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The research aims to investigate the impact of environmental trends on consumer choice, particularly regarding the purchase of recycled clothes. With increasing concern about environmental sustainability, there is a growing interest in recycled clothing both among sellers and buyers. The study uses qualitative and quantitative methods, including surveys and market analysis, to gather insights into consumer attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, the paper analyzes successful brands that sell recycled clothing. Examining environmental benefits, price, and fashion preferences, the authors study the willingness of consumers to buy recycled clothes. The findings of this research help better understand the consumer mindset concerning sustainable fashion and provide valuable implications for businesses and markets in the fashion industry.

Keywords: sustainable fashion, recycled clothes, consumer choices

In the 21st century with abundant consumer markets and choices of clothes that make people suffer from the «tyranny of choice», it is the moral choice that comes to the forefront. People think more about the impact this overproduction has on the environment.

The massive consumption of water in cotton production, pollution that comes from denim bleaching, and the mere quantities of clothes that are produced, bought, and have to be eventually disposed of, pose potential threats to the environment. People worldwide

begin to make responsible choice. The trend is slowly, but steadily coming to Russia too.

The paper is inspired by the idea to launch a start-up business in Irkutsk engaged in selling recycled clothing. Because it is necessary to study the market, the research aims at examining consumer willingness to acquire these goods. After analyzing the management literature on this topic, the article goes on to report and discuss the results obtained with the help of surveys and market analysis.

The impact of environmental tendencies on consumer choice in clothing has become an increasingly important topic these days. Consumers are becoming more conscious of the impact of their purchasing decisions on the environment, and are therefore seeking out sustainable and eco-friendly options. This literature review examines the factors that influence consumer choice in clothing, and the role of environmental tendencies in this process.

More and more authors believe that environmental concerns are one of the main factors that influence consumers' decision-making when it came to purchasing eco-friendly clothing. For example, Kowalska and Malak-Rawlikowska (2019) examined the purchase motives and factors shaping consumer behavior in the ecological product market in Poland. Their study revealed that consumers were motivated by a desire to reduce their impact on the environment and were willing to pay a premium for products that were environmentally friendly.

Similarly, a study by Lee et al. (2017) found that sustainability was a key factor in consumer decision-making when it came to clothing. The authors found out that consumers were willing to pay more for clothing that was made from sustainable materials, and that was produced in an environmentally friendly way. Besides, they concluded that consumers were more likely to purchase clothing from companies that had a strong commitment to environmental sustainability [1].

Another study by O'Rourke (2016) also investigated the impact of sustainability on consumer decision-making [2]. The author stated that providing consumers with information about the environmental impact of different products had a significant impact on their purchasing decisions. Consumers were more likely to choose products that had less impact on the environment, and were willing to pay more for products that were environmentally friendly [3].

In addition to these studies, there has been a growing trend towards sustainable shopping worldwide. According to a report by Statista (2022), the global market for sustainable products is expected to reach \$150 billion by 2022. This trend is being driven by consumer demand for products that are eco-friendly, socially responsible, and ethically produced.

Overall, the literature analysis suggests that environmental tendencies play a significant role in consumer choice when it comes to buying clothes. Consumers are increasingly seeking out sustainable and eco-friendly options and are willing to pay more for products that impact environment less. As the trend towards sustainable shopping continues to grow, it is likely that companies will need to adapt their business practices to meet consumer demand for more environmental-friendly products [4].

As for data, for more objectivity, it was necessary to collect both qualitative and quantitative information. For this purpose, the research was based on two methods: a customer survey and a market analysis of recycled clothes.

The online survey was aimed at potential buyers of recycled clothing. Respondents were divided into different age groups (17–29 years old and 30–50 years old). The main purpose of the survey was to examine the demand for recycled clothing. The questions in the survey asked how interested people were in minimizing waste, whether they would prefer recycled clothing to regular one, and how much they would be willing to pay for it. As the opening of the store is planned in Irkutsk, only residents of Irkutsk were surveyed. The respondents were students of Irkutsk State University, schoolchildren, athletes, parents of schoolchildren and students, and people working in high positions. The youth category of buyers was chosen because young people are more likely to follow trends, and the older generation usually has enough funds to experiment and buy new products. Also these categories seem to me more concerned about nature and environmental protection.

The market analysis was aimed at studying the demand for recycled clothing and examining the experience of companies which produce them. The companies that were selected for the research are H&M, Nike, and Patagonia. The market analysis includes social media analysis and financial market analysis. Social media analysis helped to find out personal characteristics of people who purchase recycled clothing. The analysis was conducted in Instagram, where these companies have accounts with followers. By analyzing the followers of brands with recycled clothes the most popular hashtags for searching in Instagram, and were analyzed, it was possible to gain a deeper understanding of public opinions and sentiments about the market under study. In addition, market analysis included financial analysis on Yahoo Finance website and Statista website, where the above-mentioned companies publish their financial reports. In particular, it was possible to examine the companies' annual sales which helped to learn about profitability of brands. All in all, the market analysis enabled to determine how successful their sales of recycled clothing are and who their customers are (approximate age/ gender/ interests/ income/ education).

Both the methods provided a more balanced view of the demand for recycled clothing and enabled to gain insights into the potential customer base. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data allowed for a more thorough understanding of consumer preferences and market dynamics.

Now let us describe research results. The first method used in the research was the survey. It embraced 100 teenagers, including students and schoolchildren, and 43 people from the older generation. The majority of young people surveyed are interested in the environment and are willing to buy clothes that reduce plastic waste. However, the respondents are not ready to wear only such clothes. According to the responses of adults, they are more ready than younger generation to switch to such clothes if the price is low or the same as the clothes price. The respondents of both age categories

also note that for them comfort and style in clothing are above all. Figures 1 and 2 show the number of people purchasing recycled clothing.

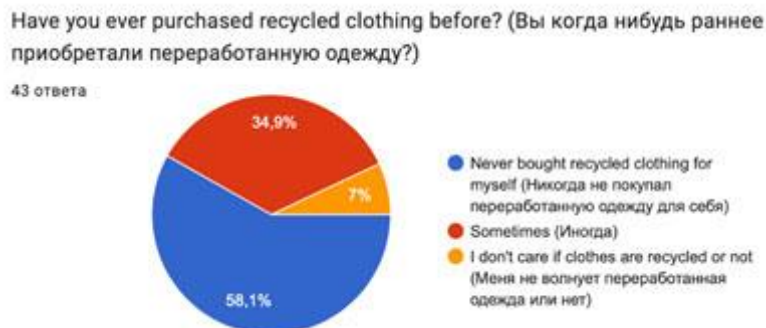


Fig. 1. Percentage of adults purchasing recycled clothing

As can be seen in the pie chart, of 43 people the majority never purchased recycled clothing for

themselves before. However, 34,9 % (about 15 people) buy such clothes from time to time.

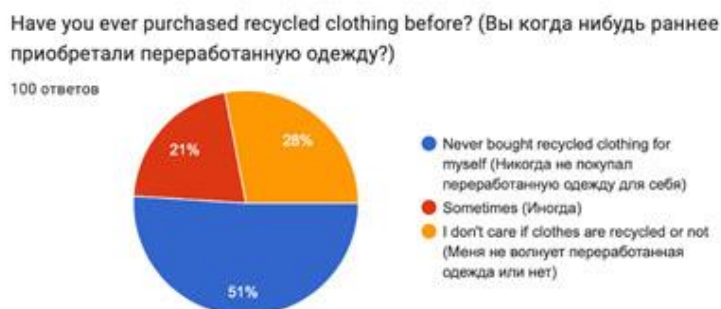


Fig. 2. Percentage of teenagers purchasing recycled clothing

Among the younger generation, there are 21 % of people who don't care whether their clothes are recycled or not.

Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate whether the price is an important criterion when choosing recycled clothes.

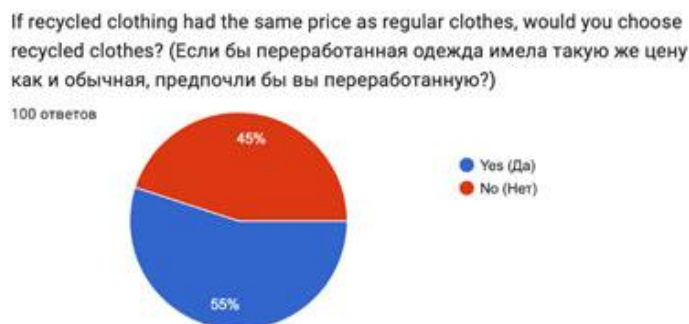


Fig. 3. The importance of price for adults

The older generation will generally prefer recycled clothing if it costs the same as clothing made from other materials.

If recycled clothing had the same price as regular clothes, would you choose recycled clothes? (Если бы переработанная одежда имела такую же цену как и обычная, предпочли бы вы переработанную?)

43 ответа

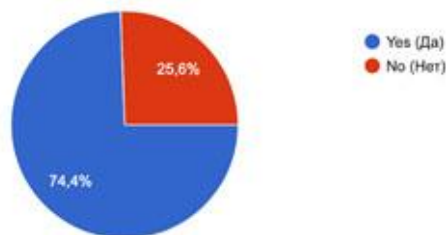


Fig. 4. The importance of price for young people

The younger generation will also generally prefer recycled clothing if it costs the same as clothing made from other materials.

In addition, according to the survey, not all people are ready to switch to recycled clothes for a few reasons: lack of awareness (many people are just not aware of them and their benefits; and they may not be familiar with the environmental impact of traditional clothing production and the potential benefits of using recycled materials), doubtful quality (some individuals may have concerns about the quality and durability of recycled clothing and might worry that these items won't be as comfortable, stylish, or long-lasting as brand-new clothing), fashion concerns (the perception that recycled clothing is not fashionable might also deter people from

making the switch; many individuals associate fashion with the latest trends and may not see recycled clothes as fitting into this ideal) [5].

The second part of the study was to analyze popular clothing brands that actively sell recycled clothing. Concerning H&M, there is a growing demand for sustainable fashion, and H&M has been able to tap into this market by offering clothing made from recycled materials. The company's focus on sustainability has helped it attract environmentally conscious consumers who are willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly products. H&M practices collecting used clothing, giving bonuses to its customers. Figure 5 shows the quantity of apparel collected by reuse and recycling schemes from 2013 to 2022.

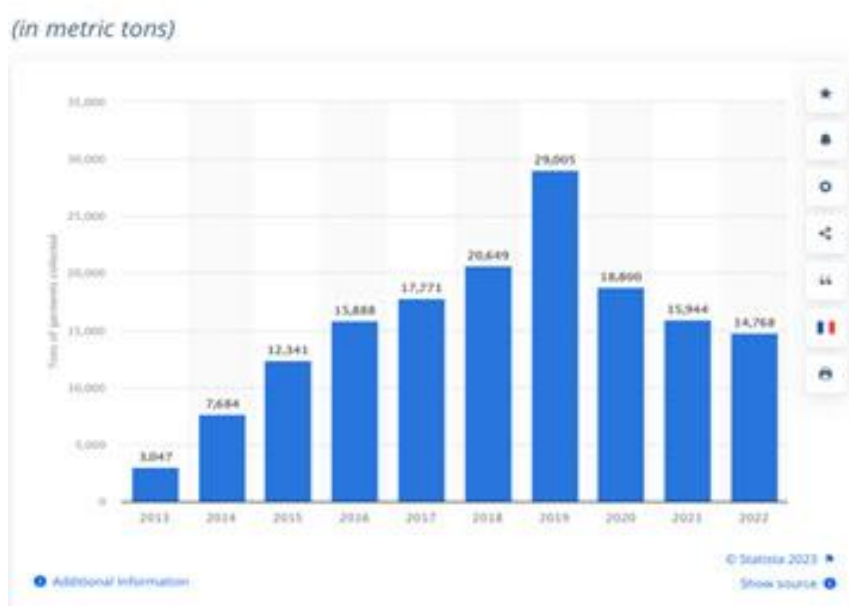


Fig. 5. The amount of clothing that H&M collected from customers who purchased their recycled items

H&M has been running a promotion worldwide since 2013: «Give us your old clothes and get a discount on new clothes from the recycled collection to protect the environment!». From 2013 to 2022, the number of buyers participating in such a promotion has increased almost five times (3 047 people to 14 768 people from

all over the world). This suggests that more and more people are getting involved in eco-trends.

Regarding Nike, its focus on sustainability has helped to attract a new segment of consumers who are concerned about the environmental impact of their purchases. The company's commitment to using recycled materials has helped it tap into this market, and

there is a growing demand for Nike's sustainable products, which is shown in Figure 6.

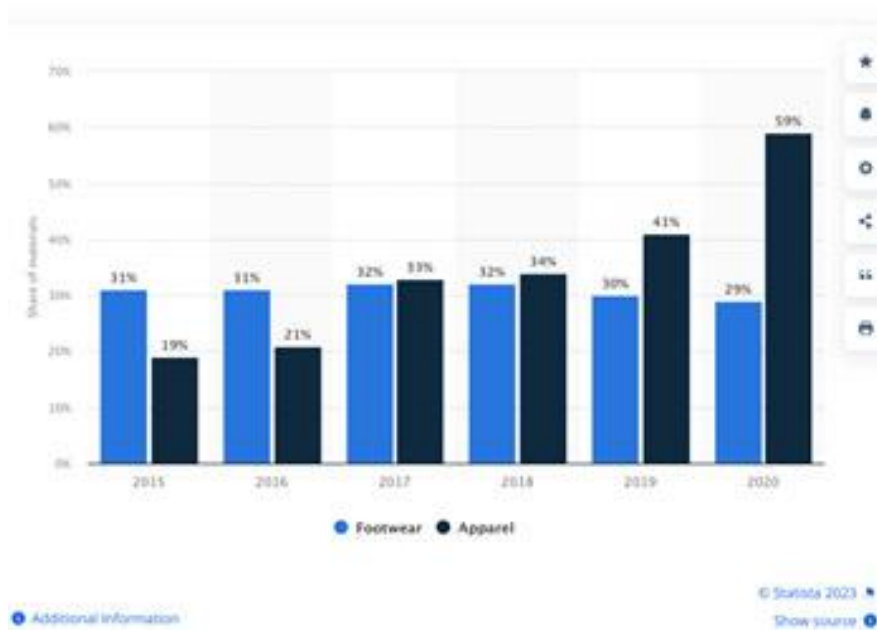


Fig. 6. Nike's percentage of recycled clothing compared to other clothing

By 2020, Nike had begun selling 59 % of its products made from recycled materials. Nike now produces most of its clothing and shoes from recycled materials, and yet the demand for its products is not falling at all, but is even growing.

The last company under study was Patagonia. It has built a reputation as a sustainable fashion brand, and

there is a strong demand for its products among environmentally conscious consumers. The company's commitment to using recycled materials has helped it attract a loyal customer base, and there is a growing demand for Patagonia's sustainable products.

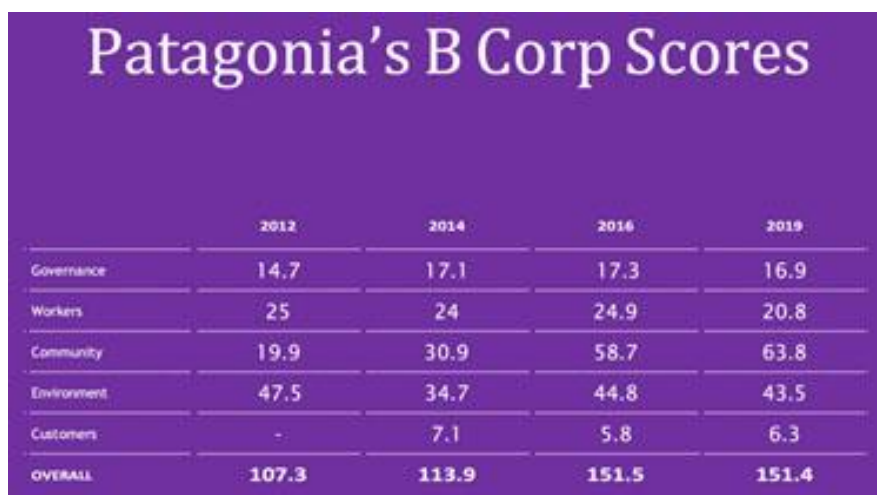


Fig. 7. Increase in the number of clients for Patagonia from 2012 to 2019

Patagonia began attracting people to recycled clothing back in 2012 and gradually the company built up loyal customers. This company produces clothes only from recycled materials and at first had few customers, but year after year people began to understand the significance of what the company does for the world. Now many people adore this brand, the company has quite a lot of regular customers from all over the world.

The next part of the study focused on identifying buyers of recycled clothing in Instagram. The analysis of Nike's, Patagonia's, and H&M's followers can give insights into the clients of their recycled clothing lines.

As for Nike, with its strong focus on athletic and lifestyle wear, its recycled clothing line is attracting environmentally-conscious athletes and fitness enthusiasts. Its Instagram followers consist of many people all over the world, including young adults, sports

enthusiasts, and fashion-forward individuals. The recycled clothing may appeal to those who prioritize sustainability and look for high-performance active wear.

Patagonia's recycled clothing line is likely to attract outdoor enthusiasts, environmental activists, and eco-conscious consumers. The brand's Instagram followers are nature lovers, adventure seekers, and individuals who value ethical and sustainable fashion. These followers are likely to be interested in the recycled clothing line as it aligns with Patagonia's ethos of environmental responsibility.

As a fast-fashion retailer with a wide customer base, H&M's recycled clothing line may cater to a diverse range of consumers. The brand's Instagram followers represent a many people from different parts of the world, including fashion enthusiasts, budget-conscious shoppers, and trend-conscious individuals. The recycled clothing line may appeal to environmentally aware consumers who are looking for sustainable fashion options at an affordable price.

In conclusion, the clients of recycled clothing of the above-mentioned brands are likely to include environmentally conscious athletes and fashion-forward individuals for Nike, outdoor enthusiasts and eco-conscious consumers for Patagonia, and a diverse range of consumers interested in sustainable fashion at an affordable price for H&M.

The final part of the paper discusses research results and draws conclusions. To advertise a store of recycled plastic clothes and encourage more people to buy them, it is important to focus on addressing some concerns. The first one is education. Advertising should emphasize the environmental benefits of using recycled materials, as well as the positive impact on reducing waste and carbon footprint. Providing information about the production process and the high-quality standards of recycled plastic clothes can help dispel misconceptions as well. The second one is quality assurance. It is essential to highlight the durability, comfort, and style of recycled plastic clothes. Besides, customers' positive testimonials and reviews can help build confidence in the quality and desirability of the products. The third aspect to pay attention to is fashion and style. Here it might be useful to showcase how versatile recycled clothes are and how they can be incorporated into different styles. Featuring fashion influencers and celebrities who support sustainable fashion can also help change the perception of recycled clothes as unfashionable. The fourth important consideration is pricing and value. It might be beneficial to emphasize the value proposition of recycled clothes, highlighting their affordability and the positive impact of supporting sustainable practices. Implementing these strategies in advertising, stores selling recycled clothes can help shift consumer perceptions and increase the demand for these environmentally-friendly products.

The social media analysis of Nike, Patagonia, and H&M followers in Instagram illustrates that the profitability of recycled clothing companies may

increase yearly due to the growing demand for sustainable and ethical fashion among environmentally conscious consumers. These consumers prioritize environmentally responsible products and are willing to pay a premium for them. Additionally, recycled clothing companies may appeal to budget-conscious shoppers who are attracted to affordable prices of recycled clothing. As more consumers become aware of the environmental impact of fast fashion, they are likely to turn to recycled clothing as a more sustainable alternative. Therefore, recycled clothing companies have the potential to attract a growing customer base and increase their profitability over time.

Taking into account the results of the study, it is possible to conclude that the prospects for opening a recycled clothing store in Irkutsk are relatively good. The demand might be unstable as potential buyers are not ready to purchase recycled clothing only. The undertaken research allows making some recommendations for opening a recycled clothing store which can be summarized as follows:

1. The store should have a wide variety of clothing. It should offer a wide range of clothing options for men, women, and children including vintage clothing, designer brands, and trendy pieces.

2. It should also focus on quality. Customers will be more likely to return if they know they can trust the quality of the clothing, so it is necessary to carefully inspect all items before putting them up for sale. Its distinctive feature will be keeping prices affordable as many people shop at recycled clothing stores because they are looking for a good deal. So, keeping prices reasonable and offering regular sales and discounts might ensure a more stable demand.

3. The store should have a welcoming atmosphere, be warm and inviting. Soft lighting, comfortable seating, and pleasant music as well as tea or coffee might be attractive to customers.

4. Online shopping should be an option too. Customers are used to purchasing online. Besides, many people in small towns may not have easy access to a recycled clothing store, so offering online shopping can help reach a wider audience and increase sales.

5. The store should focus on sustainability. It is necessary to educate customers about the environmental benefits of buying secondhand clothing, arrange workshops or events promoting sustainable fashion. It might be a good idea to partner with some local organizations that promote sustainability or support the community. It can help build goodwill and attract new customers [6].

Thus, a new business selling recycled clothing should be prepared to be inventive in order to survive and attract customers. Various approaches such as creating a unique atmosphere, educational events, cooperation with local communities, and others can make such a store more competitive; however, further financial research is necessary to make a final decision about launching this business. ■

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Влияние экологичной моды на выбор потребителей

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Данное исследование направлено на изучение влияния экологических тенденций на потребительский выбор, особенно в сфере покупки переработанной одежды. В связи с растущей озабоченностью по поводу экологической устойчивости растет интерес к переработанной одежде как среди продавцов, так и среди покупателей. В исследовании используются качественные и количественные методы, включая опросы и анализ рынка, для сбора информации о поведении потребителей. Кроме того, в статье анализируются успешные бренды, которые продают одежду из переработанного сырья. Исследуя экологические преимущества, цены и модные предпочтения, авторы изучают готовность потребителей покупать переработанную одежду. Результаты этого исследования помогают лучше понять образ мышления потребителей в отношении устойчивой моды, что ценно для бизнеса и рынков в индустрии моды.

Ключевые слова: экологичная мода, одежда из переработанных материалов, потребительский выбор
