



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## SLOW FASHION- A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

**Khedekar V., Khan S., Khambati A., Lakdawala B., Mansuri Ashiya.**

**College of Home Science, Nirmala Niketan,  
Affiliated to University of Mumbai, India.**

**Author-** Mrs. Vibhuti Khedekar, Assistant Professor, Department of Textile and Fashion Technology, College of Home Science Nirmala Niketan, Affiliated to the University of Mumbai

**Co-authors-** Ms. Sofia Khan, Ms. Arwa Khambati, Ms. Batul Lakdawala, Ms. Ashiya Mansuri, T.Y.B.Sc. (Home Science) research students of the Department of Textile and Fashion Technology, College of Home Science, Nirmala Niketan, Affiliated to the University of Mumbai, India.

**Abstract-** Slow Fashion is a term that describes a sustainable and conscious approach to fashion production and consumption. It can also be termed ethical or sustainable fashion. It refers to fashion awareness and approach that takes into account the procedures and resources needed to create apparel [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slow\\_fashion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slow_fashion). Slow Fashion items are usually made of natural fibers or regenerated fibers. These fibers are biodegradable and eco-friendly. Often designs are simpler and less trendy, so they don't fall out of fashion so quickly. <https://vertududs.com/fast-fashion-vs-slow-fashion/> Therefore, Slow Fashion is actually not necessarily more expensive in the long term because you don't have to replace items as often. The objective of this study was to understand the approach of the respondents toward slow fashion. With an abundance of cheap clothing, individuals buy unnecessary amounts, wearing it a handful of times & then discarding it, hence the study also focuses on the shopping behavior of respondents towards sustainable fashion. The study also aims in understanding the different practices/strategies which the respondents follow in a slow fashion leading to sustainability.

**Keywords-** Slow fashion, sustainability, eco-friendly shopping behavior

### Introduction and Review of Literature

Our global fashion industry has been heavily criticized for causing damage to the environment. Those days when clothes were made by hand & fashion was for the richest in the society. The use of cheaper synthetic fabric became abundant & the industry transitioned from a circular economy, 1% of textile waste was recycled to new clothing. Each year garments are manufactured on a large scale depending upon fashion trends. Different steps are taken such as the transition from fast fashion to slow fashion.

Slow fashion is an alternative to fast fashion in the sense that it promotes a more ethical and sustainable way of living and consuming. "It encompasses the whole range of 'sustainable,' 'eco,' 'green,' and 'ethical' fashion movements". [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295611183\\_Slow\\_fashion](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295611183_Slow_fashion)

Slow fashion aims to decrease the speed of production, consumption and disposal by placing greater appreciation on one's purchase. Slow fashion has very little impact on the environment. Slow fashion considers the material used, and how the garment is made in order to be ethical without compromising quality.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To elicit from the participants
  - a) quantity of clothes possessed
  - b) shopping behaviour – frequency and types
  - c) reasons for shopping behaviour
  - d) handling old clothes
2. To ascertain the perception of participants regarding slow fashion in relation to
  - a) meaning of slow fashion
  - b) ways of supporting and sustaining slow fashion
3. To understand the consumer buying behavior towards slow fashion in relation to:
  - a) recycle slow fashion / old clothes
  - b) practices toward sustainable fashion
  - c) role of social media

### Methodology

The research was an exploratory study, using convenient snowball sampling with a sample size of 35 participants (2 males and 33 females). A survey was conducted using Google form using a self-constructed questionnaire for participants with 29 close-ended and 7 open-ended questions [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1jVjLR9VgxfLolkrupFBuGeI\\_8j1VUNJsF\\_lfReHDj40/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1jVjLR9VgxfLolkrupFBuGeI_8j1VUNJsF_lfReHDj40/edit?usp=sharing). The sample participants ranged between the ages of 18 to 60 years, from the city of Mumbai. The participants were contacted virtually as the research was conducted during the Pandemic period. The total time period for collecting data was approximately one month. Data was quantitatively analyzed using frequency and percentages.

#### Inclusion criteria

- Participants of the age group 18 and above were included in the study.
- Participants of all genders were included.
- Participants who were aware and unaware of slow fashion.
- Participants who consented to fill up the questionnaire.

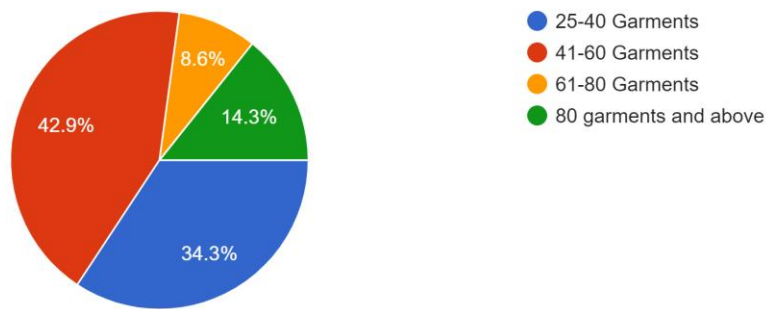
#### Exclusion Criteria

- The participants who were not using social media were excluded from the study.

## Result and Discussion

How many clothes do you have in your wardrobe?

35 responses

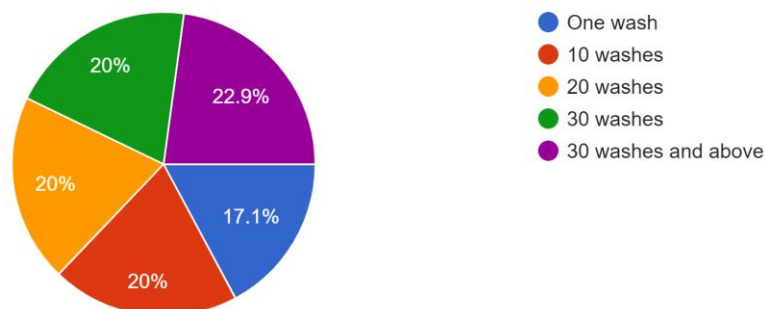


When the participants were asked about the number of clothes, they own in their wardrobe varied responses were obtained.

A little less than half of the participants (42.9 %) mentioned a range of 41 to 60 garments; while little more than one-third of the participants (34.4 %) stated 25-40 garments. Surprisingly (14.6%) of participants mentioned 61 -80 garments, however, only three of them indicated the garments owned were 80 and above.

On average how many times do you wear the same clothes / outfit

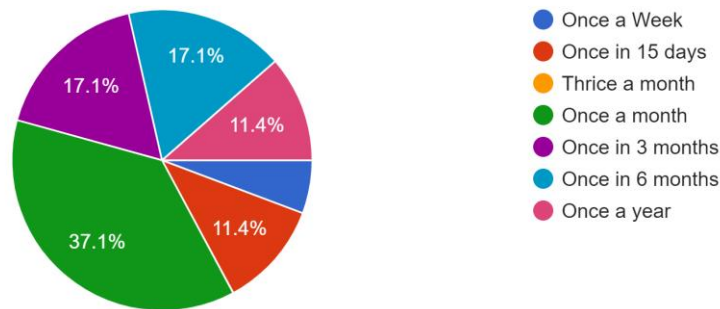
35 responses



Equal number of respondents (17.1 to 22.9 %) stated that they wear the same outfit between one to 30 washes

How many times do you do shopping?

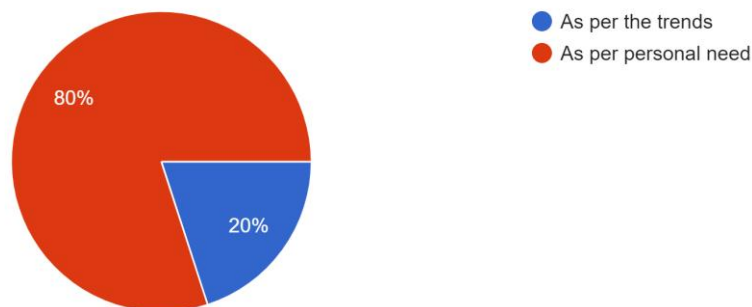
35 responses



Little more than one third of the respondents (37.1%) stated that they shop once a month, equal number of respondents (17.1%) stated shop once in three months and once in 6 months, however equal number of participants 11.4% mentioned that they shop once a year and once in 15 days and only 2 of them informed that they shop once a week.

How do you shop?

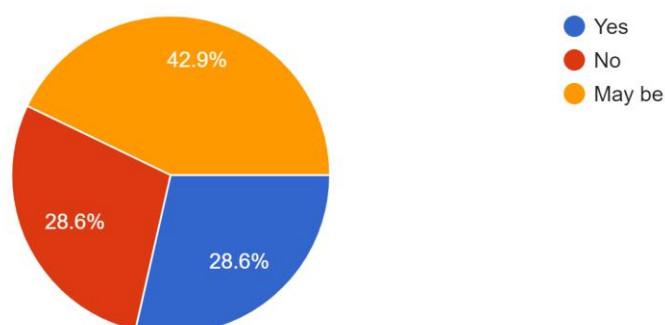
35 responses



When the participants were asked about their shopping behavior a large majority of them (80%) mentioned they shop as per their personal needs while a few of the participants (20%) mentioned it as per the trends.

Have you ever bought an item of clothing and never worn it

35 responses

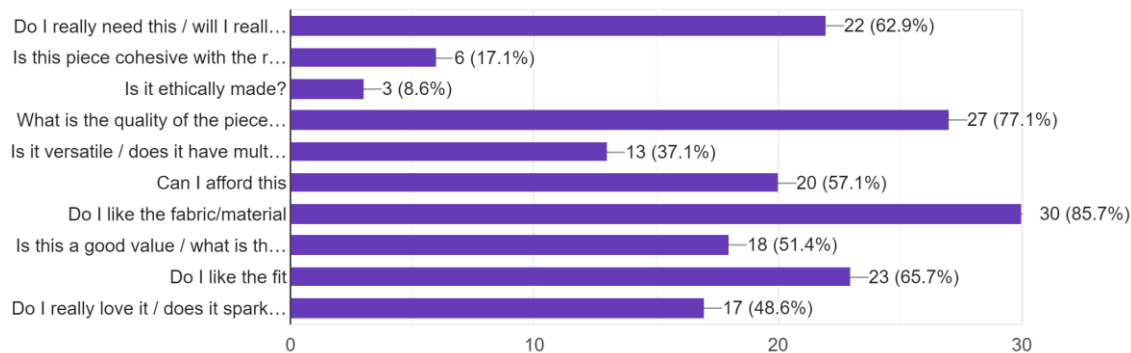


When asked about the approach towards buying clothes and not wearing them, little more than one-third of the participants (42.9%) stated that they may be buying clothes and not wearing them at all, whereas the equal number of participants stated that they do buy clothes and not wear them (28.6%) and also not buy clothes and not wear them (28.6%).

Varied reasons were provided by the participants for buying the clothes and not wearing them. They were as follows, a) confusion about the clothes (4%), b) due to lockdown(3%), c) fitting was not proper(4%), d) some clothes were bought for gifting(1%)

What questions do you ask yourself before making a purchase?

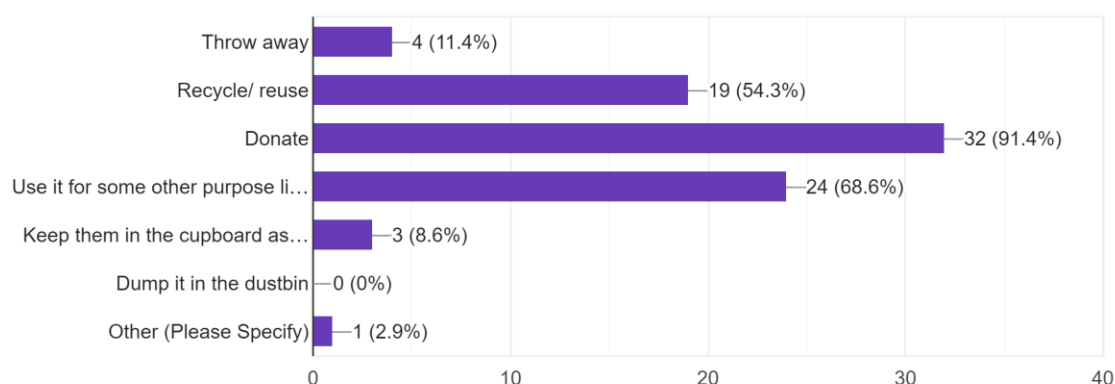
35 responses



Considerations before buying or purchasing clothes were another question asked to the participants. A substantial majority of the respondents (85.7%) stated that it was based on the fabric/material that was liked to be purchased, a large majority of them (77.1%) mentioned the quality of the purchase, while a majority of them indicated checking the fit of the garments to be purchased (65.7%) and the actual need of the purchase (62.9%).

What do you do with your old clothes?

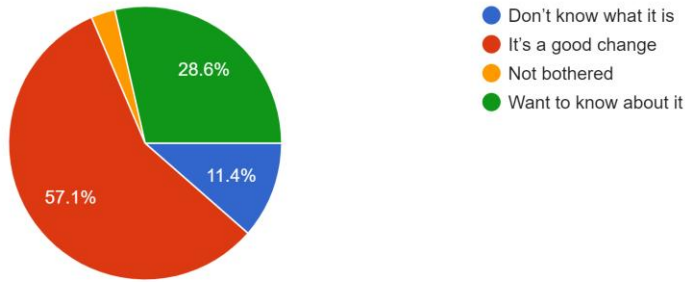
35 responses



A substantial majority of the respondents (91.4%) stated that they donate their old clothes, a majority of them (68.6%) would use the old clothes for some other purposes like cleaning etc and little more than half of them (54.3%) would recycle/ reuse the old clothes.

What do you think about slow fashion?

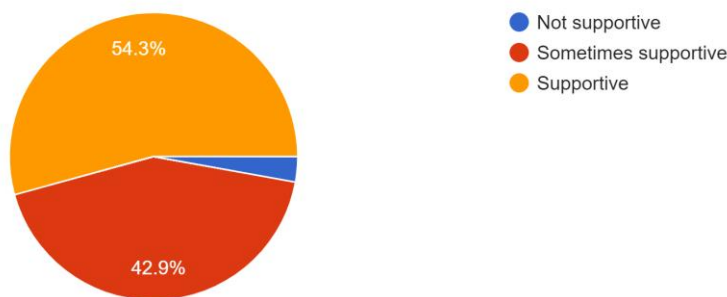
35 responses



When asked about the opinion regarding slow fashion more of the participants (57.1%) stated that slow fashion is a good change, little more than quarter of the participants (28.6%) stated that they would like to know more about it, however on the other hand very few of them (11.4%) do not know what slow fashion is and lastly only one respondent was not bothered about what slow fashion is.

How supportive are you of sustainable fashion?

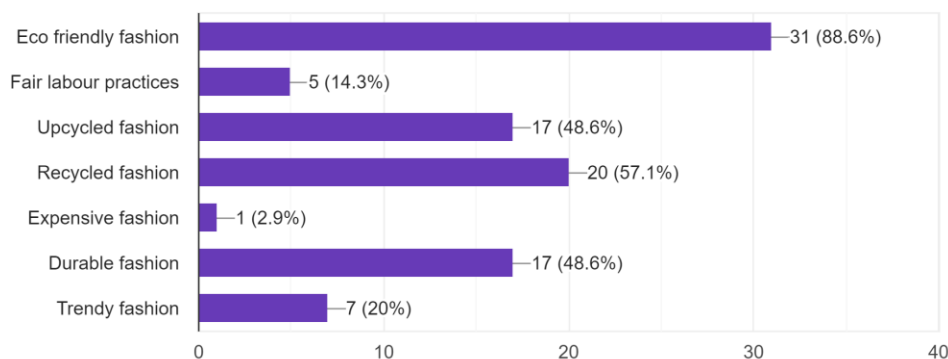
35 responses



Little more than half of the participants (54.3%) stated that they are supportive of slow fashion, where as little more than one third of the participants (42.9%) stated that they are sometimes supportive of slow fashion and only one participant stated that they are not supportive of slow fashion.

What according to you is sustainable fashion?

35 responses

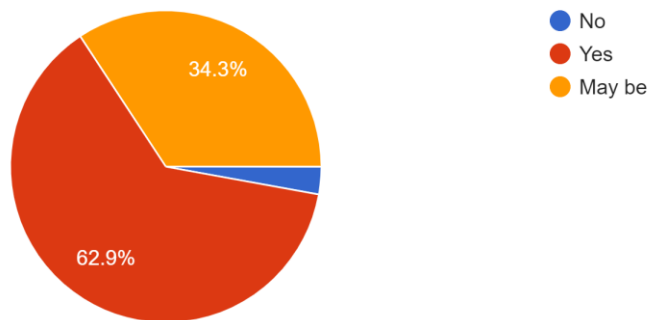


When asked about sustainable fashion, a substantial majority of them (88.6%) stated the meaning of sustainable fashion as eco-friendly fashion, more of them (57.1%) stated that sustainable fashions mean

recycled fashion, an equal number of them mentioned upcycled fashion (48.6%) and durable fashion (48.6%).

Do you think trends can still go on with supporting slow fashion?

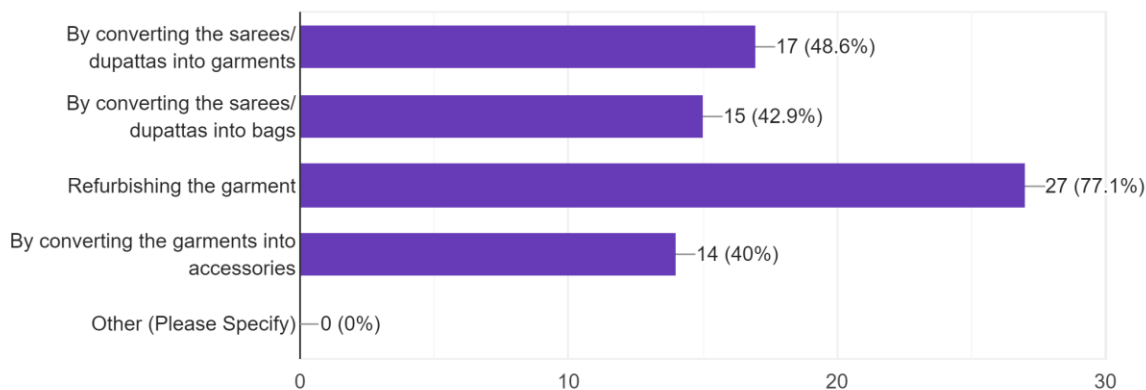
35 responses



When asked whether trends can support slow fashion, the majority of the respondents (62.9%) said yes however little more than one-third of the participants (34.3%) said they think maybe the trends can go on with supporting slow fashion.

What are the different ways in which you have upcycled your clothes?

35 responses

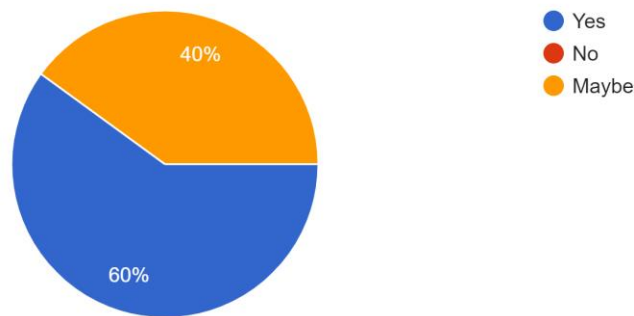


When asked about the different ways respondents upcycle their clothes a large majority of them (77.1%) stated that they refurbish the garment i.e., they give a new look to the old garment, little less than half (48.6%) convert the sarees /dupattas into garments, whereas little more than one-third of them convert the sarees /dupattas into bags (42.9%) and convert the garments into accessories (40%).



Do you think slow/ sustainable fashion is needed in today's times?

35 responses

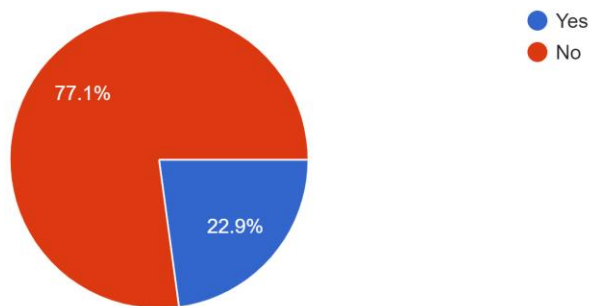


The majority of the participants (60%) think that slow/sustainable fashion is needed in today's times, however, a little more than one-third of the participants (40%) think that slow/sustainable fashion may be the need of today's times.

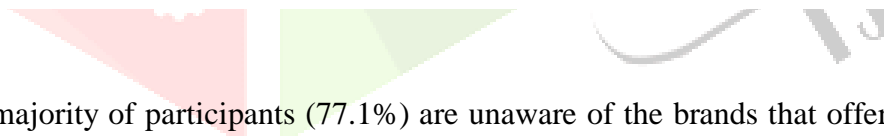


Are you aware about brands which offer slow fashion?

35 responses

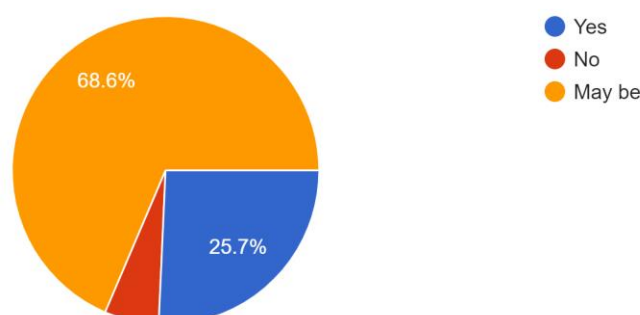


A large majority of participants (77.1%) are unaware of the brands that offer slow fashion, on the other hand little less than a quarter of the participants (22.9%) are aware of the brands that offer slow fashion



Are you ready to pay more for slow fashion clothing

35 responses

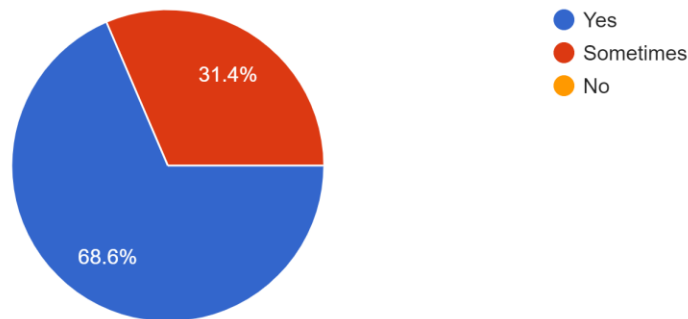




When asked about the willingness to pay more for slow fashion clothing, majority of the participants (68.6%) stated that they may pay more for slow fashion clothing, whereas quarter of the participants (25.7%) stated that they are ready to pay more for slow fashion clothing and only two participants were reluctant to pay more for slow fashion clothing.

Do you believe in purchasing less but purchasing healthy?

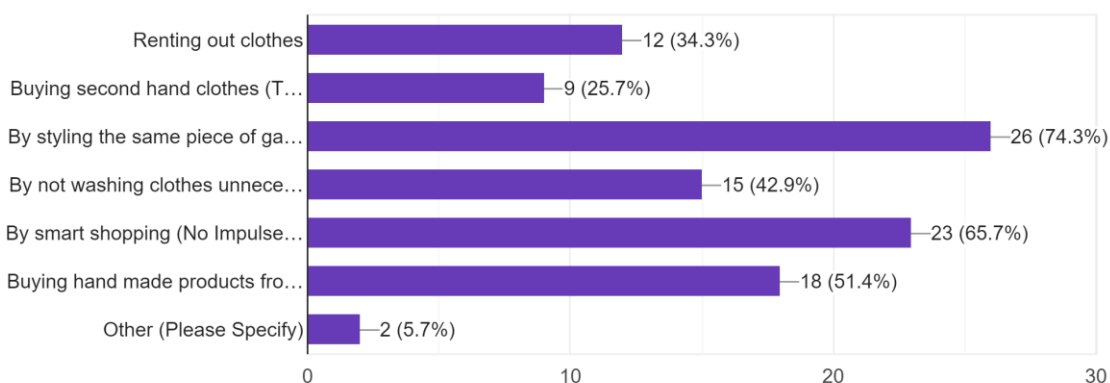
35 responses



The majority of the participants (68.6%) believe in purchasing less but purchasing healthy, however, little more than a quarter of the participants (31.4%) sometimes believe in purchasing less but purchasing healthy.

Which of the following practices have you followed which are associated with slow fashion?

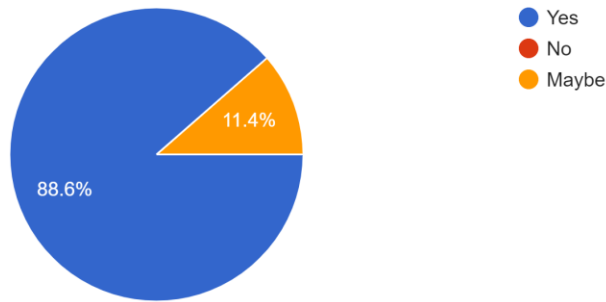
35 responses



When asked about the practices followed by the respondents associated with slow fashion, a large majority of the respondents (74.3%) stated that they style the same piece of garment in multiple ways, majority of the participants (65.7%) stated that they do smart shopping ie. No impulse buying.

Do you think social media plays an important role in creating awareness about slow fashion?

35 responses



When asked about the impact on social media in creating awareness about slow fashion, a substantial majority of the participants (88.6%) stated that they do feel that social media plays an important role in creating awareness about slow fashion, however, very few participants (11.4%) said that they feel that maybe social media plays an important role in creating awareness about slow fashion

### Discussion

Slow Fashion is getting people's attention due to growing awareness of the hazardous impact of the fashion industry on the environment. Due to global warming and more and more people are well aware of slow fashion and are having a strategic approach toward sustainability. Value is placed on clothing produced to a high standard, which will last for a long time and loses neither shape nor color after a few washes. Slow fashion designs are often simpler and less trendy, so they don't fall out of fashion so quickly, leading to less consumption. Brands are slowly moving towards sustainable solutions keeping in mind the shopping behavior of people. Slow fashion works towards creating an industry that benefits the planet and all people.

Slow fashion is organic, time-consuming, use the talent of artists, is better quality, but maybe highly-priced. Certain practices like avoiding impulse buying, and buying natural and organic garments/fabrics which require fewer chemicals, dyes, energy, less resource, less waste, and minimal impact. etc are followed by people. Trends can happen with slow fashion, by reusing, recycling, and remaking. There is a lot of impact on social media in creating awareness about slow fashion.

India, fortunately, has been practicing sustainability/slow fashion since a long time. Practices like donating old clothes, upcycling old sarees and dupattas, using the old clothes for cleaning purposes, etc have been followed by people in the country. Hence the respondents in the study were very well aware of slow fashion and have a strategic approach towards sustainability.

### Contribution of the study

The study helps in promoting the purchase of higher-quality clothes that will last longer. Making sustainable clothing itself will help the environment to reduce its pollution levels because of less usage of chemicals and less water wastage. Enough production will help the labor to get a good enough amount of wages. No clogging in sewages, leading to a cleaner surrounding.

Incorporating styling techniques will help. Slow fashion philosophy includes: buying vintage clothes, redesigning old clothes, shopping from smaller producers, making clothes and accessories at home and buying garments that last longer. New ideas and product innovations are constantly redefining slow fashion, so using a static, single definition would ignore the evolving nature of the

concept.<https://www.hisour.com/sustainable-fashion-40482/>. During these hard times making a change for a better future is the need of the hour.

More use of sustainable and organic clothing will lead to a healthier environment in all aspects such as saving water, less air pollution, happy laborers, no harm to marine life, healthy oceans, and no unnecessary spending of money.

Still awareness regarding slow fashion has to be created, various ways of practicing slow fashion would be told to people. Brands should work on techniques like a capsule wardrobe, layering, less is more, etc, and create awareness regarding the same.

### References

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340273377\\_Fast\\_Fashion\\_vs\\_Slow\\_Fashion](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340273377_Fast_Fashion_vs_Slow_Fashion)

<https://www.yesmagazine.org/environment/2018/05/31/why-fast-fashion-needs-to-slow-down>

<https://www.scmglobe.com/moving-from-fast-fashion-to-slow-circular-fashion/>

<https://www.greenfashionweek.org/sustainability/fast-fashion-vs-slow-fashion/>

<https://www.increff.com/blog/2020/12/19/sustainable-fashion-a-fad-or-the-future/>

<https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/9163/fast-fashion-2021-guide-what-it-means-problems-and-examples>

<https://www.hga-group.com/industry-insights/sustainability>

<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/what-is-slow-fashion>

<https://sanvt.com/journal/fast-fashion-vs-slow-fashion/>

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slow\\_fashion](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slow_fashion)

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295611183\\_Slow\\_fashion](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295611183_Slow_fashion)

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CN-mYUjA9qi/>

<https://www.hisour.com/sustainable-fashion-40482/>

<https://www.garmenton.net/>

<https://vertududs.com/fast-fashion-vs-slow-fashion/>

<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/what-is-slow-fashion>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340273377\\_Fast\\_Fashion\\_vs\\_Slow\\_Fashion](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340273377_Fast_Fashion_vs_Slow_Fashion)

<https://www.greenfashionweek.org/sustainability/fast-fashion-vs-slow-fashion/>

<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/what-is-slow-fashion>

<https://sanvt.com/journal/fast-fashion-vs-slow-fashion/>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340273377\\_Fast\\_Fashion\\_vs\\_Slow\\_Fashion](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340273377_Fast_Fashion_vs_Slow_Fashion)

