

BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION: UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN SUSTAINABILITY AWARENESS AND CONSUMPTION HABITS AMONG LITHUANIAN AND POLISH STUDENTS

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Annotation. This article examines sustainable consumption in the context of the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with particular emphasis on Goal 12 related to sustainable consumption and production. The study aims to analyse the relationship between students' awareness of sustainability and their actual consumption choices. Unlike much of the research that frames sustainable consumption primarily in a marketing context, this paper focuses on behavioural aspects of consumption. An empirical survey was conducted among 777 university students in Lithuania (n = 477) and Poland (n = 300). The questionnaire included 41 closed-ended statements grouped into five constructs: knowledge of sustainability, sustainable attitudes, sustainable behaviour, sustainable motivation for buying food, and sustainable motivation for buying clothes. Respondents rated the statements on a 5-point Likert scale. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, reliability testing (Cronbach's α), normalisation, and Spearman's correlation analysis. The findings indicate that Polish respondents scored higher than Lithuanian respondents in knowledge, attitudes, and sustainable behaviour. Nevertheless, in both countries, sustainable motivation is weaker when making actual purchase decisions, particularly regarding clothing. Statistically significant moderate correlations were found between knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour, as well as between sustainable motivation to buy food and clothing. Interestingly, no correlation was observed between monthly income and sustainable motivations. The study highlights the gap between sustainability awareness and actual consumer practices. These results underline the importance of educational and policy initiatives that not only raise awareness but also translate it into concrete behavioural changes.

Keywords: sustainable development, sustainable consumption, student behaviour, Lithuania, Poland.

JEL classification: Q01, D12, Q56, I23.

Introduction

Consumption has always been an integral part of human life. However, in the 21st century, it has become of particular importance in relation to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to the Global Sustainable Development Report (United Nations, 2023), however, only around 15% of the targets set for 2030 are on track to be achieved, with progress stalling or even regressing in many areas. Consumption remains one of the most challenging areas: in 2023, global consumption levels were higher than in 2020, highlighting that current production and consumption patterns are unsustainable. Consequently, scholars and international organisations have emphasised the need to restructure research, policy and local initiatives to promote sustainable consumption as a cornerstone of sustainable development (Nature, 2023).

The concept of consumption has been approached from multiple disciplinary angles. Economists and sociologists have long recognised its role as both an economic activity and a social practice. Miller (1995) defines consumption in utilitarian terms as ‘the acquisition and use of goods and services’, while Thorstein Veblen (2001 [1899]) introduced the concept of conspicuous consumption as a social construct that signals economic status and prestige. Similarly, Max Weber (1997) demonstrated how cultural and religious values, such as Protestant ethics, shaped patterns of wealth accumulation and use. These early insights positioned consumption as both a matter of individual need and a reflection of broader social, cultural and ideological systems.

From a historical perspective, the concept of sustainability entered discussions about consumption in the mid-20th century. Remmen (2001) argued that the ‘greening’ of industry through technological innovations aimed at reducing emissions in the 1960s and 1970s laid the foundation for cleaner production processes. Subsequently, scholars such as Glavič (2021) emphasised how sustainability gradually became embedded in international agreements, shifting the focus from production efficiency to the impact of everyday consumption choices. One of the first widely cited definitions of sustainable consumption was provided at the Oslo Symposium (1994), which described it as ‘the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimising the use of natural resources, toxic materials, and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations’. Similarly, the United Nations Environment Programme (2014) defined sustainable development as a ‘holistic approach to systemic change’ emphasising resource efficiency, life-cycle thinking and the creation of green job opportunities. Together, these milestones illustrate the gradual expansion of sustainability from industrial production to consumer lifestyles.

Nevertheless, there are still significant differences between awareness and action. Although many people recognise the importance of sustainability, their consumption habits often do not reflect these values. This so-called ‘value–action gap’ is particularly evident in areas such as food waste and textile consumption. According to the Food Waste Index Report (United Nations, 2024), global household food waste continues to increase. Meanwhile, the European Environment Agency (2024) reports that EU residents generated around 16 kg of textile waste per person in 2020, most of which ended up in mixed municipal waste. Meanwhile, annual global textile consumption is expected to grow from 62 million tonnes to 102 million

tonnes by 2030 (WasteManaged, 2024). These trends demonstrate the urgent need to understand how awareness of sustainability translates—or fails to translate—into daily consumption choices.

In this context, young people are a particularly important group for research. Younger generations are highly exposed to sustainability discourse and are among the most active consumers of fast fashion, digital devices and processed food. Their consumption patterns have long-term implications for sustainability transitions, particularly in Central and Eastern European countries such as Lithuania and Poland, where cultural, economic and social differences may influence the way in which sustainability awareness translates into consumer behaviour. Although earlier studies (e.g. Akenji, Bengtsson, 2014; Wang *et al.*, 2019) have examined sustainable consumption in broader global contexts, more regionally specific research is needed to investigate the relationship between sustainability knowledge, attitudes and behaviours among young people.

This article aims to analyse the attitudes of Lithuanian and Polish university students towards sustainable consumption, identifying the links between their understanding of sustainable development and their consumption habits, particularly with regard to food and clothing. By combining theoretical perspectives with empirical analysis, the study aims to improve our understanding of how knowledge and awareness of sustainability can (or cannot) influence everyday consumer decisions.

1. Theoretical Links between the Understanding of Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainable Consumption Choices

Bengtsson *et al.* (2018) argue that all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are connected with consumption in some way, whether through power, resources, products or services. Therefore, when analysing consumption, researchers must define the context and level at which sustainable consumption is examined. In the literature, sustainable consumption is explained through several core principles that reflect both individual behaviour and systemic societal changes.

Environmental impact. Consumers are encouraged to choose products and services that minimise environmental harm, such as goods produced from renewable resources, goods that require less energy or emit fewer pollutants, and second-hand goods (Xue *et al.*, 2018; Beak *et al.*, 2020). Environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to adopt responsible practices, such as reducing single-use plastics or supporting eco-friendly packaging.

Economic sustainability. This principle involves supporting companies that operate responsibly, contribute positively to local economies and ensure transparency in their business models (Abraham, Hamilton, 2018; Wang *et al.*, 2019). At the consumer level, this means favouring local producers, sustainable brands and businesses that communicate their environmental responsibility to stakeholders.

Social responsibility. Consumption is not only an individual act, but a social one too. It is linked to fair labour practices, safe working conditions, and broader impacts on local communities. Studies have highlighted the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and consumer decision-making. These studies have shown that trust in socially responsible companies can foster loyalty and encourage sustainable consumer behaviour (Pérez, del Bosque, 2015; Jeon *et al.*, 2020).

Waste reduction. Reducing waste is a central aspect of sustainable consumption. Consumers are encouraged to opt for durable goods, minimise packaging, recycle and prevent food and textile waste.

However, recent reports (UN, 2024; Fashion Waste, 2024) indicate that household food waste and textile overconsumption remain significant issues despite increasing awareness.

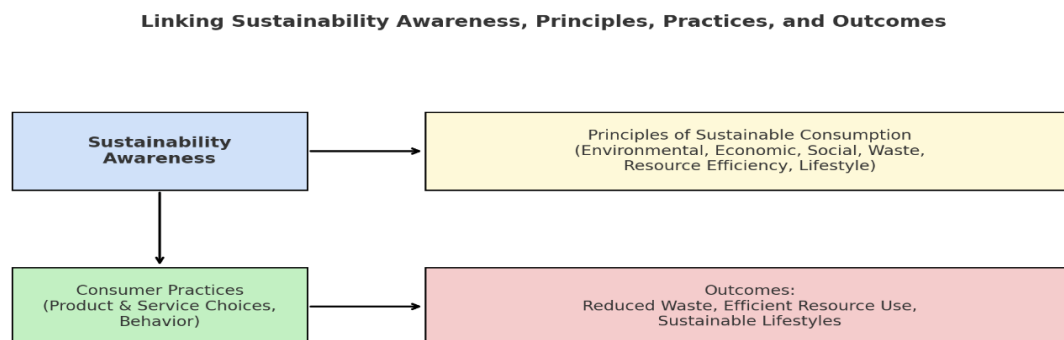
Efficient resource use. Beyond product choices, sustainable consumption involves the responsible use of energy, water and other resources. Consumers can adopt energy-efficient appliances, reduce water wastage and avoid unnecessary consumption (Sheth *et al.*, 2011; Tukker, 2015)

Lifestyle choices. Sustainable consumption involves making broader lifestyle decisions, such as using public transport, buying local produce and reducing energy dependence (Lubowiecki-Vikuk, Dąbrowska, Machnik, 2021; Longo *et al.*, 2019).

These principles demonstrate that sustainable consumption is a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by knowledge, values and attitudes, as well as being limited by economic and cultural contexts. It is important to note that there may be more to this principle when the consumption phenomenon is analysed in relation to sustainable development. However, a theoretical conceptual model can be formed based on the theoretical analysis performed.

2. Conceptual Model

In order to provide a more effective illustration of the theoretical relationships discussed above, the research employs a conceptual framework that links sustainability awareness, sustainable consumption principles, and consumer practices, leading to observable outcomes (*Figure 1*).



Source: created by the authors.

Figure 1. Linking Sustainability Awareness, Principles, Practices and Outcomes

The model highlights the following points. The cultivation of sustainability awareness, encompassing a comprehensive understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, environmental concerns, and social responsibilities, serves as the foundational element in shaping consumer attitudes. In the absence of adequate awareness, sustainable practices remain fragmented or symbolic (Akenji, Bengtsson, 2014). The role of sustainable consumption principles in this regard is that of a mediator. It is imperative that awareness is translated into action, manifesting in the form of practical values such as environmental care, economic responsibility, social justice, and efficient resource utilisation. Consumer practices are indicative of the actual behavioural dimension, as evidenced by purchasing eco-friendly products, reducing food waste, or buying second-hand clothes. This stage is characterised by the emergence of the well-documented attitude-behaviour gap (Sesini *et al.*, 2020). The outcomes of these practices are indicative of their contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the micro

level, the phenomenon is manifested in individual actions. At the macro level, it is manifested in systemic shifts towards more sustainable economies and societies.

Thus, the model provides a basis for empirically testing how young consumers in Lithuania and Poland translate sustainability awareness into practical consumption choices, particularly in food and clothing—two sectors most affected by waste generation and overconsumption (EEA, 2024).

3. Methodology

The methodological framework of this study is directly aligned with the theoretical assumptions outlined in the previous section, where sustainable consumption was conceptualised through six main dimensions: environmental impact, economic sustainability, social responsibility, waste reduction, resource efficiency, and lifestyle choices. These dimensions were operationalised in the questionnaire through constructs measuring knowledge, attitudes, behaviour, and motivation to consume sustainably, both in food and clothing. This structure enabled an empirical evaluation of whether heightened levels of sustainability awareness are reflected in consumption motives among young consumers.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of 41 closed-ended statements and additional questions on socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, and monthly income). The statements were grouped into five dimensions:

- Knowledge about sustainability (9 items; K1–K9)
- Sustainable attitudes (9 items; A1–A9)
- Sustainable behaviour (9 items; B1–B9)
- Sustainable motivation for buying food (6 items; FM1–FM6)
- Sustainable motivation for buying clothes (8 items; CM1–CM8)

All items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *definitely disagree*, 5 = *definitely agree*). The division of items into dimensions is consistent with the logic of sustainability research, where knowledge is assumed to shape attitudes, attitudes influence behaviour, and these, in turn, inform purchase motivations (Ajzen, 1991; Sheth *et al.*, 2011).

Sample and Data Collection

A total of 777 university students participated in the survey: 61% from Lithuania (N=477) and 39% from Poland (N=300). Participants were recruited from higher education institutions, representing a target group of young adults who are both current and future decision-makers in sustainable consumption. In Lithuania, 32% of respondents were older than 23 years, while in Poland this share was significantly higher (87%). Regarding income, the majority of Lithuanian respondents (35%) reported less than €400 per month, while the largest group among Polish students (34%) reported €801–1000 per month. Detailed demographic data are provided in *Table 1*.

Table 1. Demography of Respondents

	Gender			Total
	Male	Female	Other	
Lithuania	152	320	5	477
Poland	13	286	1	300
	Age			Total
	18–20 years	21–23 years	Older than 23	
Lithuania	178	147	152	477
Poland	18	20	262	300
	Monthly income			
	Less than 400 EUR	401–800 EUR	801–1000 EUR	More than 1001 EUR
Lithuania	169	96	95	117
Poland	47	57	100	92

Source: created by the authors.

Reliability and Validity

To assess the internal consistency of the constructs, *Cronbach's alpha coefficients* were calculated (see Table 2). All scales demonstrated high reliability, with alpha values ranging from 0.80 to 0.88, exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, Bernstein, 1994). The overall questionnaire reliability was excellent ($\alpha = 0.937$).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Cronbach's Alpha

	Items	Scale	Mean	Std. dev.	Cronbach's α
Total questionnaire	41	1–5	3.889	0.509	0.937
Knowledge about sustainability	9	1–5	4.008	0.586	0.879
Sustainable attitudes	9	1–5	3.851	0.650	0.827
Sustainable behaviour	9	1–5	4.095	0.623	0.844
Sustainable motivation for buying (food)	6	1–5	3.754	0.700	0.802
Sustainable motivation for buying (clothes)	8	1–5	3.663	0.702	0.830

Source: created by the authors.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data were normalised (range 0–1) to allow comparability across dimensions. This approach is particularly relevant when constructs differ in the number of items and variability, ensuring methodological rigor (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Correlation analysis was conducted using Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient, suitable for ordinal data measured with Likert scales. This enabled us to examine the strength and direction of associations between sustainability presumptions (knowledge, attitudes, behaviour) and purchase motivations (food, clothing).

The analytical strategy followed a stepwise approach:

1. **Descriptive statistics** were computed to examine overall levels of knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and motivations.
2. **Reliability analysis** (Cronbach's alpha) was used to confirm measurement consistency.

3. **Normalised values** were compared across Lithuanian and Polish respondents to identify cross-country differences.
4. **Correlation analysis** was applied to aggregated and unaggregated data, allowing the identification of general tendencies and specific item-level associations.

The methodological design employed in this study ensures a high degree of consistency between the theoretical assumptions and the empirical strategy employed. The theoretical assumptions pertain to the notion that sustainability knowledge and attitudes should translate into behaviour and consumption motives.

4. Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The survey was completed by 777 students. The data indicates that 477 subjects were from Lithuania, constituting 61% of the sample, while 300 subjects were from Poland, constituting 39% of the sample. The demographic characteristics are summarised in *Table 1*. The analysis of the sample indicates discernible discrepancies between the two countries. In Poland, the majority of respondents (87%) were over 23 years of age, while in Lithuania, this age group represented only 32%. With regard to income, a higher percentage of Lithuanian students were found to be in the lower-income bracket, with 35% of the sample earning less than €400 per month. In contrast, Polish respondents reported higher incomes, with 34% in the €801–1000 category. The gender distribution exhibited marked differences between the two countries. In Lithuania, 67% of respondents were female, while in Poland, females accounted for as much as 95%. These disparities are significant for the interpretation of subsequent results, as age and income levels may partly explain variations in sustainability-related knowledge and motivations (Haider *et al.*, 2022).

Reliability of the Constructs

The descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each construct are presented in *Table 2*. All scales demonstrate high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.802 to 0.879, thus exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, Bernstein, 1994). The total questionnaire reliability was found to be excellent ($\alpha = 0.937$). The findings substantiate the instrument's reliability in quantifying constructs pertaining to sustainability, thereby validating its application in cross-country comparisons.

Sustainability Presumptions in Lithuania and Poland

As illustrated in *Table 3*, the subsequent data sets present the mean values of the variables in question, i.e. the estimates of sustainability knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and purchase motivations, which have been normalised. The findings indicate that Polish respondents consistently attained higher scores on knowledge (0.823 vs. 0.742), attitudes (0.761 vs. 0.722), and sustainable behaviour (0.772 vs. 0.676) compared to their Lithuanian counterparts.

It is noteworthy that while both groups exhibited adequate sustainability knowledge, this was not uniformly reflected in comparable levels of sustainable motivation. In both countries, the motivation to purchase food sustainably was found to be stronger than the motivation to purchase clothing sustainably.

Table 3. Normalised Estimates of Sustainability Presumptions in Poland and Lithuania

	Poland				
	NORM_K	NORM_A	NORM_B	NORM_FM	NORM_CM
Mean	0.823	0.761	0.772	0.624	0.488
Median	0.833	0.758	0.778	0.632	0.500
Maximum	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Minimum	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Std. Dev.	0.154	0.145	0.159	0.176	0.155
Observations	300	300	300	300	300
	Lithuania				
	NORM_K	NORM_A	NORM_B	NORM_FM	NORM_CM
Mean	0.742	0.722	0.676	0.584	0.540
Median	0.750	0.719	0.694	0.591	0.538
Maximum	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Minimum	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Std. Dev.	0.149	0.164	0.154	0.177	0.147
Observations	477	477	477	477	477

Source: created by the authors.

These findings are consistent with earlier research (Sesini *et al.*, 2020), which suggests that food choices are more strongly influenced by sustainability values than clothing purchases, where price and fashion trends often dominate.

The data indicates that Polish respondents demonstrate higher levels of sustainability-related presumptions, including knowledge, attitudes, and behavioural tendencies, in comparison to their Lithuanian counterparts. The mean score for Polish respondents' knowledge of sustainability is 0.823, and for Lithuanian respondents, it is 0.742. As demonstrated in *Table 3*, the most significant disparity between Lithuanian and Polish respondents is attributed to the assumption of sustainable behaviour, which is evaluated at 0.676 and 0.772, respectively. The findings of the study demonstrate that, despite the existence of knowledge, attitudes, and favourable behaviour towards sustainability, the decision to purchase food and clothing is not invariably based on sustainable motivations. The sustainability of the motivation to purchase food is estimated at 0.624 in Poland and 0.584 in Lithuania. In both countries, a lower level of sustainability is observed in the motivation to purchase clothes than in the motivation to purchase food. The sustainable motivation of Polish respondents to purchase clothing is evaluated at 0.488, while that of Lithuanian respondents is evaluated at 0.540.

Correlation Analysis: General Findings

The findings of the correlation analysis (*Table 4* and *Table 5*) demonstrate predominantly weak to moderate positive correlations between sustainability presumptions and purchase motivations in both countries. In Lithuania, correlations between sustainable behaviour and purchase motivations (food and clothing) were weak, indicating a gap between self-reported sustainable behaviour and actual consumption motives. In the Polish context, the correlation coefficients were found to be marginally elevated. For instance, an investigation into the relationship between knowledge about sustainability and sustainable food purchasing motivation revealed a moderate correlation ($r = 0.515$). Similarly, an analysis of the association between sustainable behaviour and sustainable clothing motivation yielded a similar result ($r = 0.571$).

The strongest correlation was observed between sustainable behaviour and sustainable food motivation ($r = 0.701$), indicating that students who report behaving sustainably also demonstrate stronger motivation to purchase food sustainably. Notably, in both countries, no correlation was found between sustainability presumptions and monthly income, contradicting the assumption that higher income provides greater opportunities for sustainable choices (Wang *et al.*, 2019).

Table 4. Correlation Between Sustainability Presumptions, Buying Motivation, and Monthly Income (LT)

	NORM_FM	NORM_CM	NORM_A	NORM_K	NORM_B	<400 EUR	401-800 EUR	801-1000 EUR	> 1001 EUR
NORM_FM	1,000	0,677*	0,072	0,085	0,440*	-0,171	-0,026	0,126	0,097
NORM_CM	0,677*	1,000	-0,051	-0,001	0,350*	-0,090	-0,017	0,074	0,047
NORM_A	0,072	-0,051	1,000	0,638	0,408	0,104	0,029	0,016	-0,158
NORM_K	0,085	-0,001	0,638	1,000	0,385	0,049	0,011	-0,048	-0,020
NORM_B	0,440*	0,350*	0,408	0,385	1,000	-0,076	0,048	0,079	-0,033
<400 EUR	-0,171	-0,090	0,104	0,049	-0,076	1,000	-0,372	-0,369	-0,422
401-800 EUR	-0,026	-0,017	0,029	0,011	0,048	-0,372	1,000	-0,250	-0,286
801-1000 EUR	0,126	0,074	0,016	-0,048	0,079	-0,369	-0,250	1,000	-0,284
>1001 EUR	0,097	0,047	-0,158	-0,020	-0,033	-0,422	-0,286	-0,284	1,000

Note: *correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: created by the authors.

The correlation analysis yielded several unexpected results. Firstly, the results in *Tables 4* and *5* demonstrate only weak to moderate, statistically significant, positive correlations between the variables in most cases in both countries. In general, the correlations are stronger in Poland than in Lithuania. Further research is therefore required to assess the reasons for these results. A further unanticipated finding is the absence of a correlation between sustainability assumptions and monthly incomes among respondents from Poland and Lithuania.

The findings indicate a statistically significant, moderate, positive correlation between the sustainable motivation to purchase clothes and the sustainable motivation to purchase food ($r = 0.677$ in Lithuania and $r = 0.650$ in Poland). This suggests that individuals who prioritise sustainable motivations in their food purchasing are more likely to make similar sustainable decisions when purchasing clothing, and vice versa. As illustrated in *Table 4*, a modest positive correlation is observed between sustainable behaviour and sustainable motivation for purchasing clothing, as well as between sustainable behaviour and sustainable motivation for purchasing food, within the Lithuanian group.

As shown in *Table 5*, Poland's results indicate a modest positive correlation between attitudes and sustainable motivation for purchasing food, as well as for purchasing clothing. Furthermore, a weak positive correlation has been observed between knowledge of sustainability and sustainable motivation to purchase clothing. However, statistically significant moderate positive correlations are found between knowledge about sustainability and sustainable motivation to buy food ($r = 0.515$), as well as between sustainable behaviour and sustainable motivation to buy clothes ($r = 0.571$). A statistically significant, strong positive correlation is found between sustainable motivation of buying food and sustainable behaviour ($r = 0.701$). This suggests that Polish respondents who behave sustainably are more likely to purchase food for sustainable reasons.

Table 5. Correlation between Sustainability Presumptions, Buying Motivation, and Monthly Income (PL)

	NORM_FM	NORM_CM	NORM_A	NORM_K	NORM_B	<400 EUR	401-800 EUR	801-1000 EUR	> 1001 EUR
NORM_FM	1,000	0,650*	0,419*	0,515*	0,701*	-0,099	-0,134	0,033	0,137
NORM_CM	0,650*	1,000	0,327*	0,420*	0,571*	-0,090	-0,068	-0,023	0,133
NORM_A	0,419*	0,327*	1,000	0,705	0,614	-0,107	-0,108	0,089	0,077
NORM_K	0,515*	0,420*	0,705	1,000	0,693	-0,108	-0,139	0,035	0,150
NORM_B	0,701*	0,571*	0,614	0,693	1,000	-0,122	-0,112	0,038	0,144
<400 EUR	-0,099	-0,090	-0,107	-0,108	-0,122	1,000	-0,209	-0,305	-0,287
401-800 EUR	-0,134	-0,068	-0,108	-0,139	-0,112	-0,209	1,000	-0,342	-0,322
801-1000 EUR	0,033	-0,023	0,089	0,035	0,038	-0,305	-0,342	1,000	-0,470
>1001 EUR	0,137	0,133	0,077	0,150	0,144	-0,287	-0,322	-0,470	1,000

Note: *correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: created by the authors.

To further explore the relationships, unaggregated data were analysed. The findings indicate that in Lithuania, correlations are weak across all items, whereas in Poland moderate positive correlations are identified between specific sustainability attitudes, behaviours, and motivations.

- **Food purchasing.** Significant correlations were observed between motivation to buy ecological products (FM3) and behaviour related to waste reduction (B9) ($r = 0.597$), as well as company reputation evaluation (B9) and motivation to buy based on product greenness (FM6) ($r = 0.604$). This suggests that Polish students link corporate responsibility with their sustainable food choices.
- **Clothing purchasing.** Moderate positive correlations were identified between second-hand buying (CM3) and sustainable behaviour (B9) ($r = 0.630$), as well as fair-trade support (CM5) and sustainable behaviour (B9) ($r = 0.625$). These results indicate that students who adopt sustainable behaviours in daily life extend these practices into clothing consumption.

To determine which statements have the strongest linear relationships, a correlation analysis is performed on un-aggregated data. The analysis shows only a few weak positive correlations across all statements in the Lithuanian group, and several statistically significant, moderate positive correlations in the Polish group. For this reason, only the results for Poland are analysed further.

The findings presented in *Table 6* indicate that the correlations between sustainable motivation statements and sustainable attitudes statements are predominantly negligible, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.303 to 0.490. The results of the study indicate a moderate positive correlation between A9 (indicating socially responsible employer behaviour) and FM3 (indicating motivation to buy ecological products), with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.558$. It has been demonstrated that respondents who advocate for socially responsible employers and equitable conditions for workers in both affluent and impoverished nations are more inclined to opt for ecological and environmentally sustainable products.

Table 6. Correlation between Sustainable Food Buying Motivation, and Sustainable Attitudes (PL)

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	FM1	FM2	FM3	FM4	FM5	FM6
A1	1,000	0,351	0,280	0,231	0,131	0,093	0,161	0,222	0,258	0,178	0,126	0,354*	0,270	0,348*	0,338*
A2	0,351	1,000	0,726	0,617	0,435	0,453	0,483	0,570	0,548	0,363*	0,398*	0,490*	0,392*	0,431*	0,363*
A3	0,280	0,726	1,000	0,588	0,544	0,497	0,549	0,588	0,555	0,338*	0,391*	0,465*	0,340*	0,368*	0,282
A4	0,231	0,617	0,588	1,000	0,584	0,654	0,451	0,605	0,502	0,327*	0,354*	0,285	0,281	0,300*	0,199
A5	0,131	0,435	0,544	0,584	1,000	0,522	0,497	0,574	0,551	0,291	0,344*	0,371*	0,297	0,302*	0,223
A6	0,093	0,453	0,497	0,654	0,522	1,000	0,545	0,615	0,538	0,373*	0,366*	0,307*	0,308*	0,303*	0,227
A7	0,161	0,483	0,549	0,451	0,497	0,545	1,000	0,577	0,556	0,371*	0,358*	0,394*	0,345*	0,375*	0,328*
A8	0,222	0,570	0,588	0,605	0,574	0,615	0,577	1,000	0,644	0,366*	0,410*	0,436*	0,392*	0,408*	0,318*
A9	0,258	0,548	0,555	0,502	0,551	0,538	0,556	0,644	1,000	0,349*	0,445*	0,558*	0,490*	0,459*	0,395*
FM1	0,178	0,363*	0,338*	0,327*	0,291	0,373*	0,371*	0,366*	0,349*	1,000	0,466	0,388	0,223	0,288	0,188
FM2	0,126	0,398*	0,391*	0,354*	0,344*	0,366*	0,358*	0,410*	0,445*	0,466	1,000	0,646	0,537	0,481	0,423
FM3	0,354*	0,490*	0,465*	0,285	0,371*	0,307*	0,394*	0,436*	0,558*	0,388	0,646	1,000	0,697	0,640	0,566
FM4	0,270	0,392*	0,340*	0,281	0,297	0,308*	0,345*	0,392*	0,490*	0,223	0,537	0,697	1,000	0,565	0,709
FM5	0,348*	0,431*	0,368*	0,300*	0,302*	0,303*	0,375*	0,408*	0,459*	0,288	0,481	0,640	0,565	1,000	0,548
FM6	0,338*	0,363*	0,282	0,199	0,223	0,227	0,328*	0,318*	0,395*	0,188	0,423	0,566	0,709	0,548	1,000

Note: *correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: created by the authors.

Table 7. Correlation between Sustainable Food Buying Motivation, and Sustainable Behavior (PL)

	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	FM1	FM2	FM3	FM4	FM5	FM6
B1	1,000	0,754	0,605	0,542	0,342	0,517	0,382	0,359	0,479	0,338*	0,461*	0,483*	0,364*	0,443*	0,332*
B2	0,754	1,000	0,650	0,595	0,427	0,546	0,394	0,399	0,492	0,318*	0,488*	0,474*	0,459*	0,411*	0,371*
B3	0,605	0,650	1,000	0,633	0,430	0,494	0,381	0,492	0,561	0,324*	0,442*	0,501*	0,501*	0,490*	0,397*
B4	0,542	0,595	0,633	1,000	0,330	0,608	0,324	0,356	0,404	0,291	0,418*	0,370*	0,359*	0,386*	0,244
B5	0,342	0,427	0,430	0,330	1,000	0,200	0,483	0,496	0,480	0,214	0,295	0,436*	0,428*	0,343*	0,438*
B6	0,517	0,546	0,494	0,608	0,200	1,000	0,370	0,323	0,382	0,390*	0,454*	0,336*	0,283	0,344*	0,265
B7	0,382	0,394	0,381	0,324	0,483	0,370	1,000	0,296	0,376	0,166	0,306*	0,315*	0,389*	0,332*	0,444*
B8	0,359	0,399	0,492	0,356	0,496	0,323	0,296	1,000	0,607	0,278	0,338*	0,477*	0,439*	0,416*	0,411*
B9	0,479	0,492	0,561	0,404	0,480	0,382	0,376	0,607	1,000	0,324*	0,447*	0,597*	0,597*	0,588*	0,604*
FM1	0,338*	0,318*	0,324*	0,291	0,214	0,390*	0,166	0,278	0,324*	1,000	0,466	0,388	0,223	0,288	0,188
FM2	0,461*	0,488*	0,442*	0,418*	0,295	0,454*	0,306*	0,338*	0,447*	0,466	1,000	0,646	0,537	0,481	0,423
FM3	0,483*	0,474*	0,501*	0,370*	0,436*	0,336*	0,315*	0,477*	0,597*	0,388	0,646	1,000	0,697	0,640	0,566
FM4	0,364*	0,459*	0,501*	0,359*	0,428*	0,283	0,389*	0,439*	0,597*	0,223	0,537	0,697	1,000	0,565	0,709
FM5	0,443*	0,411*	0,490*	0,386*	0,343*	0,344*	0,332*	0,416*	0,588*	0,288	0,481	0,640	0,565	1,000	0,548
FM6	0,332*	0,371*	0,397*	0,244	0,438*	0,265	0,444*	0,411*	0,604*	0,188	0,423	0,566	0,709	0,548	1,000

Note: *correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: created by the authors.

A stronger correlation is found between sustainable motivation of buying food statements and sustainable behaviour statements. The results of the study are presented in *Table 7*. Moderate positive correlations are measured between FM3 and B3 ($r = 0.501$), FM4 and B3 ($r = 0.501$), FM3 and B9 ($r = 0.597$), FM4 and B9 ($r = 0.597$), FM5 and B9 ($r = 0.588$), FM6 and B9 ($r = 0.604$). The findings indicate that respondents who have modified their behaviour and reduced their waste, as well as avoided purchasing products from

companies with a poor reputation, are more inclined to select food products based on their environmental sustainability. It has been demonstrated that respondents who evaluate the reputation of companies prior to the procurement of food products hold a certain degree of respect for the nation of origin of the foodstuffs and the working conditions of the labourers responsible for their production.

Table 8. Correlation between Sustainable Motivation of Buying Clothes and Sustainable Attitudes (PL)

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	CM1	CM2	CM3	CM4	CM5	CM6	CM7	CM8
A1	1,000	0,351	0,280	0,231	0,131	0,093	0,161	0,222	0,258	0,201	0,204	0,403*	0,417*	0,340*	0,436*	0,278	0,233
A2	0,351	1,000	0,726	0,617	0,435	0,453	0,483	0,570	0,548	0,401*	0,442*	0,445*	0,382*	0,391*	0,405*	0,208	0,363*
A3	0,280	0,726	1,000	0,588	0,544	0,497	0,549	0,588	0,555	0,362*	0,399*	0,373*	0,360*	0,373*	0,356*	0,232	0,360*
A4	0,231	0,617	0,588	1,000	0,584	0,654	0,451	0,605	0,502	0,315*	0,368*	0,268	0,284	0,371*	0,277	0,111	0,316*
A5	0,131	0,435	0,544	0,584	1,000	0,522	0,497	0,574	0,551	0,377*	0,376*	0,313*	0,339*	0,375*	0,384*	0,085	0,333*
A6	0,093	0,453	0,497	0,654	0,522	1,000	0,545	0,615	0,538	0,329*	0,434*	0,254	0,272	0,388*	0,291	0,084	0,342*
A7	0,161	0,483	0,549	0,451	0,497	0,545	1,000	0,577	0,556	0,340*	0,425*	0,325*	0,341*	0,425*	0,318*	0,056	0,367*
A8	0,222	0,570	0,588	0,605	0,574	0,615	0,577	1,000	0,644	0,353*	0,435*	0,352*	0,364*	0,444*	0,374*	0,182	0,403*
A9	0,258	0,548	0,555	0,502	0,551	0,538	0,556	0,644	1,000	0,449*	0,438*	0,484*	0,511*	0,506*	0,473*	0,247	0,430*
CM1	0,201	0,401*	0,362*	0,315*	0,377*	0,329*	0,340*	0,353*	0,449*	1,000	0,674	0,410	0,389	0,442	0,373	0,336	0,675
CM2	0,204	0,442*	0,399*	0,368*	0,376*	0,434*	0,425*	0,435*	0,438*	0,674	1,000	0,500	0,452	0,491	0,469	0,221	0,481
CM3	0,403*	0,445*	0,373*	0,268	0,313*	0,254	0,325*	0,352*	0,484*	0,410	0,500	1,000	0,799	0,583	0,725	0,300	0,318
CM4	0,417*	0,382*	0,360*	0,284	0,339*	0,272	0,341*	0,364*	0,511*	0,389	0,452	0,799	1,000	0,600	0,742	0,356	0,345
CM5	0,340*	0,391*	0,373*	0,371*	0,375*	0,388*	0,425*	0,444*	0,506*	0,442	0,491	0,583	0,600	1,000	0,594	0,259	0,496
CM6	0,436*	0,405*	0,356*	0,277	0,384*	0,291	0,318*	0,374*	0,473*	0,373	0,469	0,725	0,742	0,594	1,000	0,337	0,384
CM7	0,278	0,208	0,232	0,111	0,085	0,084	0,056	0,182	0,247	0,336	0,221	0,300	0,356	0,259	0,337	1,000	0,469
CM8	0,233	0,363*	0,360*	0,316*	0,333*	0,342*	0,367	0,403*	0,430*	0,675	0,481	0,318	0,345	0,496	0,384	0,469	1,000

Note: *correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: created by the authors.

The results presented in *Table 8* demonstrate a correlation between the sustainable motivation of buying clothes statements and the sustainable attitudes statements. The majority of these correlations are weak (correlation coefficient between 0.316 and 0.484). A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.511$) is found between A9 and CM4, as well as between A9 and CM5 ($r = 0.506$). This suggests that respondents who advocate for socially responsible employers and equitable conditions for workers in both affluent and impoverished nations are more likely to support the fair trade movement when purchasing clothing. Furthermore, it is imperative that garments are manufactured by a local producer.

Table 9. Correlation between Sustainable Motivation of Buying Clothes and Sustainable Behavior (PL)

	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	CM1	CM2	CM3	CM4	CM5	CM6	CM7	CM8
B1	1,000	0,754	0,605	0,542	0,342	0,517	0,382	0,359	0,479	0,296	0,401*	0,351*	0,342*	0,429*	0,371*	0,217	0,377*
B2	0,754	1,000	0,650	0,595	0,427	0,546	0,394	0,399	0,492	0,340*	0,443*	0,372*	0,377*	0,448*	0,401*	0,169	0,332*
B3	0,605	0,650	1,000	0,633	0,430	0,494	0,381	0,492	0,561	0,348*	0,495*	0,442*	0,467*	0,471*	0,455*	0,160	0,347*
B4	0,542	0,595	0,633	1,000	0,330	0,608	0,324	0,356	0,404	0,349*	0,433*	0,308*	0,343*	0,420*	0,342*	0,102	0,365*
B5	0,342	0,427	0,430	0,330	1,000	0,200	0,483	0,496	0,480	0,272	0,322*	0,493*	0,495*	0,378*	0,401*	0,197	0,210
B6	0,517	0,546	0,494	0,608	0,200	1,000	0,370	0,323	0,382	0,381*	0,440*	0,289	0,329*	0,413*	0,301*	0,211	0,357*
B7	0,382	0,394	0,381	0,324	0,483	0,370	1,000	0,296	0,376	0,152	0,340*	0,345*	0,358*	0,338*	0,337*	0,207	0,158
B8	0,359	0,399	0,492	0,356	0,496	0,323	0,296	1,000	0,607	0,341*	0,312*	0,554*	0,501*	0,456*	0,465*	0,129	0,312*
B9	0,479	0,492	0,561	0,404	0,480	0,382	0,376	0,607	1,000	0,354*	0,392*	0,630*	0,622*	0,625*	0,642*	0,225	0,350*
CM1	0,296	0,340*	0,348*	0,349*	0,272	0,381*	0,152	0,341*	0,354*	1,000	0,674	0,410	0,389	0,442	0,373	0,336	0,675
CM2	0,401*	0,443*	0,495*	0,433*	0,322*	0,440*	0,340*	0,312*	0,392*	0,674	1,000	0,500	0,452	0,491	0,469	0,221	0,481
CM3	0,351*	0,372*	0,442*	0,308*	0,493*	0,289	0,345*	0,554*	0,630*	0,410	0,500	1,000	0,799	0,583	0,725	0,300	0,318
CM4	0,342*	0,377*	0,467*	0,343*	0,495*	0,329*	0,358*	0,501*	0,622*	0,389	0,452	0,799	1,000	0,600	0,742	0,356	0,345
CM5	0,429*	0,448*	0,471*	0,420*	0,378*	0,413*	0,338*	0,456*	0,625*	0,442	0,491	0,583	0,600	1,000	0,594	0,259	0,496
CM6	0,371*	0,401*	0,455*	0,342*	0,401*	0,301*	0,337*	0,465*	0,642*	0,373	0,469	0,725	0,742	0,594	1,000	0,337	0,384
CM7	0,217	0,169	0,160	0,102	0,197	0,211	0,207	0,129	0,225	0,336	0,221	0,300	0,356	0,259	0,337	1,000	0,469
CM8	0,377*	0,332*	0,347*	0,365*	0,210	0,357*	0,158	0,312*	0,350*	0,675	0,481	0,318	0,345	0,496	0,384	0,469	1,000

Note: *correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: created by the authors.

As illustrated in Table 9, a positive correlation between sustainable motivation for purchasing clothing and sustainable behaviour is evident. The findings reveal the presence of moderate positive correlations between CM3 and B8 ($r=0.554$), CM4 and B8 ($r=0.501$), CM3 and B9 ($r=0.630$), CM4 and B9 ($r=0.622$), CM5 and B9 ($r=0.625$), and CM6 and B9 ($r=0.642$). The findings indicate that respondents who frequently purchase second-hand items prioritise the use of recycled raw materials in clothing production and contribute to the fair trade movement. Furthermore, respondents who evaluate companies' reputations also prefer locally produced and ecological raw-materials-based clothing.

The results can be summarised as follows:

- **Knowledge vs. practice gap.** The survey revealed that both Lithuanian and Polish respondents demonstrated sufficient knowledge about sustainability. However, this knowledge was not consistently reflected in their purchase motivations, especially for clothing.
- **Cross-country differences.** Polish students demonstrated superior performance across the domains of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour, exhibiting pronounced correlations between presumptions and motivations.
- **Food vs. clothing.** Sustainable motivations are stronger for food than for clothing in both countries, supporting findings from earlier studies (Fischer *et al.*, 2017).

Income irrelevance. The subjects' monthly income did not show a significant correlation with sustainability-related presumptions or motivations. This finding suggests that attitudes and values, rather than financial means, are the primary drivers of sustainable choices among young consumers.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between sustainability awareness and consumption habits among Lithuanian and Polish students. While the results indicate that both groups possess a high level of knowledge regarding sustainability, they also demonstrate a substantial discrepancy between knowledge, attitudes, and actual sustainable consumption behaviours. This observation aligns with what many scholars have identified as the attitude–behaviour gap, or value–action gap, in sustainability research (Joshi, Rahman, 2015; Vermeir, Verbeke, 2006).

Knowledge and Awareness

The findings indicate that both Lithuanian and Polish students exhibit a commendable level of sustainability knowledge, with normalised scores exceeding 0.74 in Lithuania and 0.82 in Poland. These findings are consistent with earlier studies that have emphasised the increasing penetration of sustainability concepts into education and public discourse in Europe (Sesini *et al.*, 2020; Fischer *et al.*, 2017). It is noteworthy that Polish respondents exhibited marginally elevated levels of knowledge, a discrepancy that may be attributed to variations in university curricula, awareness initiatives, or national-level policy communication concerning sustainability.

Nevertheless, possessing a higher level of knowledge does not necessarily lead to the adoption of sustainable choices. This finding is in accordance with the conclusions of Wu *et al.* (2020), who posit that awareness is a necessary but insufficient precondition for sustainable consumption, since structural and contextual barriers (e.g. price, availability, social norms) often hinder behavioural change.

Attitudes Toward Sustainability

Respondents' attitudes towards sustainability are also positive, but slightly weaker than the knowledge indicators. This finding suggests that while students are cognisant of sustainability challenges, their personal attachment to and prioritisation of sustainability in decision-making may be less pronounced. As posited by Ajzen (1991) and Grankvist and Biel (2007), research indicates that attitudes are not solely determined by knowledge but also by a combination of cultural, social, and psychological factors.

A noteworthy finding is a moderate correlation between attitudes towards sustainable consumption and motivations to purchase sustainable food and clothing in Poland. In contrast, these correlations are weak in Lithuania. This finding suggests that Polish students' attitudes may exert a more direct influence on their consumption motivations. One potential explanation for this phenomenon is the presence of national-level variations in consumer markets. Poland has witnessed a surge in the eco-product market and the emergence of prominent environmental movements (Lubowiecki-Vikuk *et al.*, 2021). In contrast, Lithuania's sustainable product market remains underdeveloped, which may potentially diminish the correlation between environmental attitudes and everyday practices.

Behaviour and the Value–Action Gap

The most significant discrepancy between Lithuanian and Polish respondents is evident in sustainable behaviour, where Poles achieve a score of 0.772, compared with Lithuanians' 0.676. This finding corroborates earlier evidence that sustainable behaviour is context-dependent and influenced by the accessibility and affordability of sustainable options (Fischer *et al.*, 2017; Thøgersen, Schrader, 2012).

Nevertheless, even within Poland, a discernible discrepancy persists between positive behaviour and actual consumption motivations. The findings reveal that both Lithuanian and Polish respondents demonstrate diminished sustainable motivation in the context of food purchasing (0.584 and 0.624, respectively) and exhibit an even more pronounced decline in motivation for clothing purchases (0.540 and 0.488, respectively). These results reflect broader global patterns in which clothing consumption, particularly fast fashion, remains one of the most resistant areas to behavioural change despite widespread knowledge about its environmental impact (Joy *et al.*, 2012; Niinimäki *et al.*, 2020). This discrepancy underscores a persistent challenge: while students exhibit sustainable attitudes and engage in practices such as recycling and reducing waste, these practices do not necessarily influence purchasing decisions, particularly for fashion items.

Food vs. Clothing Consumption

The analysis indicates that students are more motivated to purchase sustainable food than sustainable clothing. This finding aligns with the conclusions of previous studies, which have demonstrated that food consumption is often more closely linked to personal health and immediate well-being, thereby promoting more conscious decision-making (Aschemann-Witzel, 2015; Peschel *et al.*, 2019). In contrast, clothing choices are often influenced by trends, price sensitivity, and social identity, factors that may override sustainability considerations (McNeill, Moore, 2015).

The moderate positive correlations observed in Poland between sustainable food motivations and sustainable behaviour suggest that food consumption is an area where awareness and action align more closely. In contrast, the weaker correlations observed for clothing indicate the ongoing challenge of integrating sustainability into fashion consumption habits, a subject that requires further research and policy interventions.

The findings of this study carry several practical implications.

- **For universities.** It is imperative to enhance sustainability education not only in terms of knowledge acquisition, but also through experiential learning and behavioural interventions. The integration of sustainability principles into practical courses, workshops, and campus activities has the potential to facilitate a transition from awareness to action.
- **For policymakers.** The results of the study highlight the importance of creating enabling environments that support sustainable choices. Such environments may be created through subsidies for eco-friendly products, better waste management systems, and clearer product labelling.
- **For businesses.** In particular, companies in the food and clothing sectors should acknowledge that, while young consumers are cognisant of sustainability issues, they are also constrained by economic and social factors. The translation of awareness into actual purchase behaviour is dependent on the existence of affordable, attractive, and transparent sustainable products.

While this study provides novel insights into sustainable consumption among Lithuanian and Polish students, several limitations must be acknowledged. Firstly, the use of self-reported data may introduce bias, as respondents may be inclined to overstate their sustainable attitudes or behaviours. Secondly, the study focuses exclusively on university students, who may not be representative of the broader population in either country. Thirdly, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to track changes in

sustainability perceptions and behaviours over time. Future research could address these limitations by applying longitudinal methods, expanding the sample beyond students, and incorporating qualitative approaches to better understand the psychological and cultural mechanisms behind sustainable consumption. Furthermore, an exploration of the role of structural barriers, including price sensitivity, product availability, and marketing practices, could elucidate the reasons why sustainability awareness does not invariably translate into behaviour.

In summary, the study demonstrates that both Lithuanian and Polish students exhibit a strong comprehension of sustainability, yet this is not consistently reflected in their consumption patterns. The discrepancy between awareness, attitudes, and behaviour is especially evident in the field of clothing consumption. These findings resonate with broader debates in sustainability research and underscore the necessity for comprehensive, interdisciplinary strategies that seamlessly integrate education, policy, and market interventions to effectively promote sustainable consumption among young people.

Conclusions

The present study examined the relationship between sustainability awareness and sustainable consumption choices among university students in Lithuania and Poland. The research sought to determine whether sustainability presumptions are reflected in everyday consumption decisions by examining knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and motivations related to food and clothing purchases.

The findings suggest that students in both countries possess a relatively strong understanding of sustainability and exhibit favourable attitudes towards sustainable development. Nevertheless, a discernible discrepancy persists between awareness and action. While Polish respondents demonstrate marginally higher levels of sustainable behaviour than their Lithuanian counterparts, both groups exhibit a comparative paucity of sustainable motivations for purchasing food and clothing. This finding reinforces the concept of the value–action gap, a term coined by previous research. The value–action gap refers to the phenomenon where favourable attitudes towards sustainability do not necessarily translate into concrete sustainable consumption practices.

A particularly salient outcome of this study is the distinction between food and clothing consumption. The findings indicate a robust correlation between dietary choices and sustainability knowledge, suggesting that health-related and environmental motivations play a significant role in decision-making. In contrast, the consumption of clothing remains significantly influenced by factors such as affordability, fashion trends, and social identity, thereby rendering sustainability a comparatively weaker driver in this particular domain.

From a pragmatic standpoint, the study emphasises the necessity for targeted educational, policy, and market interventions. It is imperative that higher education institutions incorporate sustainability into their curricula and promote experiential learning that connects awareness with everyday practices. It is recommended that policymakers establish supportive frameworks, including clearer product labelling, incentives for sustainable purchases, and stronger waste reduction policies. It is imperative for businesses, particularly in the fashion industry, to acknowledge the growing demand for affordable, transparent, sustainable alternatives. This is crucial to facilitate behavioural change among young consumers.

Notwithstanding the research's contributions, there are limitations that must be acknowledged. These limitations stem from the research's reliance on self-reported data, its focus on student populations, and

its cross-sectional design. It is recommended that future studies adopt a longitudinal approach, expand the sample to include individuals outside of academia, and explore the structural and psychological barriers that prevent young consumers from aligning their sustainable knowledge and attitudes with actual behaviour.

While awareness of sustainability is already well established among Lithuanian and Polish students, this alone is insufficient to drive widespread sustainable consumption. The challenge of connecting knowledge and practice remains central. The findings indicate that achieving sustainable development goals necessitates not only informed and motivated individuals but also systemic changes that enable and support sustainable consumption patterns in everyday life.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the subject by demonstrating that, while Lithuanian and Polish students show relatively high awareness of sustainability, translating this awareness into concrete, consistent consumption habits remains partial. The findings underscore the notion that a mere knowledge of sustainability does not invariably translate into sustainable behaviour, particularly in the context of clothing consumption, where motivation levels remain suboptimal. Consequently, the "bridge" between sustainability awareness and action necessitates further reinforcement through targeted education, institutional support, and consumer empowerment. This insight not only validates the article's title but also underscores the urgent need to align sustainability knowledge with everyday practices.

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ŽINIŲ IR VEIKSMŲ SUJUNGIMAS: TVARUMO SĄMONINGUMO IR VARTOJIMO ĮPROČIŲ SĄSAJA TARP LIETUVOS IR LENKIJOS STUDENTŲ

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Santrauka. Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas tvarus vartojimas 2030 m. Tvaraus vystymosi tikslų (angl. SDG) kontekste, pabrėžiant 12 tikslą, susijusį su tvariu vartojimu ir gamyba. Tyrimo tikslas – ištirti ryšį tarp studentų žinių apie tvarumą ir jų faktinių vartojimo pasirinkimų. Kitaip nei dauguma tyrimų, kuriuose tvarus vartojimas nagrinėjamas pirmiausia rinkodaros kontekste, šiame straipsnyje dėmesys skiriamas vartojimo elgsenos aspektams. Empirinė apklausa atlikta tarp 777 universitetų studentų Lietuvoje ($n = 477$) ir Lenkijoje ($n = 300$). Klausimyne buvo 41 uždaro tipo teiginys; jie suskirstyti į penkias grupes: žinios apie tvarumą, tvarus požiūris, tvarus elgesys, tvari motyvacija pirkti maistą ir tvari motyvacija pirkti drabužius. Respondentai teiginius vertino pagal 5 balų Likerto skalę. Duomenys analizuoti naudojant aprašomąją statistiką, patikimumo testavimą (Cronbach α), normalizavimą ir Spearmano koreliacijos analizę. Rezultatai rodo, kad respondentai iš Lenkijos surinko daugiau balų nei respondentai iš Lietuvos žinių, požiūrio ir tvaraus elgesio srityse. Vis dėlto abiejose šalyse tvaraus elgesio motyvacija yra silpnesnė priimant faktinius pirkimo sprendimus, ypač susijusius su drabužiais. Buvo nustatyta statistiškai reikšminga vidutinė koreliacija tarp žinių, požiūrio ir elgesio, taip pat tarp tvarios motyvacijos pirkti maistą ir drabužius. Įdomu, kad nebuvo pastebėta jokios koreliacijos tarp mėnesinių pajamų ir tvarios motyvacijos. Tyrimas atskleidžia atotrūkį tarp tvarumo sąmoningumo ir faktinių vartotojų veiksmų. Šie rezultatai pabrėžia švietimo ir politikos iniciatyvų, kurios ne tik didina sąmoningumą, bet ir paverčia jį konkrečiais elgesio pokyčiais, svarbą.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: tvarus vystymasis; tvarus vartojimas; studentų elgesys; Lietuva; Lenkija.