271	163	30	13
I only buy what I can afford.	303	163	85	10	16
I only shop when I need something for my wardrobe	111	169	206	71	20
I shop to pass the time.	25	59	117	161	215
I shop to feel better	63	106	150	121	137

1 – Always; 2 – Often; 3 – Sometimes; 4 – Rarely; 5 – Never

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

Tab. 15: Descriptive statistics of shopping behaviour

Rank	Statement	Mean	SD
1	I only buy what I can afford.	1.740	0.962
2	I buy items on sale	2.281	0.888
3	I only shop when I need something for my wardrobe	2.515	1.044
4	I shop to feel better	3.282	1.305
5	I shop to pass the time.	3.835	1.162

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

This is followed by buying items on sale (2.281), which represents an important element of consumer behaviour and also corresponds to the previous findings on the importance of price. This is followed by the statement "I only shop when I need something for my wardrobe" (2.515), which points to a combination of planned and occasional shopping behaviour. The highest mean values, and therefore the lowest frequency, were recorded for the statements "I shop to feel better" (3.282) and "I shop to pass the time" (3.835). These results indicate a lower importance of emotional and leisure-related motivations when buying clothes. The standard deviation values suggest relatively stable responses for rational forms of behaviour, especially financial decision-making, while the higher variability recorded for emotional factors indicates differences among individual respondents. Overall, respondents' shopping behaviour appears to be predominantly rational, oriented towards financial possibilities and practical needs, while impulsive and emotional motivations seem to play a more complementary role.

3.5 PERCEPTION OF THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF FAST FASHION

The results indicate a high level of awareness of the concept of fast fashion among respondents, with 84.75% stating that they are familiar with the term. Only 13.34% of respondents reported that they are not familiar with fast fashion, while a minimal proportion (1.91%) stated that they were unsure. In terms of purchasing behaviour, it can be stated that the majority of respondents buy fast fashion products (61.87%), while approximately one third (30.85%) reported that they do not buy them. A smaller proportion (7.28%) were unable to give a clear answer. Respondents' attitudes towards fast fashion are most often neutral, as indicated by 56.33% of respondents. Negative attitudes (rather negative and very negative) together account for 28.60%, while positive attitudes (rather positive and very positive) represent 15.08%. The distribution of responses suggests that although respondents are largely familiar with and make use of fast fashion, their assessment of this phenomenon is neither clearly positive nor clearly negative, with a neutral perception prevailing. These findings provide the basis for the subsequent analysis, which focuses on the extent to which respondents are aware of the specific social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with fast fashion.

In terms of overall perception (Tab. 16), it can be stated that respondents show a relatively high level of awareness of the negative impacts of fast fashion across all monitored areas. The most prominent are the perceived environmental impacts, especially the large amount of textile waste, which is perceived very strongly by 195 respondents and strongly by a further 176 respondents. A similarly high level of perception can be observed in the case of water pollution (168 respondents – very strongly; 173 – strongly) and water and energy consumption (142 respondents – very strongly; 159 – strongly). Social impacts associated with working conditions also play an important role. Low employee wages are perceived very strongly by 169 respondents, while a further 197 respondents perceive them strongly, indicating a high level of sensitivity to this issue. Human rights violations, health risks, and employee exploitation are perceived in a similar way, as they are assessed as strong or very strong impacts in a substantial proportion of cases. By contrast, some social aspects are perceived more moderately. This mainly concerns the loss of cultural identity and adaptation to global trends, where a medium level of perception prevails (213 respondents). Similarly, the development of shopping addiction and support for large fashion brands are more often assessed as moderately significant impacts. Economic impacts, such as reducing production costs or job instability, show a balanced distribution of responses and are most often perceived at a medium level, although higher levels of perception are also represented to a considerable extent.

Tab. 16: Perception of negative impacts of fast fashion

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
Child labour	156	158	184	53	26
Human rights violations	151	190	157	56	23
Health risks	151	190	165	49	22
Exploitation of employees	154	186	170	49	18
Expanding consumer lifestyle	138	170	190	54	25
The development of shopping addiction	137	155	181	49	55
Loss of native culture and adaptation to global trends	107	134	213	73	50
Support for large fashion brands	113	161	201	64	38
Pressure for constant innovation and short delivery cycles	122	167	198	50	40
Low employee wages	169	197	147	39	25
Reducing production costs	118	157	218	50	34
Job instability	97	162	217	64	37
Water and energy consumption	142	159	179	59	38
Water pollution	168	173	150	52	34
Large amounts of textile waste	195	176	119	51	36
Greenhouse gas emissions	126	154	189	74	34
Overexploitation of natural resources	145	176	161	65	30
Increasing carbon footprint	130	190	162	59	36

1 – I perceive them very strongly; 2 – I perceive them strongly; 3 – I perceive them moderately; 4 – I perceive them very little; 5 – I do not perceive them at all

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

From the perspective of descriptive statistics (Tab. 17), it can be stated that the mean values of all monitored factors range from 2.0735 to 2.7071, indicating an overall relatively high level of perception of the negative impacts of fast fashion. The lowest mean value, and therefore the strongest perception, was recorded for the factor of large amounts of textile waste (Mean = 2.0735), which suggests the prominent position of environmental aspects in respondents' awareness. Strong perception was also recorded for low employee wages (Mean = 2.1697), water pollution (Mean = 2.1811), exploitation of employees (Mean = 2.2769), and water and energy consumption (Mean = 2.2790). By contrast, the highest mean value was recorded for the factor of loss of cultural identity and adaptation to global trends (Mean = 2.7071), indicating a relatively lower intensity of perception. Higher mean values can also be observed for factors such as support for large fashion brands (Mean = 2.5797) and pressure for constant innovation and fast

Tab. 17: Descriptive statistics of perceptions of the impacts of Fast Fashion

Factor	Mean	SD
Child labour	2.3711	1.17
Human rights violations	2.3276	1.12
Health risks	2.3076	1.10
Exploitation of employees	2.2769	1.09
Expanding consumer lifestyle	2.4135	1.11
The development of shopping addiction	2.5165	1.18
Loss of native culture and adaptation to global trends	2.7071	1.17
Support for large fashion brands	2.5797	1.16
Pressure for constant innovation and short delivery cycles	2.5477	1.13
Low employee wages	2.1697	1.05
Reducing production costs	2.4073	1.13
Job instability	2.4627	1.14
Water and energy consumption	2.2790	1.10
Water pollution	2.1811	1.08
Large amounts of textile waste	2.0735	1.05
Greenhouse gas emissions	2.3194	1.12
Overexploitation of natural resources	2.2678	1.10
Increasing carbon footprint	2.2920	1.11

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

production cycles (Mean = 2.5477). The standard deviation values range approximately from 1.05 to 1.18, indicating slight variability in respondents' answers. This suggests that despite the overall high level of awareness of negative impacts, there are some differences in the intensity of perception among individual respondents.

Based on the aggregation of individual items, a summary index of the perception of the impacts of fast fashion was calculated, reaching a value of approximately 2.36. This value lies between the levels of "strongly perceive" and "moderately perceive", indicating an overall relatively high level of awareness of the negative consequences of fast fashion among respondents.

From the perspective of a more in-depth analysis of the perception of the impacts of fast fashion, the individual monitored factors can be divided into three basic dimensions: environmental, social, and economic (Fig. 8). Such a division allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the areas in which respondents perceive the consequences of fast fashion most intensely. Based on the mean values of the individual factors, a summary

mean was calculated for each dimension. The lowest value, and therefore the strongest perception, was recorded for the environmental dimension (Mean ≈ 2.2350). This result indicates a considerable sensitivity among respondents to environmental impacts, such as water pollution, high consumption of natural resources, and the large amount of textile waste. The environmental aspects of fast fashion are therefore the most strongly reflected in respondents' awareness. The second most significant dimension is the social one (Mean ≈ 2.2906), which mainly includes issues such as human rights violations, child labour, low wages, and employee exploitation. Here too, it is possible to speak of a relatively strong level of perception, suggesting that respondents are also aware of the social consequences of the global fashion industry. By contrast, the highest mean value was recorded for the economic dimension (Mean ≈ 2.4822), which means that these impacts are perceived less intensely. These mainly include aspects such as pressure for constant innovation, reduction of production costs, and job instability. Although these factors are not ignored by respondents, their perception is less pronounced in comparison with environmental and social impacts.

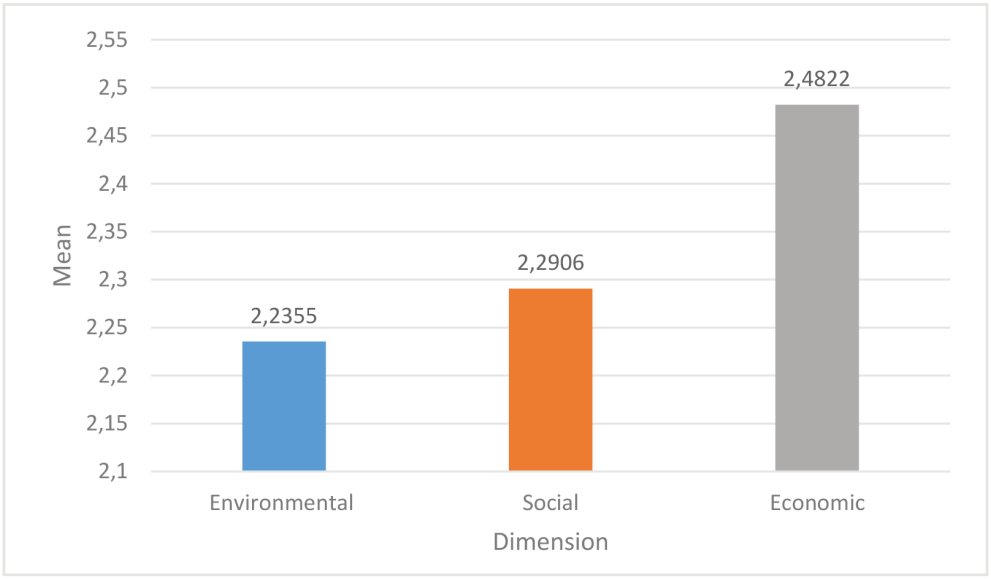

Fig. 8: Perception of fast fashion Impacts by Dimension
Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

3.6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PERCEPTION OF FAST FASHION IMPACTS AND PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR

In terms of a deeper interpretation of the results, it is appropriate to link the findings on the perception of the negative impacts of fast fashion with respondents' purchasing behaviour. Such a connection allows for a better understanding of the extent to which awareness of these consequences is reflected in actual consumer behaviour. Based on the results, it can be stated that respondents show a relatively high level of perception of the environmental and social impacts of fast fashion, with the most strongly perceived issues being those associated with textile waste, environmental pollution, and working conditions. At the same time, however, the analysis of purchasing behaviour points to a continuing orientation towards factors such as price, availability, and design, which play an important role in clothing purchase decisions. This relationship may suggest the presence of a certain discrepancy between consumers' attitudes and behaviour. Although respondents declare awareness of the negative consequences of fast fashion, their purchasing decisions continue to be influenced primarily by practical and economic factors. In the academic literature, this phenomenon is often described as the attitude–behaviour gap, that is, the difference between declared attitudes and actual behaviour. At the same time, it can be observed that environmental impacts are perceived more intensely than economic ones, which does not necessarily mean that they exert a dominant influence on purchasing decisions themselves. Although consumers are aware of the environmental consequences, factors such as affordability, current fashion trends, and shopping convenience continue to play an important role in actual purchases. On the other hand, certain elements of rational consumer behaviour can be identified, for example in the declared tendency to shop within one's financial means or to make use of discount promotions. However, behaviours associated with limiting purchases due to environmental or social impacts appear to be less pronounced. These findings suggest that although respondents are aware of the negative consequences of fast fashion, this awareness is reflected in their consumer behaviour only to a limited extent. Purchasing decisions are the result of a combination of several factors, with environmental and social aspects representing only one dimension of this complex process.

3.7 STATISTICAL TESTING OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Based on the previous descriptive findings, this part of the study focuses on the statistical verification of the formulated research hypotheses.

H1. Women assign greater importance to sustainability when purchasing clothing than men.

This hypothesis is based on the assumption that previous research suggests a higher sensitivity among women to issues of sustainability, production ethics, and responsible consumption. In the literature focused on sustainable fashion and responsible consumption, women have in some studies been identified as consumers who pay greater attention to these aspects of consumption (Bonelli *et al*., 2024; Rahman *et al*., 2023). The variable "sustainability" originates from Question Q16, in which respondents evaluated the importance of individual factors when purchasing clothing. Since the scale is coded from 1 = very important to 5 = not important at all, a lower mean indicates greater importance. Comparing genders therefore makes it possible to assess which group assigns greater weight to sustainability.

H0: There is no statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

The ANOVA test (Tab. 18) revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F = 8.203$; $p = 0.000$; $\eta^2 = 0.028$). The effect size can be interpreted as small to medium. The lowest mean was recorded for the "prefer not to say" group (i.e. a more intensive manifestation of the examined phenomenon in terms of the scale), while the highest mean was found in the "male" group.

Since, for the sustainability item, a lower mean indicates greater importance, it can be concluded that women assign greater importance to sustainability than men. The difference is substantively important despite the fact that the effect is not large; in the field of consumer attitudes, even a small effect often indicates a systematic difference in value orientation. At the same time, it should be noted that the "prefer not to say" category is very small; therefore, the main interpretative emphasis should be placed on the comparison between men and women.

Tab. 18: Results of one-way ANOVA for the importance of the factor sustainability when purchasing clothing by gender

Group			N	Mean	SD
Woman			153	2.980	1.184
I don't want to mention			6	2.333	0.816
Man			418	2.598	0.960
Factor	**F**	**p**	**η^2**	**df between**	**df within**
Gender	8.203	0.000	0.028	2	574

Operationalization: Q16 – sustainability; grouping variable: Gender. One-way ANOVA at the significance level α = 0.05. For factors with three or more categories, available Tukey post hoc comparisons were also used.

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

Tab. 19: Supplementary post hoc interpretation for H1 (Tukey HSD)

Group I	Group J	Mean difference (I-J)	p	95% CI
Woman	Man	−0.382*	0.000	−0.609 to −0.155

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

The post hoc comparison (Tab. 19) confirms that the statistically significant difference arises mainly between women and men; women assign greater importance to sustainability. Hypothesis H1 was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H2. Respondents who have already heard of fast fashion perceive the negative social impact in the form of child labour more intensively.

This hypothesis is based on the assumption that awareness of the concept of fast fashion may be associated with a more sensitive perception of its negative social impacts. Previous studies indicate that awareness of fast fashion and sustainable consumption may be related to a more intensive ethical evaluation of consumer practices and their consequences. It is therefore assumed that respondents who have already heard of fast fashion will reflect more strongly on the social problems associated with the production of cheap fashion. Child labour was selected as a representative indicator, as it is one of the most frequently cited and socially most sensitive problems associated with fast fashion production. This assumption, as formulated,

makes it possible to link respondents' level of awareness with their perception of the ethical consequences of fast fashion. From a research perspective, this assumption is important because it connects the level of awareness with the ethical perception of consequences. If confirmed, it will be possible to conclude that the informational and educational component is not merely an accompanying factor, but also a potential tool for shaping more responsible consumer behaviour (Zhang *et al*., 2021; Rahman *et al*., 2023; Dzhengiz *et al*., 2023; Perry & Wood, 2025).

H0: There is no statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

The ANOVA test (Tab. 20) revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F = 17.382$; $p = 0.000$; $\eta^2 = 0.057$). The effect size can be interpreted as small to medium. The lowest mean was recorded for the "yes" group (i.e. a more intensive manifestation of

Tab. 20: Results of one-way ANOVA for the perception of child labour according to aware-ness of the concept of fast fashion

Group			N	Mean	SD
Yes			489	2.256	1.049
Do not know			11	2.818	1.471
No			77	3.013	1.198
Factor	**F**	**p**	**η^2**	**df between**	**df within**
HeardOfFF	17.382	0.000	0.057	2	574

Operationalization: Q17 - child labour; grouping variable: HeardOfFF. One-way ANO-VA at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$. For factors with three or more categories, avail-able Tukey post hoc comparisons were also used.

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

Tab. 21: Supplementary post hoc interpretation for H2 (Tukey HSD)

Group I	Group J	Mean difference (I-J)	p	95% CI
No	Yes	0.757*	0.000	0.447 to 1.068

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

the examined phenomenon in terms of the scale), while the highest mean was found in the "no" group. Respondents who had already heard of fast fashion achieved a markedly lower mean than those who had not heard of it. This means that they perceive child labour as a more relevant and more pronounced negative consequence. This result can be interpreted as an argument in favour of the importance of awareness: the more familiar the fast fashion phenomenon is, the more sensitively its social consequences are perceived.

The Tukey test (Tab. 21) shows that the decisive difference arises between the group that had not heard of fast fashion and the group that was familiar with it. It is therefore not merely a vague dispersion of means, but a clearly differentiated profile of informed and uninformed respondents. Hypothesis H2 was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H3. Respondents who declare purchasing fast fashion have a more favourable attitude towards fast fashion than respondents who do not purchase it.

One of the key questions of the research is whether declared fast fashion purchasing is related to the overall attitude towards this phenomenon. Previous studies suggest that, in the field of fast fashion, tension often emerges between consumers' environmental and ethical awareness and their actual purchasing behaviour, while the relationship between attitude and behaviour is not always unambiguous. At the same time, the literature indicates that attitude and purchasing behaviour may be interconnected, and that consumers who continue to purchase fast fashion may show a less negative evaluation of this consumption model or may rationalize their behaviour in some way. This hypothesis therefore links declared behaviour with respondents' value orientation. If confirmed, it would be possible to speak of an internally consistent relationship between consumer practice and attitude; if not confirmed, it would be possible to discuss a discrepancy between behaviour and values (Zhang *et al*., 2021; Hageman *et al*., 2023).

H0: There is no statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

The ANOVA test (Tab. 22) revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F = 16.623$; $p = 0.000$; $\eta^2 = 0.055$). The effect size can be interpreted as small to medium. The lowest mean was recorded for the "yes" group (i.e. a more intensive manifestation of the examined phenomenon in terms of the scale), while the highest mean was found in the "no" group. For the item "attitude towards fast fashion", a lower

Tab. 22: Results of one-way ANOVA for the attitude towards fast fashion according to declared fast fashion purchasing

Group			N	Mean	SD
Yes			357	2.997	0.774
Do not know			42	3.214	0.470
No			178	3.416	0.893
Factor	**F**	**p**	**η^2**	**df between**	**df within**
BuyFF	16.623	0.000	0.055	2	574

Operationalization: Q15 - attitude towards fast fashion; grouping variable: BuyFF. One-way ANOVA at the significance level α = 0.05. For factors with three or more categories, available Tukey post hoc comparisons were also used.

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

Tab. 23: Supplementary post hoc interpretation for H3 (Tukey HSD)

Group I	Group J	Mean difference (I-J)	p	95% CI
No	Yes	0.419*	0.000	0.247 to 0.590

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

mean indicates a more favourable, or less negative, attitude. Respondents who declared purchasing fast fashion achieved the lowest mean, whereas those who do not purchase it had the highest mean. The result confirms internal consistency between behaviour and the evaluation of the phenomenon: more frequent, or at least declared, contact with fast fashion is associated with a less rejecting attitude.

The pairwise comparison (Tab. 23) confirmed a difference mainly between respondents who purchase fast fashion and those who do not. Declared purchasing is associated with a less negative overall attitude. Hypothesis H3 was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H4. The importance of the factor design/style when purchasing clothing differs according to the level of personal net monthly income.

Personal income belongs among the classic explanatory variables of consumer behaviour. Previous studies in the field of fashion consumption and sustainability suggest that economic background is one of the relevant factors that may influence

purchasing preferences, consumer decision-making, and the willingness to assign importance to different product attributes. In the field of fashion, however, its effect does not necessarily manifest itself linearly. Higher income does not automatically mean a greater emphasis on design/style, because decision-making is also influenced by rational purchasing, price, the individual level of fashion involvement, and the broader value framework of consumption. The hypothesis is therefore formulated as a difference hypothesis rather than a strictly directional one. The test examines whether the aesthetic dimension of fashion manifests itself differently across income groups. If the difference is confirmed, it will then be possible to discuss the extent to which fashion fulfils a status, self-expressive, or hedonic function (Zhang *et al*., 2021; Pires *et al*., 2024).

H0: There is no statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

Tab. 24: Results of one-way ANOVA for the importance of the factor design/style when purchasing clothing according to the level of personal net monthly income

Group			N	Mean	SD
Up to EUR 203			184	1.978	1.135
EUR 203–583			184	1.663	0.984
Above EUR 583			184	2.087	1.142
Factor	**F**	**p**	**η^2**	**df between**	**df within**
PersonalIncomeTertile	7.515	0.001	0.027	2	549

Operationalization: Q16 – design/style; grouping variable: PersonalIncomeTertile. One-way ANOVA at the significance level α = 0.05. For factors with three or more categories, available Tukey post hoc comparisons were also used.

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

Tab. 25: Supplementary post hoc interpretation for H4 (Tukey HSD)

Group I	Group J	Mean difference (I-J)	p	95% CI
Up to EUR 203	EUR 203-583	0.315*	0.016	0.048 to 0.582

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

The ANOVA test (Tab. 24) revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F = 7.515$; $p = 0.001$; $\eta^2 = 0.027$). The effect size can be interpreted as small to medium. The lowest mean was recorded for the "EUR 203-583" group (i.e. a more intensive manifestation of the examined phenomenon in terms of the scale), while the highest mean was found in the "above EUR 583" group.

The lowest mean was found in the middle-income group, which suggests that respondents with a personal income between EUR 203 and EUR 583 assigned the greatest importance to design/style. The difference is therefore not linear; higher income in itself does not lead to a stronger emphasis on design. However, the aesthetic dimension of fashion may culminate in a group with sufficient, yet still sensitive, purchasing power, where the need for self-presentation combines with budget-based selectivity.
The post hoc test (Tab. 25) localizes the significant difference mainly between the lowest and the middle-income group. The test shows that the difference does not arise between all three groups, but specifically between groups with different economic backgrounds and probably also different consumer strategies. Hypothesis H4 was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H5. The degree of agreement with the statement that the respondent purchases fashion in order to improve their mood differs according to household income.

Household income may also influence emotional purchase motives. Literature focused on hedonic shopping and fashion consumption points out that clothing purchases do not have to be motivated exclusively by utilitarian considerations, but may also fulfil an emotional, gratificatory, and hedonic function. At the same time, it appears that the economic background of the household affects the extent of expenditure on clothing and fast fashion, and thereby also the scope within which emotional motives for consumption may manifest themselves. In an environment of greater economic security, consumption may more often be used as a means of improving mood, whereas in households with lower income, purchasing may be more regulated by budget constraints. The hypothesis therefore examines whether the emotional motive "I shop to feel better" differs between households with different monthly incomes. This assumption, as formulated, links the economic background of the household with the psychological function of consumption and points out that fast fashion is not only a matter of price, but also of emotional compensation and everyday mood management (Ciocodeică *et al*., 2025; Bishnoi *et al*., 2023).

Tab. 26: Results of one-way ANOVA for the degree of agreement with the statement that the respondent purchases fashion in order to improve their mood according to household income

Group			N	Mean	SD
Up to 2000			133	3.444	1.264
2000-3000			153	3.418	1.249
Above 3000			224	3.058	1.370
Factor	**F**	**p**	**η^2**	**df between**	**df within**
HouseholdIncomeTertile	5.101	0.006	0.020	2	507

Operationalization: Q19 – I shop to feel better; grouping variable: HouseholdIncomeTertile. One-way ANOVA at the significance level α = 0.05. For factors with three or more categories, available Tukey post hoc comparisons were also used.

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

Tab. 27: Supplementary post hoc interpretation for H5 (Tukey HSD)

Group I	Group J	Mean difference (I-J)	p	95% CI
Above 3000	Up to 2000	-0.386*	0.020	−0.722 to −0.049

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

H0: There is no statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

The ANOVA test revealed (Tab. 26) a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F = 5.101$; $p = 0.006$; $\eta^2 = 0.020$). The effect size can be interpreted as small to medium. The lowest mean was recorded for the "above 3000" group (i.e. a more intensive manifestation of the examined phenomenon in terms of the scale), while the highest mean was found in the "up to 2000" group.

For this item, a lower mean indicates more frequent use of fashion shopping as a means of improving mood. The lowest mean was recorded for households with an income above EUR 3000, which suggests that in higher-income households, fashion consumption is more often connected with an emotional or hedonic function. In lower-income households, purchasing may be more regulated by economic limits and therefore less often used as a means of mood management.

The Tukey test (Tab. 27) indicates that the significant difference is concentrated primarily between households with the highest and the lowest income. This strengthens the interpretation that the emotional purchase motive is more pronounced in economically stronger households. Hypothesis H5 was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H6. Generations differ in the degree of fashion impulsivity expressed by the statement that the respondent cannot stop thinking about a fashion item that appeals to them.

Generational differences belong among the most frequently discussed topics in connection with fashion and digitally mediated trends. Previous studies indicate that Generation Z in particular is strongly influenced by social media, visual brand communication, and impulse stimuli in the online environment, which may increase its tendency towards impulsive purchasing behaviour in the field of fashion. Younger generations are, on average, more intensively exposed to images of fashion on social media, influencer culture, and rapid trend cycles. For this reason, it may be assumed that they will exhibit higher fashion impulsivity. The statement "when I see a fashion item that appeals to me, I cannot stop thinking about it" was used as an indicator of impulsivity. This item captures well the persistence of a fashion stimulus in the consumer's mind and the possible transition from interest to purchase desire. The result of this hypothesis may potentially serve as an argument for a generationally conditioned relationship to fashion stimulation (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021; Wojdyla *et al*., 2024; Ciocodeică *et al*., 2025).

H0: There is no statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

The ANOVA test (Tab. 28) revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F = 8.017$; $p = 0.000$; $\eta^2 = 0.027$). The effect size can be interpreted as small to medium. The lowest mean was recorded for the "Generation Z" group (i.e. a more intensive manifestation of the examined phenomenon in terms of the scale), while the highest mean was found in the "Generation X and older" group.

The results suggest a clear generational gradient: Generation Z shows the lowest mean, and therefore the highest impulsivity in relation to fashion stimuli, whereas the X and older group recorded the highest mean. The result of the hypothesis thus links age cohorts with a different media environment and a different degree of exposure to trend stimuli.

Tab. 28: Results of one-way ANOVA for the degree of fashion impulsivity according to respondents' generational affiliation

Group			N	Mean	SD
Generation Z			508	3.392	1.259
Generation Y			42	3.929	1.438
Generation X and older			27	4.185	1.145
Factor	**F**	**p**	**η^2**	**df between**	**df within**
Generation	8.017	0.000	0.027	2	574

Operationalization: : Q18 – impulsivity in relation to fashion; grouping variable: Generation. One-way ANOVA at the significance level α = 0.05. For factors with three or more categories, available Tukey post hoc comparisons were also used.

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

Tab. 29: Supplementary post hoc interpretation for H6 (Tukey HSD)

Group I	Group J	Mean difference (I-J)	p	95% CI
Generation Z	Generation Y	-0.537*	0.023	−1.015 to −0.059
Generation X and older	Generation Z	0.793*	0.005	0.205 to 1.382

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

The post hoc comparisons (Tab. 29) confirmed that Generation Z differs significantly from both Generation Y and X and older. This result is particularly valuable because it is not only an overall ANOVA difference, but also a specifically identified generational gap. Hypothesis H6 was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H7. The overall attitude towards fast fashion differs according to the highest level of education attained by respondents.

Education is often associated in consumer studies with differences in awareness, value orientation, and the ability to reflect on the broader social contexts of consumption. Previous studies also suggest that education in the field of sustainable fashion may influence attitudes, knowledge, and consumer intentions when choosing clothing, while educational background may be a relevant factor in shaping attitudes towards fast fashion and sustainable fashion. It is therefore justified to examine whether the overall

attitude towards fast fashion differs according to the highest level of education attained. This hypothesis is also methodologically interesting. Although ANOVA may reveal a significant overall difference between groups, subsequent comparisons do not always have to confirm one clearly dominant pair of groups. Such a result is scientifically valuable because it points out that the effect of education may be dispersed across several categories and sensitive to subgroup sizes (Williams, 2021; Bennetta & Hill, 2022).

H0: There is no statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

H0: There is a statistically significant difference between the compared groups in the mean value of the examined item.

The ANOVA test (Tab. 30) revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F = 5.050$; $p = 0.000$; $\eta^2 = 0.050$). The effect size can be interpreted as small to medium. The lowest mean was recorded for the "secondary education with school-leaving examination" group (i.e. a more intensive manifestation of the examined phenomenon in terms of the scale), while the highest mean was found in the "higher vocational education" group.

Tab. 30: Results of one-way ANOVA for the attitude towards fast fashion according to the highest level of education attained by respondents

Group			N	Mean	SD
Secondary education without school-leaving examination			14	3.286	1.139
Secondary education with school-leaving examination			337	3.062	0.771
First-cycle university education			148	3.155	0.716
Second-cycle university education			30	3.333	0.994
Third-cycle university education and higher			25	3.080	1.077
Higher vocational education			3	4.333	0.577
Primary education			20	3.900	0.912
Factor	**F**	**p**	**η^2**	**df between**	**df within**
Generation	8.017	0.000	0.027	2	574

Operationalization: Q15 – attitude towards fast fashion; grouping variable: Education. One-way ANOVA at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$. For factors with three or more categories, available Tukey post hoc comparisons were also used.

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

ANOVA confirmed that there is an overall difference in attitude towards fast fashion across educational categories. The means indicate a less negative attitude particularly among respondents with secondary education with school-leaving examination and respondents with first-cycle university education, whereas primary education and higher vocational education tend towards a more negative attitude. At the same time, it should be noted that some groups have very low frequencies, which weakens the conclusiveness of pairwise inferences.

The post hoc comparisons in the available output did not provide clear significant pairwise differences. From a scientific point of view, this does not weaken the ANOVA result itself, but it means that the emphasis was placed rather on the overall difference between groups and on the description of means than on strong claims concerning a specific pair of categories. Hypothesis H7 was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

3.7.1 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE VERIFICATION OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The analysis confirmed (Tab. 31) that attitudes towards fast fashion and several related dimensions are not homogeneous in the population. They differ significantly according to gender, awareness of the phenomenon, declared purchasing, personal and household income, generational affiliation, and education. This means that fast fashion cannot be perceived merely as a uniform consumer phenomenon; rather, it is a phenomenon intersecting with values, awareness, economic situation, and lifestyle.

At the level of the overall profile of responses, it was shown that respondents attach the greatest importance to quality, price, and design/style, while assigning less importance to brand, country of origin, and fashion trends. The perception of the impacts of fast fashion is relatively strong particularly with regard to socio-ethical and environmental risks, such as low wages, textile waste, exploitation, and human rights violations. This result is important because it shows that fast fashion is associated in respondents' awareness with problematic aspects, even though this does not automatically mean its rejection.

Particularly valuable is the finding of a discrepancy between awareness and behaviour. On the one hand, respondents who had heard of fast fashion perceived its negative impacts more strongly; on the other hand, those who purchase it had a less negative attitude towards it. This ambivalence is analytically significant for the monograph. It makes it possible to argue that knowledge of the problem in itself does not yet lead to unambiguous consumer resistance.

Tab. 31: Summary of the results of the verification of research hypotheses

Hypothesis	Examined item	Grouping variable	F	p	η^2	Result	Brief interpretation
H1	sustainability	Gender	8.203	0.000	0.028	confirmed	women place greater emphasis on sustainability
H2	child labour	HeardOfFF	17.382	0.000	0.057	confirmed	awareness of FF increases the perception of child labour
H3	attitude towards fast fashion	BuyFF	16.623	0.000	0.055	confirmed	purchasing FF is associated with a less negative attitude
H4	design/style	PersonalIncomeTertile	7.515	0.001	0.027	confirmed	design/style differs across income groups
H5	I shop to feel better	HouseholdIncomeTertile	5.101	0.006	0.020	confirmed	higher household income is associated with shopping to improve mood
H6	when I see a fashion item that appeals to me, I cannot stop thinking about it	Generation	8.017	0.000	0.027	confirmed	Generation Z is more fashion-impulsive
H7	attitude towards fast fashion	Education	5.050	0.000	0.050	confirmed	attitude towards FF changes according to education

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey (IBM SPSS Statistics)

The generational dimension suggests higher fashion impulsivity especially among Generation Z, which corresponds well with social media culture, the rapid circulation of trends, and a higher degree of symbolic communication through appearance. At the same time, however, the sample as a whole does not show an extremely high level of agreement with statements about going into debt for fashion or hiding purchases. The research picture is therefore rather differentiated than one-sidedly dramatic.

CONCLUSION

The present study focused on the analysis of consumer behaviour in relation to the fast fashion phenomenon, on the identification of factors influencing consumer decision--making when purchasing clothing, and on the assessment of the extent to which the social, economic, and environmental impacts of fast fashion are perceived. Based on the conducted questionnaire survey, it can be concluded that fast fashion represents a complex consumer phenomenon that cannot be reduced merely to the issue of price and fashion trends, but is also closely linked to consumers' value orientation, awareness, social consciousness, and economic possibilities.

The results of the research showed that respondents attach the greatest importance to quality, price, and design/style when purchasing clothing, which points to the dominance of pragmatic, economic, and aesthetic factors in purchasing decision-making. Less importance was assigned to brand, country of origin, and fashion trends. At the same time, it was confirmed that respondents perceive the negative environmental and social impacts of fast fashion relatively intensively, particularly textile waste, low wages, the exploitation of workers, water pollution, and human rights violations. These findings suggest that fast fashion is associated in respondents' awareness with problematic aspects and with an understanding of its broader consequences.

An important finding of the study is also the existence of a certain discrepancy between awareness and actual consumer behaviour. Although respondents who had heard of fast fashion perceived its negative consequences more intensively, those who purchase fast fashion held a less negative attitude towards it. This contradiction confirms that knowledge of the problem alone does not automatically lead to more responsible consumer behaviour. Consumer decision-making proved to be the result of the influence of several factors, among which price, availability, design, and the practical characteristics of the product continue to occupy a significant position.

The statistical testing of hypotheses confirmed significant differences in selected attitudes and forms of behaviour according to gender, awareness of the fast fashion phenomenon, declared fast fashion purchasing, personal income, household income, generational affiliation, and education. These results indicate that the consumer relationship to fast fashion is not homogeneous but rather differentiated according to several socio-demographic and economic characteristics. The generational dimension proved particularly significant, as Generation Z showed a higher degree of fashion impulsivity, as did the gender dimension, within which women assigned greater importance to sustainability when purchasing clothing.

A contribution of the study lies in the fact that it combines the economic, social, and environmental perspective on consumer behaviour and at the same time points to the contradiction between declared awareness and actual consumer practice.

However, the limitations of the research stem from the uneven structure of the research sample, in which younger respondents, students, and members of Generation Z clearly predominated. For this reason, the findings cannot be generalized to the entire population without further consideration. Nevertheless, the presented research provides a relevant empirical basis for further investigation of the fast fashion issue and may serve as a starting point for subsequent studies focused on sustainable consumption, the ethical aspects of the fashion industry, and the mechanisms influencing consumer decision-making.

ZHRNUTIE

Predkladaná monografia sa zaoberá problematikou fast fashion ako komplexného ekonomického, sociálneho a environmentálneho fenoménu, ktorý v súčasnosti významne ovplyvňuje spotrebiteľské správanie, fungovanie módneho priemyslu aj širší spoločenský diskurz o udržateľnosti. Fast fashion je charakteristická rýchlou výrobou, krátkymi výrobnými cyklami, nízkou cenou produktov a ich rýchlou obmenou v súlade s aktuálnymi trendmi. Tento model spotreby sa stal dostupným pre široké skupiny obyvateľstva, najmä pre mladšiu generáciu, no zároveň vyvoláva množstvo otázok súvisiacich s environmentálnou záťažou, pracovnými podmienkami vo výrobe a s etickými dôsledkami masovej spotreby.

Hlavným cieľom monografie bolo analyzovať spotrebiteľské správanie vo vzťahu k fenoménu fast fashion, identifikovať faktory ovplyvňujúce rozhodovanie spotrebiteľov pri kúpe oblečenia a posúdiť mieru vnímania sociálnych, ekonomických a environmentálnych dopadov fast fashion. Súčasťou výskumného zámeru bolo aj overenie, či sa postoje a nákupné správanie respondentov štatisticky významne líšia podľa vybraných socio-demografických a ekonomických charakteristík. Na naplnenie hlavného cieľa boli formulované aj čiastkové ciele zamerané na zistenie úrovne znalosti pojmu fast fashion, identifikáciu najdôležitejších faktorov pri kúpe oblečenia, analýzu postojov k módnej spotrebe, skúmanie nákupného správania a posúdenie vnímania negatívnych dôsledkov fast fashion.

Teoretická časť monografie je venovaná vymedzeniu pojmu fashion a fast fashion, vývoju módneho priemyslu, rozdielom medzi fast fashion a slow fashion a tiež analýze ekonomických, sociálnych a environmentálnych dopadov tohto modelu spotreby. Pozornosť sa venuje aj problematike dodávateľských reťazcov, ktoré predstavujú dôležitý prvok fungovania fast fashion priemyslu. V sociálnej rovine monografia zdôrazňuje problémy súvisiace s nízkymi mzdami, zlými pracovnými podmienkami, vykorisťovaním pracovníkov, rodovou nerovnosťou a detskou prácou. V environmentálnej rovine sú analyzované najmä otázky nadmernej spotreby prírodných zdrojov, znečistenia vody, tvorby textilného odpadu, uhlíkovej stopy a obmedzených možností recyklácie textilu. Teoretický základ práce tak vytvára širší interpretačný rámec pre pochopenie súčasného fungovania fast fashion a jej dôsledkov.

Na dosiahnutie stanoveného cieľa bola použitá kvantitatívna výskumná metóda, konkrétne dotazníkový prieskum realizovaný prostredníctvom online dotazníka v prostredí Microsoft Forms. Výskum mal prierezový charakter, keďže údaje boli získané v jednom časovom okamihu. Výskumný súbor tvorilo 577 respondentov. Z hľadiska štruktúry vzorky prevažovali ženy, respondenti vo veku 20 až 24 rokov, príslušníci generácie Z a študenti. Väčšina respondentov pochádzala zo Slovenskej republiky, menšia časť z Českej republiky. Získané údaje boli predspracované v programe Microsoft Excel a následne analyzované v programe IBM SPSS Statistics.

V rámci spracovania údajov boli použité deskriptívne štatistické ukazovatele, najmä absolútne a relatívne početnosti, aritmetický priemer a smerodajná odchýlka. Na overenie rozdielov medzi skupinami respondentov bola použitá jednofaktorová analýza rozptylu (One-Way ANOVA), doplnená v prípadoch štatisticky významných rozdielov o Tukeyho post hoc testy. Testovanie prebiehalo na hladine významnosti $\alpha = 0,05$. Súčasťou interpretácie výsledkov bolo aj sledovanie veľkosti efektu prostredníctvom ukazovateľa etakvadrát (η^2). Pri interpretácii výsledkov bolo nevyhnutné prihliadať na smerovanie použitých Likertových škál, keďže v mnohých prípadoch nižší priemer znamenal vyššiu intenzitu skúmaného javu, vyššiu dôležitosť, vyšší súhlas alebo častejšie správanie.

Výsledky výskumu ukázali, že respondenti pri kúpe oblečenia pripisujú najväčší význam kvalite, cene a dizajnu/štýlu. Medzi ďalšie dôležité faktory patrili funkčnosť, odolnosť materiálu a pohodlie. Naopak, menší význam respondenti pripisovali značke, krajine pôvodu a módnym trendom. Tieto zistenia naznačujú, že pri rozhodovaní spotrebiteľov zohrávajú kľúčovú úlohu predovšetkým pragmatické, ekonomické a funkčné hľadiská, pričom symbolické faktory spojené s imidžom produktu vystupujú do úzadia.

V oblasti postojov k móde sa ukázalo, že respondenti nevykazujú výrazne extrémne alebo rizikové spotrebiteľské správanie. Najvyššia miera súhlasu bola zaznamenaná pri tvrdení, že sa respondent cíti spoločensky atraktívnejšie, keď je módne oblečený, čo poukazuje na význam sociálnej a sebaprezentačnej funkcie módy. Naopak, nízka miera súhlasu bola potvrdená pri tvrdeniach týkajúcich sa zadlžovania sa kvôli móde alebo skrývania nákupov pred blízkymi. V oblasti nákupného správania respondenti najčastejšie deklarovali, že nakupujú len to, čo si môžu dovoliť, a že často využívajú zľavnené produkty. Menej často uvádzali nákup s cieľom zlepšiť si náladu alebo tráviť voľný čas. Tieto výsledky naznačujú, že nákupné správanie respondentov je prevažne racionálne a orientované na finančné možnosti.

Dôležitou súčasťou výskumu bolo skúmanie vnímania negatívnych dopadov fast fashion. Výsledky potvrdili, že respondenti relatívne intenzívne vnímajú predovšetkým environmentálne a sociálne dôsledky fast fashion. Najsilnejšie boli vnímané veľké množstvo textilného odpadu, nízke mzdy zamestnancov, znečistenie vody, vykorisťovanie pracovníkov, vysoká spotreba vody a energie a porušovanie ľudských práv. Menej intenzívne boli vnímané ekonomické dôsledky, ako napríklad tlak na neustálu inováciu, znižovanie výrobných nákladov alebo nestabilita pracovných miest. Na základe agregácie položiek bol vypočítaný aj súhrnný index vnímania dopadov fast fashion, ktorý potvrdil celkovo relatívne vysokú mieru uvedomovania si negatívnych dôsledkov tohto fenoménu.

Osobitne významným zistením je existencia určitého nesúladu medzi informovanosťou a reálnym nákupným správaním. Na jednej strane respondenti, ktorí už o fast fashion počuli, intenzívnejšie vnímajú jej negatívne sociálne dopady, najmä detskú prácu. Na druhej strane respondenti, ktorí deklarujú nákup fast fashion, majú k tomuto fenoménu menej negatívny postoj. Tento rozpor možno interpretovať ako prejav tzv. attitude–behaviour gap, teda medzery medzi deklarovanými hodnotami a skutočným

spotrebiteľským správaním. Znalosť problému sama osebe teda nemusí automaticky viesť k zodpovednejšiemu spotrebiteľskému správaniu.

Súčasťou analytickej časti bolo aj štatistické overenie siedmich výskumných hypotéz. Výsledky potvrdili, že ženy pripisujú pri kúpe oblečenia vyššiu dôležitosť udržateľnosti než muži. Respondenti, ktorí už počuli o fast fashion, intenzívnejšie vnímajú negatívny sociálny dopad v podobe detskej práce. Ďalej sa potvrdilo, že respondenti deklarujúci nákup fast fashion majú k fast fashion priaznivejší, resp. menej negatívny postoj ako tí, ktorí ju nenakupujú. Štatisticky významné rozdiely sa preukázali aj pri význame faktora dizajn/štýl podľa osobného príjmu, pri emocionálnom motíve nakupovania s cieľom zlepšiť si náladu podľa príjmu domácnosti, pri miere módnej impulzivity podľa generačnej príslušnosti a pri postoji k fast fashion podľa úrovne vzdelania. Všetky formulované hypotézy boli na hladine významnosti 0,05 potvrdené.

Výsledky monografie poukazujú na to, že fast fashion nemožno chápať ako jednotný a homogénny spotrebiteľský jav. Ide o komplexný fenomén, ktorý sa prelína s hodnotovou orientáciou spotrebiteľov, ich informovanosťou, ekonomickými možnosťami, sociálnym prostredím a životným štýlom. Osobitne výrazne sa ukázal vplyv generačnej príslušnosti, pohlavia, vzdelania a príjmovej situácie na formovanie postojov a spotrebiteľského správania. Monografia tak prináša empiricky podložený pohľad na fast fashion ako problém presahujúci rámec bežnej módnej spotreby.

Za prínos práce možno považovať najmä prepojenie ekonomického, sociálneho a environmentálneho pohľadu na fast fashion s analýzou konkrétnych spotrebiteľských postojov a foriem správania. Práca zároveň upozorňuje na rozpor medzi deklarovanou informovanosťou a faktickým nákupným konaním spotrebiteľov. Zároveň však treba zohľadniť aj limity výskumu, predovšetkým nerovnomernú štruktúru výskumného súboru, v ktorom výrazne dominovali mladší respondenti, študenti a príslušníci generácie Z. Z tohto dôvodu nemožno zistenia bez ďalšieho zovšeobecniť na celú populáciu. Napriek tomu výsledky predstavujú relevantný základ pre ďalší výskum udržateľnej spotreby, etických aspektov módneho priemyslu a faktorov ovplyvňujúcich spotrebiteľské rozhodovanie.

SUMMARY

The monograph addresses the issue of fast fashion as a complex economic, social, and environmental phenomenon that currently exerts a significant influence on consumer behaviour, the functioning of the fashion industry, and the broader public discussion on sustainability. Fast fashion is characterized by rapid production, short product life cycles, low prices, and the continuous renewal of collections in accordance with current trends. This consumption model has become accessible to broad groups of consumers, especially younger generations, but at the same time it has raised a number of concerns related to environmental burden, working conditions in production, and the ethical consequences of mass consumption.

The main aim of the monograph was to analyse consumer behaviour in relation to the fast fashion phenomenon, identify the factors influencing consumer decision--making when purchasing clothing, and assess the extent to which the social, economic, and environmental impacts of fast fashion are perceived. The research also sought to verify whether respondents' attitudes and purchasing behaviour differ statistically significantly according to selected socio-demographic and economic characteristics. In line with the main aim, several partial objectives were formulated, including determining the level of awareness of the concept of fast fashion, identifying the most important factors considered when purchasing clothing, analysing attitudes towards fashion consumption, examining purchasing behaviour, and assessing the perception of the negative consequences of fast fashion.

The theoretical part of the monograph is devoted to the definition of fashion and fast fashion, the development of the fashion industry, the distinction between fast fashion and slow fashion, and the analysis of the economic, social, and environmental impacts of this consumption model. Considerable attention is also paid to supply chains, which represent a crucial element in the functioning of the fast fashion industry. In the social dimension, the monograph emphasises issues related to low wages, poor working conditions, labour exploitation, gender inequality, and child labour. In the environmental dimension, the analysis focuses primarily on the excessive consumption of natural resources, water pollution, textile waste generation, carbon emissions, and the limited possibilities of textile recycling. The theoretical background therefore provides a broader interpretative framework for understanding the current functioning of fast fashion and its consequences.

To achieve the stated aim, a quantitative research method was employed, specifically a questionnaire survey conducted through an online questionnaire created in Microsoft Forms. The research had a cross-sectional character, as the data were collected at one point in time. The research sample consisted of 577 respondents. In terms of sample structure, women predominated, as did respondents aged 20 to 24, members of

Generation Z, and students. Most respondents came from the Slovak Republic, while a smaller proportion came from the Czech Republic. The collected data were pre-processed in Microsoft Excel and subsequently analysed in IBM SPSS Statistics.

Descriptive statistical indicators were used in the data processing, especially absolute and relative frequencies, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation. To verify differences between groups of respondents, one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) was applied, complemented in cases of statistically significant differences by Tukey's post hoc tests. Testing was carried out at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The interpretation of the results also included the assessment of effect size through eta-squared (η^2). When interpreting the findings, it was necessary to consider the direction of the Likert scales used, since in many cases a lower mean represented a higher intensity of the examined phenomenon, greater importance, stronger agreement, or more frequent behaviour.

The research results showed that respondents attach the greatest importance to quality, price, and design/style when purchasing clothing. Other highly valued factors included functionality, material durability, and comfort. By contrast, less importance was assigned to brand, country of origin, and fashion trends. These findings suggest that consumer decision-making is shaped primarily by pragmatic, economic, and functional considerations, while symbolic factors associated with image play a less prominent role.

In the area of attitudes towards fashion, the findings showed that respondents do not display strongly extreme or risky consumer behaviour. The highest level of agreement was recorded for the statement that respondents feel more socially attractive when dressed fashionably, which points to the importance of the social and self-presentational function of fashion. By contrast, a low level of agreement was confirmed for statements related to going into debt because of fashion or hiding purchases from loved ones. In the area of purchasing behaviour, respondents most frequently declared that they buy only what they can afford and that they often purchase discounted items. Less frequent were purchases made in order to improve mood or to spend free time. These results indicate that respondents' purchasing behaviour is predominantly rational and oriented towards financial possibilities.

An important part of the research focused on the perception of the negative impacts of fast fashion. The results confirmed that respondents perceive mainly the environmental and social consequences of fast fashion relatively intensively. The strongest perceptions were recorded for large amounts of textile waste, low employee wages, water pollution, worker exploitation, high water and energy consumption, and human rights violations. By contrast, economic consequences such as pressure for constant innovation, cost reduction, or job instability were perceived less intensively. Based on the aggregation of individual items, a summary index of the perception of fast fashion impacts was also calculated, confirming an overall relatively high level of awareness of the negative consequences of this phenomenon.

A particularly important finding is the existence of a certain discrepancy between awareness and actual purchasing behaviour. On the one hand, respondents who had already heard of fast fashion perceived its negative social impacts, especially child labour, more intensively. On the other hand, respondents who declared purchasing fast fashion held a less negative attitude towards this phenomenon. This contradiction may be interpreted as an example of the socalled attitude-behaviour gap, that is, the difference between declared values and actual consumer behaviour. Knowledge of the problem alone therefore does not automatically lead to more responsible consumer conduct.

The analytical part of the monograph also included the statistical verification of seven research hypotheses. The results confirmed that women assign greater importance to sustainability when purchasing clothing than men. Respondents who had already heard of fast fashion perceived the negative social impact in the form of child labour more intensively. It was further confirmed that respondents who purchase fast fashion hold a more favourable, or at least less negative, attitude towards it than those who do not purchase it. Statistically significant differences were also identified in the importance of the design/style factor according to personal income, in the emotional motive of shopping to improve mood according to household income, in the level of fashion impulsivity according to generational affiliation, and in attitudes towards fast fashion according to educational attainment. All formulated hypotheses were confirmed at the significance level of 0.05.

The findings of the monograph indicate that fast fashion cannot be understood as a uniform and homogeneous consumer phenomenon. Rather, it should be seen as a complex issue intertwined with consumers' values, awareness, economic possibilities, social environment, and lifestyle. Particularly strong effects were found for generational affiliation, gender, education, and income in shaping attitudes and consumer behaviour. The monograph thus offers an empirically grounded view of fast fashion as a problem that extends far beyond the sphere of ordinary fashion consumption.

One of the main contributions of the monograph lies in the integration of the economic, social, and environmental perspective on fast fashion with the analysis of specific consumer attitudes and behavioural patterns. At the same time, the study highlights the contradiction between declared awareness and actual purchasing practice. Nevertheless, the research also has certain limitations, especially the uneven structure of the sample, in which younger respondents, students, and members of Generation Z clearly predominated. For this reason, the findings cannot be generalized to the entire population without further consideration. Even so, the results provide a relevant basis for further research into sustainable consumption, the ethical aspects of the fashion industry, and the mechanisms influencing consumer decision-making.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI – Artificial Intelligence
ANOVA – Analysis of Variance
EU – European Union
FF – Fast Fashion
HSD – Honestly Significant Difference
IBM SPSS – International Business Machines Statistical Package for the Social Sci-ences
IoT – Internet of Things
ISO – International Organization for Standardization
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Q – Question
SCM – Supply Chain Management
SD – Standard Deviation
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Environmental, economic and social challenges associated with „Fast Fashion"

Thank you for deciding to complete this questionnaire, which focuses on the environmental, economic, and social challenges associated with the phenomenon of fast fashion. The questionnaire consists of several questions and will take approximately 5–10 minutes to complete. The research results are part of a project and will be used solely for scientific purposes.

Thank you for your time.
Research Team

Section 1

Q1. Gender:
- Man
- Woman
- I don't want to mention

Q2. Age: (open answer)_____

Q3. Highest level of education attained:
- Primary education / Elementary school
- Secondary education without school-leaving exam / High school without diploma
- Post-secondary vocational education / Higher vocational education
- Bachelor's degree (1st level university degree)
- Master's degree (2nd level university degree)
- Doctoral degree or higher (3rd level university degree or higher)

Q4. Employment status:
- Student
- Employed
- Unemployed
- Pensioner (old-age or disability pension)
- On maternity/parental leave
- Self-employed (sole trader)
- Entrepreneur – legal entity (business owner / company owner)

Q5. Sector of employment / Sector you work in:
- primary sector
- secondary sector
- tertiary sector
- quaternary sector
- other

Q6. Your current net monthly income (EUR): (open answer) _____

Q7. Number of household members:
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 and more

Q8. Current net monthly household income (EUR): (open answer) _____

Q9. Country you currently live in (Country):
- Slovak Republic
- Czech Republic
- other

Q10. Region you currently live in (based on country): Slovak Republic
- Bratislava
- Trnava
- Trenčí
- Nitra
- Žilina
- Banská Bystrica
- Prešov
- Košice

Q11. Region you currently live in (based on country): Czech Republic
- Prague (Capital City)
- Stredočeský
- Jihočeský
- Plzenský
- Karlovarský
- Ústecký
- Liberecký
- Královohradecký
- Pardubický
- Vysočina
- Jihomoravský
- Olomoucký
- Zlínsky
- Moravskosliezsky

Q12. Urban area / agglomeration you currently live in:
- rural area (countryside)
- small town (up to 20,000 inhabitants)
- medium-sized town (20,000–100,000 inhabitants)
- large city (over 100,000 inhabitants)

Section 2 – Fast Fashion

Fast fashion refers to a method of producing and selling clothing that emphasises speed and low cost in following fashion trends, often at the expense of quality, ethical practices, and environmental sustainability.

Q13. Have you ever heard of fast fashion?
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q14. Do you buy fast fashion?
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q15. What is your attitude toward fast fashion?

1 – Very positive; 2 – Rather positive; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Rather negative; 5 – Very negative

	1	2	3	4	5
Attitude toward fast fashion	○	○	○	○	○

Section 3 – Environmental, economic and social challenges associated with "Fast Fashion"

Q16. How important are the following factors to you when buying clothing?

1 – Very important; 2 – Rather important; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Rather unimportant; 5 – Not important at all

	1	2	3	4	5
Price	○	○	○	○	○
Quality	○	○	○	○	○
Design/style	○	○	○	○	○
Composition	○	○	○	○	○
Brand	○	○	○	○	○
Sustainability	○	○	○	○	○
Availability	○	○	○	○	○
Country of origin	○	○	○	○	○
Fashion trends	○	○	○	○	○

	1	2	3	4	5
Comfort	○	○	○	○	○
Durability/resistance of material	○	○	○	○	○
Functionality	○	○	○	○	○
Guarantee	○	○	○	○	○

Q17. How much do you perceive the negative social, economic, and environmental effects of fast fashion?

1 – I perceive them very strongly; 2 – I perceive them strongly; 3 – I perceive them moderately; 4 – I perceive them very little; 5 – I do not perceive them at all

	1	2	3	4	5
Child labour	○	○	○	○	○
Human rights violations	○	○	○	○	○
Health risks	○	○	○	○	○
Exploitation of employees	○	○	○	○	○
Expanding consumer lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
The development of shopping addiction	○	○	○	○	○
Loss of native culture and adaptation to global trends	○	○	○	○	○
Support for large fashion brands	○	○	○	○	○
Pressure for constant innovation and short delivery cycles	○	○	○	○	○
Low employee wages	○	○	○	○	○
Reducing production costs	○	○	○	○	○
Job instability	○	○	○	○	○
Water and energy consumption	○	○	○	○	○
Water pollution	○	○	○	○	○
Large amounts of textile waste	○	○	○	○	○
Greenhouse gas emissions	○	○	○	○	○
Overexploitation of natural resources	○	○	○	○	○
Increasing carbon footprint	○	○	○	○	○

Section 4 – Consumer attitude towards fashion shopping

Q18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1 – Strongly agree; 2 – Agree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Disagree; 5 – Strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
I am willing to go into debt for fashion	○	○	○	○	○
I often hide my fashion purchases from my loved ones	○	○	○	○	○
If I see a fashion I like, I can't stop thinking about it	○	○	○	○	○
I am not satisfied until I buy the fashion of my dreams	○	○	○	○	○
I also buy fashion that I know I don't need	○	○	○	○	○
I'm afraid I'll be dressed unfashionably	○	○	○	○	○
I change my wardrobe regularly	○	○	○	○	○
I feel more socially attractive when I am dressed fashionably	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer the company of people who are dressed fashionably	○	○	○	○	○

Q19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1 – Always; 2 – Often; 3 – Sometimes; 4 – Rarely; 5 – Never

	1	2	3	4	5
I buy items on sale	○	○	○	○	○
I only buy what I can afford.	○	○	○	○	○
I only shop when I need something for my wardrobe	○	○	○	○	○
I shop to pass the time.	○	○	○	○	○
I shop to feel better	○	○	○	○	○
I'm afraid I'll be dressed unfashionably	○	○	○	○	○

Section 5 – Conclusion

Q20. Data Usage Consent

- Consent to my responses being used for research purposes focused on customer attitudes toward fast fashion.

Q21. Additional Information and Comments (open answer)

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