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“WEAR(E)ABLE”

BEST DRESSED SUSTAINABLY

PROGETTO 2019-3-AT02-KA205-002603

OUTPUT 1

FOCUS GROUP RESULTS





PARTICIPANTS AND ACTIVITIES DESCRIPTION

The focus group activity organized by Jonathan Cooperativa Sociale in Piazzola sul Brenta (PD) on the 17th of June, 2019, included 5 15-year-old Italian teenagers and lasted 1 hour 40 minutes. It was held in a non-threatening and receptive environment that allowed all participants to express comfortably their thoughts and ideas.

To recruit the participants we posted a call-to-action in our Facebook page and promoted it through our mailing list and telephone contacts. The 5 selected teenagers applied after they were directly reached and informed about the specific project.



CONDUCTING GUIDELINES

According to the guidelines for conducting a focus group, the project included a beginning section where we explained what is 'Wear(e)able', and the meeting purpose and rules. After this introduction, we asked some simple questions to check if everybody understood and if there were any doubts to clarify. Then we asked participants to briefly introduce themselves and after that, we begun the real focus group activity following the three sections: warm up, main and closing section.

After talking to the participants, we decided not to tape record because it could have affected their free speech. However, to allow the focus group moderator to handle the meeting smoothly, we decided to involve an anonymous assistant, who stayed hidden during the whole meeting and gathered participants' answers in the most accurate way.



ANSWERS PROCESSING

In the warm up section, the questions aimed to approach the topic in wider terms and discover participants' opinions and interests. We asked them: "What is your favourite clothing brand? Why? Who had the most influence on your choice of a clothing brand?" 4 teenagers out of 5 said they were interested in brands that are sold both in the shopping centres and in the biggest cities, such as Berska, Zara and Pull&Bear. 2 said they were interested in sport brands like Nike and Adidas. Finally, 2 participants out of 5 followed also *luxury brands*, but just one of them admitted to buy from them because of their high prices. The mentioned clothing brands are appealing for their style, but also for their prices which have to be affordable, while fabrics have to be lasting and fine quality. Friends are the main influencers for everybody, while parents seem to be the last people they would ask for advices on clothing, disregarding some exceptions.

During the warm up section, we asked participants what are the positive and negative sides of fashion. 3 out of 5 said the negative side of fashion -intended like trend- doesn't allow the single buyer to have their own style nor to feel free to buy whatever they like because of the fear of criticism. On the contrary, 1 participant said that fashion and other information channels are a great inspiration to find one's own style. Finally, only 1 participant identified some negative sides related to clothing industry environmental impact, without adding specific reasons.

In the main section, where the real topic is faced and participants' opinions on specific subjects are scrutinized, we asked them: "Do you know what fabrics your clothing items are made of?" 4 participants out of 5 said they don't pay attention to clothing label. Only one usually reads it but if she/he likes the item, she/he would buy it anyway even if the fabric is not good. For 3 out of 5 it is important how you feel touching or wearing the fabric, and one of these claims to ask her/his parents information about the fabric. Some of them listed some fabric types such as cotton, linen, wool, but when they mentioned viscose they didn't know exactly what kind of fabric it is.

All participants had a vague idea of what 'sustainable fashion' is, and they related it mainly to the clothing industry environmental impact. They all claimed they didn't hear much about the subject. According to them, the concept of 'sustainability-environmental impact' regarded mainly the production processes and the resources exploitation. Only 3 teenagers out of 5 spoke about overproduction and waste product recycle. Later, we asked: "What do you think young people should know to be more conscious about choosing and buying their clothes?". All agreed to say that on the one hand young people are not familiar with the concept of sustainability and the clothing production process, on the other, they claimed that there is no promotion, advertisement nor info circulation on sustainable clothing brands. As for the alternative brands, initiatives and good activities for sustainable fashion, the majority of the teenagers in the focus group knew there are second-hand clothing shops. One participant said in the USA there are many big second-hand stores that sell all types of clothing. Finally almost all of the participants said they swap clothes with other members of the family because it is worth to wear them if you like them, they are for free, and they feel safer because they belonged to some relatives, compared to the ones you buy in the second-hand shops.

4 out of 5 claimed that their favourite brands have sustainable and eco-friendly collections but they cannot give specific references. They mentioned 'Join Life' as a sustainable clothing brand but they didn't say it's a project that involved the brands they talked about, nor that the brands aimed to have production processes with a smaller environmental impact.



In the closing section, where you try to go deeper into participants' habits, we asked them: "What social media channels do you use to obtain information? What influencers or bloggers are relevant for you?". 4 out of 5 said they follow Instagram and YouTube, and 3 mentioned a specific YouTuber they follow to get advice on outfits, while 2 out of 5 use Pinterest too.

All participants claimed to know second-hand shops, flea markets and clothing swap alternatives, however they don't shop at the second-hand stores to avoid a negative social status, and because the clothes are poor and old style. In particular one of them underlined that young people want new and trendy stuff. Clothing swap happens mainly inside the family.

CONCLUSIONS

From the focus group we learned that the teenagers have a vague idea of the concept of 'sustainable fashion', they related it to the environmental impact topic, but mainly from the point of view of the usage of pollutants harmful to the environment and animals, and the exploiting of raw material. Only one participant knew the problem of overproduction and two of them mentioned the need of waste recycling. The pollution issue itself was not well identified and defined.

The meeting showed that social media and friends are essential for the choice of clothing items. Everybody agreed that fashion -as a trend and outfit choice- is very important to make you feel accepted by your friends, as well as it is the cause of being left out when you don't follow it. At the same time, we learned that the type of fabric is not essential when choosing a clothing item. The most important factor is style, the matching of different items, the price and finally the fabric, that is evaluated by touching. The participants knew some natural fabric but ignored synthetic ones.

All participants knew some alternatives to face the problem of sustainability in fashion and retailing, such as clothing swap, and second-hand shops, but no one is inclined to shop this way, apart from swapping clothes with relatives or members of their family. They underlined the lack of knowledge of production processes and the poor advertisement of brands that offer sustainable items or that care about sustainable fashion. The participants didn't speak directly about their choices, but mentioned the lack (or ignorance) of alternatives suiting their needs, and the lack of knowledge of sustainable fashion concept.

ANSWERS

Reminder: we tried to stimulate a dynamic conversation, hence the answers and eventual supplements are incorporated to the question.

	Teenager 1	Teenager 2	Teenager 3	Teenager 4	Teenager 5
WARM UP SECTION					
Question 1	I like luxury brand such as Burberry and Tommy Highfingher, but	I like Zara, Berska, Pull&Bear clothes, and Stradivarius	I like Zara, Pull&Bear and Berska clothing style and affordable	Adidas, Nike (off-white), or luxury brand such as Versace, because I like the	I like Zara, Paul&Bear and Berska because of their style and



	they are expensive so, as G. said, I buy clothes from Zara, Pull&Bear and Berska, because I like their style. As regards clothes, I am inspired mostly by my friends.	too. They are cheap and use fine quality fabric. I ask my friends for advice, I don't trust my parents because they have a different style that I don't really like.	prices. I also like sport clothing even if I don't do sport. I don't ask for suggestions, I have my own style, if I see something that I like, I try it on, and if I'm not sure, I ask my friends.	matching of the clothes colours and the fabric is fine quality. Usually I go shopping to the stores near my house where I can find various sport brands or to the factory outlets. Usually I ask my friends, but if I see something that I like, I buy it and only if I have doubts I ask my friends or my parents for advice.	affordable prices, and the lasting fabrics. I don't normally buy sport clothes, because I get them from my dance school. I've always asked my friends, but now my mum knows my style more or less, so sometimes I ask her.
Question 2	A negative side is that even if you like a clothing item, you don't buy it because you are afraid of being criticized by the others. (4th grade)	I think about influencers that are copied so there's a predominant style. If somebody has a different style, maybe it is not understood, hence criticized. (middle school)	For me fashion is inspiration. You can look on Pinterest too to be inspired. You can find lots of ideas there. (7th-8th grade)	The negative side is the environmental impact. (middle school but I witnessed an episode of this kind when I was in the primary school)	I agree with C. and G. but also with F. (6th grade)
MAIN SECTION					
Question 3	I don't know all the fabrics, but usually I look at the style before trying on clothes. If I feel comfortable with the fabric, I buy it even if I don't know what fabric it is	First I look at the dress, top or trousers to see if I like it, and then usually I ask my mother about the fabric because she knows a lot.	I never look at the label, I touch the fabric and try it on to check if it feels comfortable.	I know fabrics such as cotton, wool, linen. I choose canvas or leather shoes. Usually I check if it's 100% cotton or linen, etc. but sometimes even if the material is bad, but I like the	As F. I know cotton, linen, wool, I know viscose but I don't know if the other materials are natural or synthetic. I don't pay much attention



	exactly.			clothing item, I buy it anyway.	to the label, but I realize that I prefer fabrics like cotton.
Question 4	I heard very little about sustainable fashion. I read something on social media and online. One of the main things I found out is that of creating clothes from waste materials or old clothes to reduce the waste, and avoid exploiting resources for overproduction (which are burned after). But I looked for information specifically.	I heard little about that. In the social media few people talk about sustainable fashion, but I know there are brands which create sustainable clothes, through clothes recycling or producing them with little environmental impact.	I think sustainability is about respecting environment and animals. For me it is important to recycle natural and non-natural materials.	I heard little about this, but once in school we studied polluting materials connected to retailing. I think sustainability is mostly about pollution and poultry exploitation. I believe it's important to use leather coming from certain animals in order to avoid waste. For example, when animals are already killed by other industries such as food industry.	I don't agree. I think animals should not be killed if you want to be sustainable. I agree sustainability is the environmental one, so it's important to avoid polluting and materials that are harmful to animals.
Question 5	There's not much information and advertisement. Promotion and circulation of sustainable clothing brands is scarce.	I think people don't know the meaning of 'sustainable' to understand what are the most sustainable processes (which are useful to everyone)	I agree with C. and G. on everything.	I agree too. Promotion is what lacks most.	I agree on the need of promotion and of production processes that use less power and materials.
Question 6	I know that in the USA there are second-hand shops, but even if there are some in Italy	I know Berska has a sustainable clothing collection.	Pull&Bear has a sustainable clothing collection that is called "Join life".	I know some brands have a sustainable clothing collection. A habit of my	Zara has a sustainable clothing collection, that is "Join Life".



	too, it's not common to go. I know Zara, Pull&Bear and Stradivarius and some others have a sustainable clothing collection, besides Berska.			family is to give clothes that can still be worn to the younger relatives. I give them to my cousins, for example.	
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CLOSING SECTION

Question 8	I follow Eleonora Petrella on YouTube for advice on outfits, and shopping; on Instagram I follow 'the carow' because it's about sustainable apparel, and Caro Daur that is an influencer, and fashion model. I also follow Green Peace because one of his activities is to prove that clothing items are really sustainable.	I use both Instagram and YouTube, but I don't follow a specific person. It depends on what they suggest me and if I like the style, if it's similar to mine and if the prices are affordable. I follow Chiara Ferragni, but not for fashion.	I don't follow a specific person, but I use Instagram and YouTube and depending on my tastes, I look for something, but I don't follow a specific person.	I use Instagram, YouTube and Pinitereest. I follow the Italian Youtuber Andrea Eroti who reviews products, etc... because I like how he explains, the style and what he suggests. Then I follow Diamo del Russo (Russian, Vladislav) for his advice, but also because he explains how to avoid online shopping fraud.	As G. I don't use social media for fashion. I look on Pinterest or the way people are dressed in the streets to be inspired.
Question 9	I don't go to second-hand stores, and I think people don't go there either because clothes are old and out of fashion. People want new stuff.	We swap clothes a lot but inside our own family because it's safer. There's social criticism on shopping in second-hand store, because	I think that some second-hand clothes are even nicer. There are second-hand items from luxurious clothing brands that are still	I have never been in one, but I could go. The important thing is that I like the clothes. Anyway, I prefer to swap clothes with my relatives because I save money. Those	I've never been in a second-hand shop, but I would go. I gave my clothes to a relative in the past.



		people that shop there are considered poor.	expensive, and there are also unknown or little-known brands. My neighbour shops there. Besides, I think it's not so common in Italy because there are not big shops as in America, where you can choose among lot of stuff.	clothes can last longer if my relatives like them or I like the ones I receive.	
Extra question by the moderator: Do you think fashion can be more sustainable? Talking about environmental respect, where do you think we are? Are we doing bad, are we on the right path, or are we at the beginning so it's easy to change path towards sustainability?	I think we need stricter rules for environment and workers worldwide. Think about countries such as China and India, where workers are very exploited.	I agree with G. More and more people care for this, so buyers can really make a difference. Retailers have to change if they want to keep selling. We can affect brands' game rules (by boycotting)	I think the situation is not that serious yet because more and more brands are looking at sustainability. I think we can do better. Maybe smaller brands will not change much because they can't make enough profit.	I agree with G., we can always do better.	I think the situation is very serious. They are doing something, but lots of brands don't change. Some are doing it. I think it's the beginning of the process to solve and change things.