



Information, consumerism and sustainable fashion

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OBJECTIVES:

- to investigate in which extent were articles regarding sustainable fashion represented in the electronic editions of Croatian daily newspapers with national coverage and how this topic was elaborated in the media;
- to examine whether Croatian fashion designers are familiar with the concept of sustainable fashion, what they think about this concept, and whether media coverage of this subject affects their attitudes.



METHODOLOGY:

Quantitative and qualitative research methods.

The quantitative content analysis of selected Croatian electronic media (Jutarnji list, Slobodna Dalmacija, Večernji list, 24 sata, Novi list) regarding sustainable fashion.

A qualitative analysis of the media content.

Research of fashion designers attitudes regarding sustainable fashion was carried out through a qualitative method of open question questionnaire.

The introduction presents theoretical elaboration of the sustainable fashion and its relation to the concept of sustainable development.



Initial hypotheses

- Croatian media published the texts on sustainable fashion at small extent
- Texts were not published in serious columns (economy or politics), but superficially in the life style rubrics
- Croatian designers are not well acquainted with the concept of sustainable fashion, and those who are reduce this concept on the usage of organic materials
- Media processing of this topic affects the (non)interest of designers, because no necessary public pressure is imposed on designers



Theoretical frame – fashion and environment

In the UK the consumption of fashion has increased by 37% between 2001 and 2005 (the amount of clothes purchased per capita) (Allwood et al.2006).

In Sweden the amount of clothes and home textiles released on the market rose by 40% between the years 2000 and 2009 (Carlsson et al. 2011 in Tojo et al. 2012)



Theoretical frame – fashion and environment

Croatian Environmental Protection Agency:

- 1.653.918 t of mixed municipal waste were produced in 2015
- 3.71% of mixed municipal waste were waste textile and footwear.
- Every Croatian citizen annually produces about 12 kilos of waste textile and footwear.



Theoretical frame – fashion and environment

The environmental impact of garments can be decreased during:

- fibre production, finishing, dyeing and printing processes
- global logistics during manufacturing and sales
- the use and the maintenance of the product disposal of the product.

Current design and manufacturing systems as well as economic models lead to unsustainable fashion consumption.
(Niinimäki, 2013: 13)



Theoretical frame – fashion and environment

Efficient mass manufacturing in lower cost countries has brought about low end-prices of garments. Cheap product prices lead consumers to impulse purchases and unsustainable consumption behaviour:

- overconsumption,
- very short use time of products and
- premature disposal of the product (Niinimäki 2011).

A black and white line drawing of a woman from the side, facing right. She is wearing a sleeveless, sequined dress that is catching the light, creating a pattern of highlights and shadows. Her hair is pulled back in a bun. The background is a solid, light color.

Consumerism

Idea that happiness depends on the consumption of goods and services, or possession of material goods. It refers to the overwhelming aspirations for possessing and buying things.

In economics, consumerism is an economic policy aimed at stimulating consumption, i.e. the attitude towards which free choice of consumers should dictate the economic structure of society.

Globalization of the market and consumerism are twin brothers of today's economic policy.



Consumerism and fashion

In US every year is spent around \$ 250 billion on fashion and fashion accessories (Grabstats.ca)

Fashion industry use advertisements as an instrument that drives consumers to escape from reality, in advertising they create the perception that wearing this clothes will transfer consumers into the life of wealth and luxury that most people want.

The fashion industry rests on creating and maintaining false people's needs.



What is sustainable fashion?

Sustainable fashion - a part of the philosophy of design that seeks to be socially responsible, different, primarily aware of the environment and people but also of its own profession.

Sustainability within means that through the development and use of thing or a process, there is no harm done to people or the planet, and that thing or process, once put into action, can enhance the well being of the people who interact with it and the environment it is developed and used within (Hethorn, 2009: xviii)



Fashion and information

The question of media sources - who is authorized to speak or say something about social events, how it is implemented and who approves it. The question is whose voices and views are structured and shaped by the news discourse (Cottle, 2009: 5)



Fashion and information

The purpose of fashion media is to serve as a communication tool to the rest of the industry ... the media have a major influence in determining what fashion is ... most traditional fashion media is owned by only a few companies... Studies show a direct link between advertising and exclusion of certain issues from the journals. (Hoskins, 2015: 33-37)

Dallas Smythe: The purpose of mass media is to produce audiences that can be sold to advertisers.



Results – quantity content analysis of media

- 1) number of articles in each publication,
- 2) length of the texts,
- 3) authors of the texts
- 4) presence of key words.



Presence of key words

- Sustainable fashion; slow fashion; circular fashion; eco fashion; ethical fashion
- circular economy; ethical production; consumerism; hyper production
- sustainable materials; recycled clothes; recycled polyester; organic silk and cotton; new fabrics; plastic bags; redesigned clothes; natural cotton
- environmental protection; eco-friendly
- responsible behaviour; fair business; fair trade; eco philosophy; humanitarian fashion show

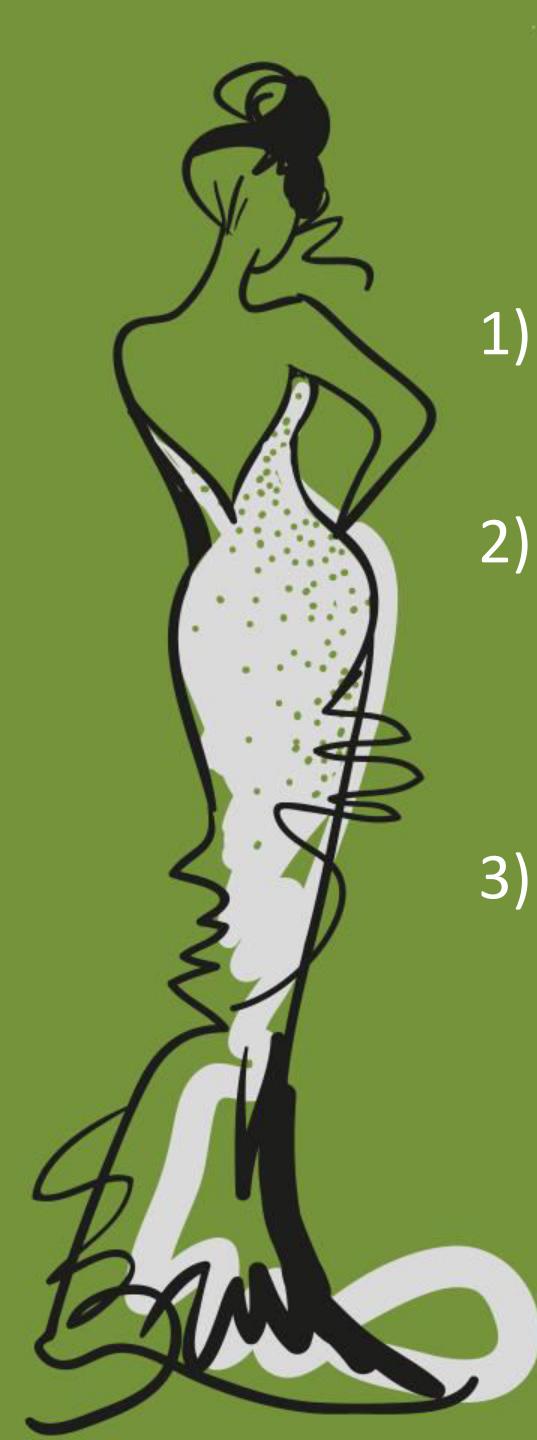
Media / Owner	Number of articles	Dates of issue / Period
Jutarnji list / Gloria HANZA media /ex EPH	6 total 2 Jutarnji list 4 Gloria	03.07.2015. 13.04.2016. 10.05.2016. 29.11.2016. 21.02.2017. 07.04.2017. July 2015 till April 2017
Slobodna Dalmacija HANZA media /ex EPH	6 total	27.11.2012. 03.07.2015. 04.08.2015. 18.03.2016. 14.06.2016. 29.11.2016. November 2012 till November 2016
Večernji list / DIVA Styria	9 total 6 Večernji list 3 Diva	08.01.2009. 01.09.2010. 18.08.2012. 09.01.2014. 22.05.2014. 07.06.2015. 22.07.2016. 04.09.2016. 07.02.2017. January 2009 till February 2017.
24 sata / Miss 7 Styria	6 total 6 Miss7	10.05.2012. 22.01.2013. 18.09.2012. 16.03.2016. 02.03.2017. 22.04.2017. May 2012 till April 2017
Novi list J&T fond	4 total	24.01.2014. 05.07.2015. 17.05.2016. 05.11.2016. January 2014 till November 2016.
TOTAL:	31	January 2009 till April 2017

Media / Owner	Length of the texts in words	Authors of the texts
Jutarnji list / Gloria HANZA media /ex EPH	399, 572, 371, 176, 294, 203 Total: 2015 Average: 336	Hina; Jutarnji.hr; Gloria.hr; Nikolina Krznar; Tina Kovačićek; Nikolina Krznar;
Slobodna Dalmacija HANZA media /ex EPH	357, 357, 299, 391, 710, 230 Total: 2344 Average: 391	PSD; PSD; PSD; HINA; Nevena Banić; PSD
Večernji list / DIVA Styria	184, 715, 186, 168, 220, 393, 854, 241, 380 Total: 3341 Average: 371	Ana Škiljić Ravenščak; Božena Matijević; Ana Škiljić Ravenščak; aka/VLM; Tonkica Zlački; DIVA; PROMO
24 sata / Miss 7 Styria	201, 378, 342, 697, 323, 711 Total: 2652 Average: 442	Anamaria Butković; Monika Samarđieva; Promo; Mija Dropuljić; Mija Dropuljić; Mija Dropuljić
Novi list J&T fond	409, 147, 511, 450 Total: 1517 Average: 379	Andrej Petrk; Portal Novilist.hr; Ivana Kocijan;
	Total: 11869 Average: 383	3 articles Mija Dropuljić 2 articles Ana Škiljić Ravenščak 2 articles Nikolina Krznar 1 article: Tina Kovačićek; Nevena Banić; Božena Matijević; Tonkica Zlački; Anamaria Butković; Monika Samarđieva; Andrej Petrk; Ivana Kocijan Many advertorials / promo articles



Results – qualitative content analysis of media

- 1) value orientation of articles regarding topic of sustainable fashion;
- 2) media context of the articles (the sections in which they were published)
- 3) manner in which the topic was processed and the values it promoted.



Results – qualitative content analysis of media

- 1) Five (5) articles are neutral, the rest of the articles (26) are positive toward sustainable fashion;
- 2) majority of articles (24) are published in life style sections. One article in: political section, business section, Zagreb section, Rijeka section. Three articles are published in Actual topics;
- 3) manner in which topic of sustainable fashion is being processed is dominantly simple and superficial, it serves as a decoration to promotion of several designers or fashion industries. As a rule, articles do not provide more concise information about the concept.



Research of the attitudes of the fashion designers

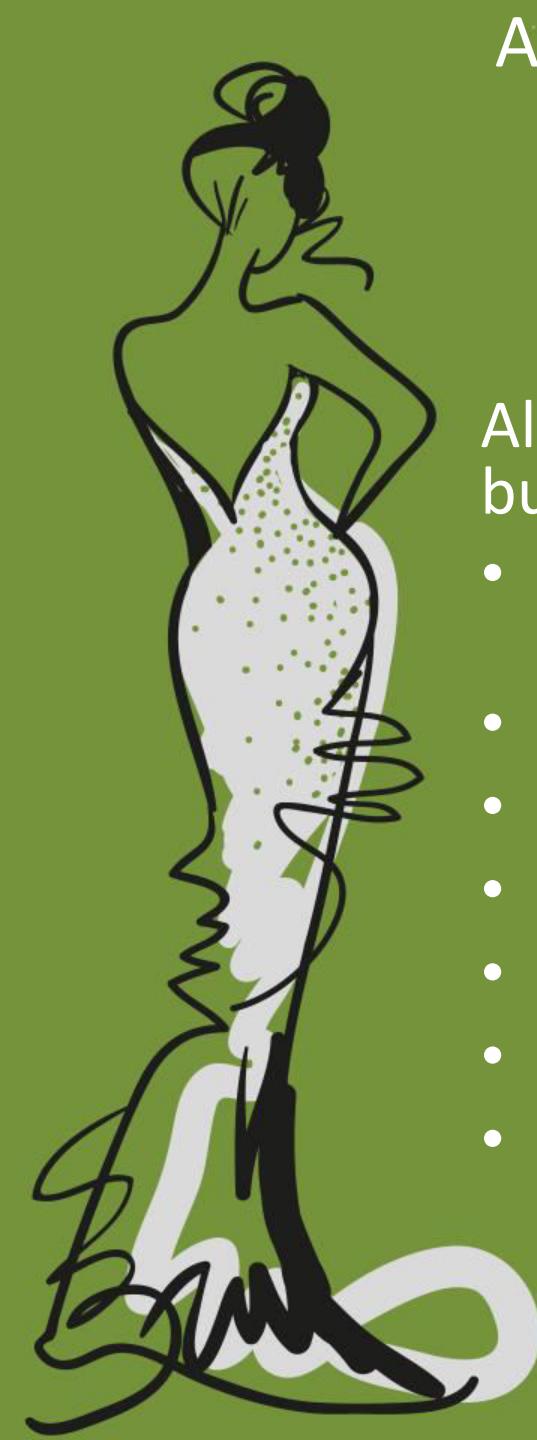
Eight (8) designers from the Croatian Design Association (HDD) and the Croatian Association of Applied Artists (ULUPUH):

1. Anamarija Brkić Višnjić;
2. Paulina Pustahija Penzar;
3. Nataša Jeletić;
4. Staša Čimbur;
5. Jadranka Hlupić Dujmušić;
6. Vedrana Mastela,
7. Davor Klarić and
8. Luka Grubišić



Research of the attitudes of the fashion designers

Designers responded to open question questionnaire that consisted of four groups of questions that explored whether designers are informed of the concept of sustainable fashion and how; what is their attitude toward concept; do they apply principles of sustainable design in their work and in what way, and what is the cultural and social perception of the concept in society.



Ad 1) Are you familiar with the concept of sustainable fashion? Where have you collected this information?

All respondents are familiar with the concept but sources of information were different:

- newspaper articles and professional literature,
- documentaries and online sources,
- fabrics suppliers,
- foreign clients,
- fashion exhibitions and competitions,
- PARSONS University in New York,
- ULUPUH.



Ad 2) What is your attitude regarding sustainable fashion?

Attitudes of Croatian fashion designers about the concept of sustainable fashion are predominantly positive.

The overriding consideration is that this concept is more and more present in the world, but in Croatia it is still in its infancy and is not sufficiently represented and known.

In Croatia, fashion design is undeveloped and fashion designers do not even have the ability to tackle the topic of sustainable fashion.



Ad 3) Have you implemented principles of sustainable design in your work so far? If so, how that manifested itself?

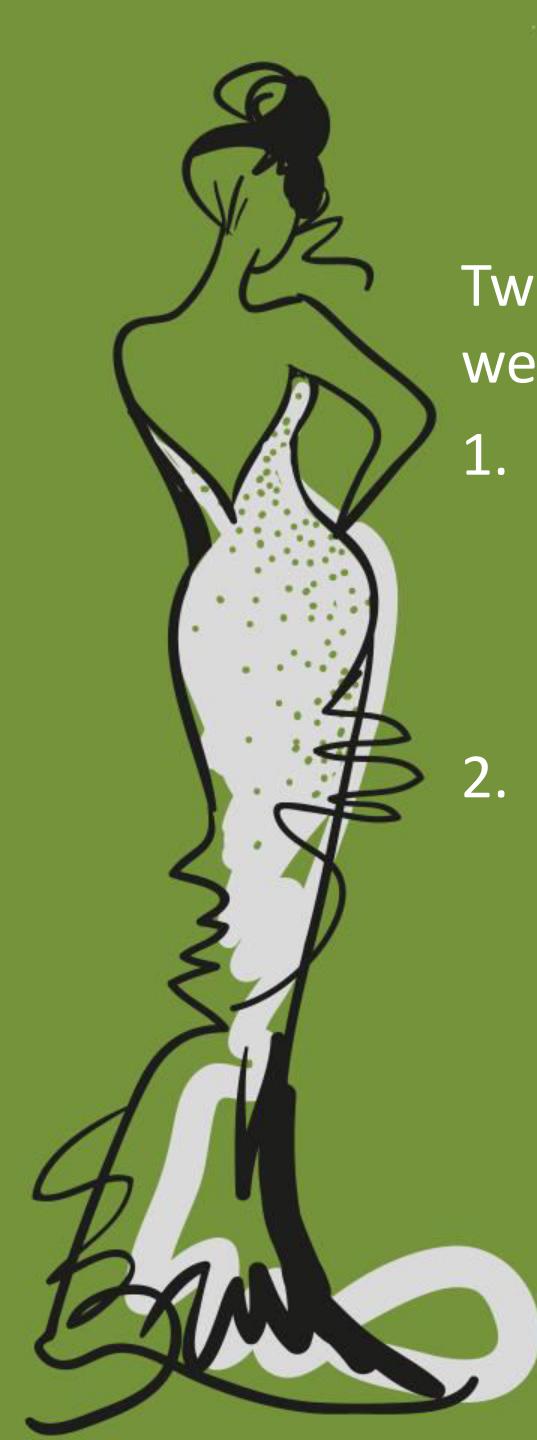
Answers of respondents quite varied:

- Design of collections that conform to the principle of circular fashion;
- Apply of sustainability principles when cutting -zero waste concept;
- Use of natural/ organic fabrics;
- Usage and redesign of vintage clothes;
- Collect and use of waste in creations etc.



Ad 4) What is the cultural and social perception of the concept of sustainable fashion design in the society in which you are moving?

- There is no major difference in awareness between designers and non-designers.
- Majority of Croatian designers primarily follow the world fashion and try to keep up with it.
- Greater presence of these topics would contribute to the promotion of the concept to the wider public.
- How: by showing (promoting) good examples from Croatia and the world, educating the public through public campaigns, promoting eco design, using celebs as promoters of the concept.



Conclusions

Two initial hypotheses were accurate and that two weren't.

1. It was confirmed that Croatian media published the texts on sustainable fashion at small extent, as well as that these articles were not published in serious columns.
2. It was confuted that Croatian designers are not well acquainted with the concept, and that those who are reduce this concept to usage of organic materials. Media processing of this topic doesn't affect the (non)interest of designers, because they are acquainted with the sustainable fashion concept.