

Analysys of Some Aspects That Influence the Perception and Buying Decission of the Women's Business Jacket

Carmen Melania Blejan, Manuela Lacramioara Avadanei
Antonela Curteza,
Faculty of Industrial Design and Business Management
"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University
Iasi, Romania

Zlatin Zlatev
Faculty of Technics and Technologies
Trakia University
Yambol, Bulgaria

Abstract - Currently, the biggest challenge for companies in the fashion industry is to produce clothing products that meet the requirements and needs of the consumers with the aim of reducing, among other things, the huge amount of textile waste and, consequently, the negative effects on the environment.

The study aims to highlight the importance of integrating the consumer's aesthetic perception and preferences into the sustainable design of garments. Besides the fact that the fashion product will be developed according to the consumer's expectations, it will meet the stringent sustainability requirements through the possibility of extending the product life.

Also, knowing the socio-demographic profile of the consumer helps companies and designers to identify and to outline the target consumer profile, in order to subsequently carry out in-depth investigations aimed at the needs and preferences related to the product to be developed.

The presented study focused on analyzing some aspects related to the way women's business jackets are perceived and evaluated by their wearers. To this end, a questionnaire was drawn up and answered by 100 women who wear business jackets. The processing of information obtained from the questionnaire showed that the most important influencing factors in the purchase decision are the jacket size and fitting. Equally important are the wearing comfort, the jacket's model and fabric. The next top-ranked factors are the jacket's color and style. It was also found that the respondents preferences were influenced by socio-demographic features and job-specific situations.

Keywords: perception, visual, consumer, preferences, business jacket for women, design.

I. INTRODUCTION

The clothing industry has gone through a number of changes over the last 35 years. The trigger factor was the democratization of luxury, which involved marketing mass products perceived as premium products by a large audience. This trend, known as fast fashion, made fashionable clothing accessible to the masses, but came with significant social and environmental costs. The main disadvantages of the fashion

industry are uncontrolled clothing production, environmental damage and poor working conditions [1].

The fashion industry's impact on the environment is a state of current concern and of collective interest due to the significant contributions it currently makes to carbon emissions, water scarcity, pollution, reduction of natural raw material resources, and loss of biodiversity [3]. The fashion industry is estimated to be responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions, more than international flights and maritime shipping combined [4]. This is due to the use of tons of water that produce excess carbon dioxide gas, excessive energy use to produce clothing and the use of non-renewable sources for fiber, as well as environmental pollution with harmful chemicals [5].

The sustainable growing movement in the fashion industry aims to reduce environmental impact and improve the way workers are treated [2]. Ray and Nayak (2023) highlighted the need for further research on B2B marketing, circular economy and sustainability-oriented innovations [6]. Sambargi and Tripathi (2023) emphasized that consumer awareness and perception of sustainable fashion is crucial to combat climate change. The author promotes cooperation between businesses, consumers, governments and civil society [7]. Bairagi and Acharya (2022) also pointed out the need to integrate biocentric and socio-ecological principles into product design and development [8].

Ensuring wearing comfort is very important in the development of clothing products, from the consumer's perspective, and increase chances both of purchase and product life extension.

Identifying the needs and preferences, more quickly and efficiently, can be done on the basis of feedback collected from the consumer through various methods such as interviews, surveys, focus groups, workshops, observations, literature reviews. By applying collaborative methods in the product development process can also be successfully achieved a more sustainable design.

The paper focuses, first of all, on analyzing the consumer's perception of the attractiveness and buying probability of women's business jacket, and the main influencing factors.

Including a business jacket, for certain professions, in the day-to-day attire at work, is the most feasible and quickest choice to complete a professional image. Women's business jacket design has undergone various shapes throughout history, influenced by human progress, women's desire to gain financial independence and build professional careers. This emphasizes the need to constantly investigate consumer expectations imposed by current conditions in society and fluctuating consumer preferences.

The first impression of a person can be made by the way is dressed. Factors such as clothing style, fit, color, design, comfort, job position and company dress code are important considerations in choosing the right outfit. Therefore, the right business jacket is essential both for a successful career and for personal satisfaction, safety and well-being [10].

II. WORK METHOD

The current research aimed to integrate the consumer's perception into product design and development by assessing, among others, the attractiveness and buying probability of the women's business jacket.

The qualitative research methodology used in the study was the survey through a self-administered questionnaire including visual stimuli. The questionnaire was completed by 100 respondents, women, who wear a business jacket at their workplace.

Participants were recruited through a message sent on the social networking platform Facebook. After confirming their participation in the study, they received an email with the necessary data related to the study in order to complete the questionnaire, and a link to the questionnaire. Data collection and processing was carried out in strict compliance with the University's Code of Ethics and Professional Deontology, TUIASI.COD.01.

A starting point in fashion product development is to analyze the socio-demographic profile of the consumer, and the specific needs and preferences related to the targeted clothing product.

The socio-demographic data of the participants included age, marital status, education, living environment (urban or rural), residence/housing situation, members living under the same roof, number of children (table 1).

TABLE 1. Socio-demographic features of the participants in the study

Socio-demographic features and codes assigned	Number of participants in the study		
	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
F1 - Age	<30	38	38
	31-40	42	42
	41-50	12	12
	51-60	6	6
	>60	2	2
F2 - Marital status	Married	53	53
	Single	41	41
	Other	6	6
F3 - Education	High school	1	1
	University	71	71
	Master	22	22
	Other	6	6
F4 - Living area	Urban	82	82
	Rural	18	18
F5 - Domicile /housing situation	Living in their own home	62	62
	Living with parents / grandparents / a distant relative	6	6
	Living in rented accommodation	29	29
	Other	3	3
F6 - Members living under the same roof	Just me	8	8
	2-3 members	76	76
	4-5 members	15	15
	More than 5 members	1	1
F7 - Children	Yes, I have a child	30	30
	Yes, I have 2 children	16	16
	Yes, I have more than 2 children	0	0
	No children	54	54

Job-specific situational data or the occasion on which the product will be worn are important factors that can influence consumer choice and preferences regarding, in this case, the women's business jacket. The job-specific situational data, taken into analysis, included: financial status, work field, work area, labor category, company size where they work, job seniority, dress code at work, type of interaction with colleagues/customers (table 2).

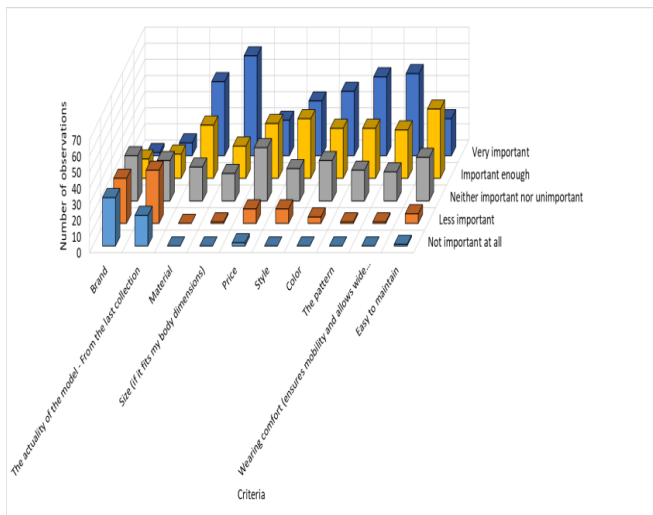


Fig. 3. Criteria influencing the buying decision

In terms of wearing comfort of the business jacket for women, 71% of the respondents answered that it is very important and 29% that it is important enough. No respondents rated this factor as neither important, nor unimportant, less important or not important at all. Fig. 4 shows the answers regarding the importance of wearing comfort.

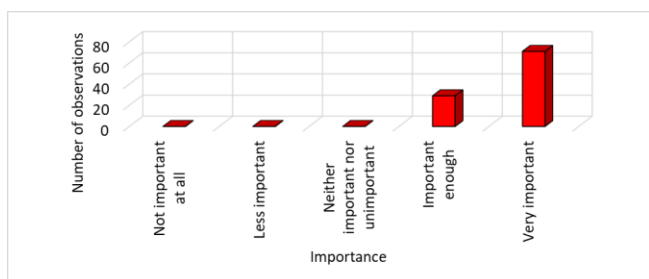


Fig. 4. The importance of the women's business jackets wearing comfort

When evaluating color preferences for women's business jackets, most respondents chose black and navy blue. These are followed by gray and green, and then pink and beige. Respondents dislike olive and brown colors for the business jacket. In fig. 5 are presented the answers regarding color preferences for the business jacket.

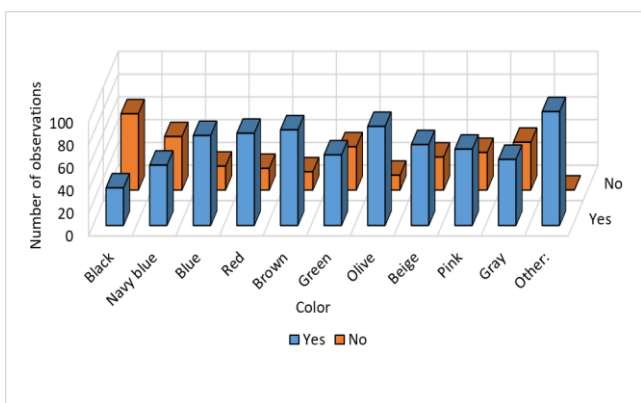


Fig. 5. Color preferences of the women's business jacket

With regard to how varied is the color palette of the business jacket in their wardrobe, the respondents' opinion is divided into 3 large groups. The first group has more than 3 colors for the business jacket in the wardrobe, representing 43%. The same percentage of 43% was obtained by the second group of respondents, who have 2-3 colors in their wardrobe. For only 14% of respondents a single color of women's business jacket is predominant in their wardrobe. In fig. 6 are presented the answers regarding the color palette of the business jacket found in respondents' wardrobe.

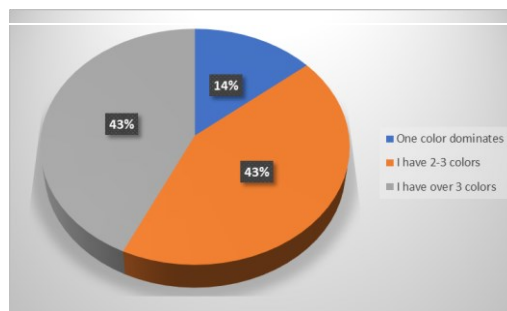


Fig 6. Color palette variation of the women's business jacket

The correlation of the respondents' socio - demographic features with the models and colors preferences is very important and decisive in the development of business jacket models for women. The analysis of these features was conducted to determine what influence the choice of women's business jacket. Principal component analysis (PCA) technique was used for the data analysis [11].

Fig. 7 shows the number of observations for each of the features mentioned in tables 1 and 2 (F1 – F15), and their corresponding weights that have values in the range of 0 - 8. From the figure it can be seen that two of the features are of the greatest importance in choosing a business jacket model. These are F4 and F11. They are related to whether the respondents live in urban or rural area and what is their labor category. The most insignificant features are F2 and F12. These are related to the marital status of the respondents and the size of the company they work for.

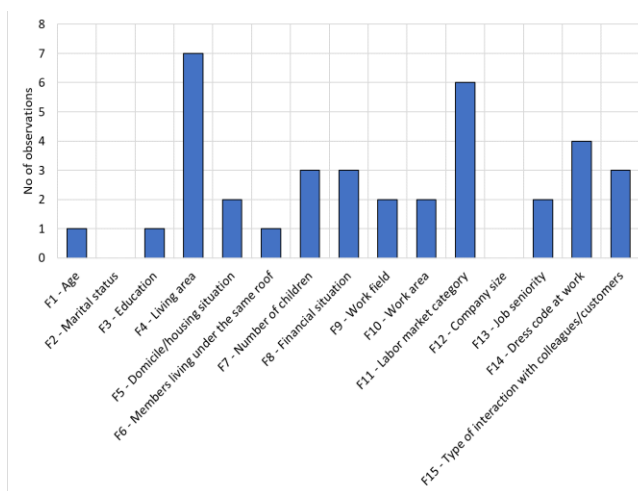


Fig 7. Features that influence the women's business jacket choice or preference

Fig. 8 shows the respondents' answers related to the business jacket and situations that may be encountered at work. According to the respondents' answers, three issues are considered to be important when wearing the business jacket at work. Firstly, the results showed that they like to wear a business jacket. They consider that wearing the jacket gives them a certain prestige. They are also self-assured and confident when wearing a business jacket. On the other hand, respondents strongly disagreed with other aspects. Specifically, they do not believe that wearing a business jacket is only due to obligation because of the specifics of their work. Wearing such a jacket does not affect their productivity. They do not consider that it is necessary to wear different models of business jackets just because of a certain occasion. Respondents do not wear a business jacket just to please their colleagues.

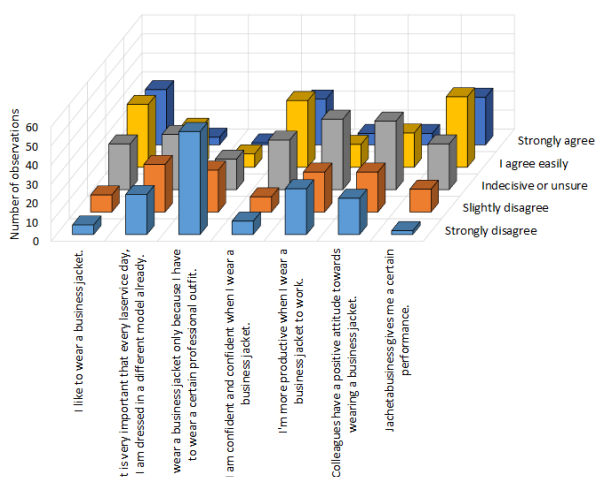


Fig. 8. The women's business jacket and situations encountered at work

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The presented study was mainly aimed at analyzing some aspects and elements that influence the wearers' perception of the women's business jacket and their purchase decision. It was based on the answers given by 100 women to a questionnaire. The questionnaire included information related to socio-demographic and job-specific situational features. The analysis was based on visual stimuli, namely 9 models for the business jacket, and 10 color proposals for them. These were selected based on the latest trends presented on the Pantone website and at international fashion shows.

Respondents to the questionnaire rated the business jacket attractiveness and buying probability based on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Based on the answers received, their frequency and their corresponding weights, it was found that the most popular models were M4, M1 and M8, and the least popular were M3, M9 and M6. The highest likelihood of purchase is, again, for M1, M4 and M8 models, and the lowest likelihood for M9, M3 and M6 models. In addition, the factors influencing the purchase decision for this product category were also analyzed. The most important criteria, according to the respondents, are the size and fitting of the jacket, the wearing comfort, the jacket's model and fabric, and the less important criteria are the brand and the model's up-to-dateness.

Since among the factors mentioned was wearing comfort, it was analyzed how important it is for the 100 respondents, and

the results showed that 71% of the respondents consider that it is very important, and 29% that it is important enough.

To analyze the possible link between socio-demographic factors and the women's business jacket choice or preference, the principal component analysis (PCA) technique was used. The results obtained, in this case, showed that the most important factors are those related to living area (urban or rural) and the labor category (employee or employer), and the least important are the marital status and size of the company they work for.

In view of a deeper analysis, the situation in the workplace influencing the context of wearing business jackets was also followed, which revealed that respondents like to wear a business jacket, are more confident and perceive a certain prestige when wearing the jacket.

In terms of color preferences, the most popular colors are black and navy blue, and the least popular for this product category are olive and brown.

The results obtained showed that the socio-demographic profile of the consumer can influence the preferences and likelihood of buying business jackets. Job-specific situational factors or the occasion on which the clothing product is worn, may also influence the consumer's choice and preferences, in our case the women's business jacket.

Such studies can also be applied to other product and wearers categories. The results obtained can be implemented in the design process of the garments, giving designers the possibility to:

- select from the set of criteria in design only those agreed by the consumer as the most important, and for which the purchase probability is highest;
 - focus on the designs identified as being preferred by the consumer;
 - develop fashion products in line with consumer expectations, thus preventing uncontrolled clothing production;
 - obtaining a complete fashion product that meets both the aesthetic and sustainability requirements of the consumer.
- In order to ensure the shift towards more sustainable fashion product development, it is also necessary to quickly identify, among others, the needs and preferences of the consumer, and to incorporate them at an early stage in the design process. In addition to the fact that the fashion product will be manufactured in accordance with the consumer's expectations and perception, will increase the likelihood of purchase and reduce negative environmental impacts by the possibility of extending the product's lifetime and reducing the textile waste.

REFERENCES

- [1] A.M. Rosa, "The evolution and democratization of modern fashion: from Frederick Worth to Karl Lagerfeld's fast fashion", *Comunicação e sociedade*, vol. 24, pp. 79-94, April 2014.
- [2] Z. Kutsenkova, "The sustainable future of the modern fashion industry", pp. 4, Honors Theses, May 2017.
- [3] J. Singh, S. Bansal, "The impact of the fashion industry on the climate and ecology", *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, vol. 21, pp. 210-215, July 2024.
- [4] "https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20201208STO93327/the-impact-of-textile-production-and-waste-on-the-environment-infographics", Published December 2020, Last updated March 2024, Retrieved July 2024.

- [5] S. Shafie, A. Kamis, & M. Ramli, S. Abu Bedor, F. Ahmad Puad, "Fashion sustainability: benefits of using sustainable practices in producing sustainable fashion designs", International Business Education Journal, vol. 14, pp. 103-111, January 2021.
- [6] S. Ray, L. Nayak, "Marketing sustainable fashion:trends and future directions", Sustainability, vol. 15, issue 7, 6202, April 2023.
- [7] D.S. Sambargi, M. Tripathi, "A study on the awareness and perception towards sustainable fashion", International Scientific Journal of Engineering and Management, vol. 2, issue 4, April 2023.
- [8] N. Bairagi, S.N. Acharya, "Sustainability in the fashion industry: current practices and challenges in india", International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews, vol. 3, issue 2, pp. 1227-1236, February 2022.
- [9] X. Yang, "Application of clothing ergonomics in fashion design", International Conference on Arts, Design and Contemporary Education, pp. 618-621, May 2016, ISBN 10.2991/icadce-16.2016.145.
- [10] R. Nayak, R. Padhye, L. Wang, "How to Dress at Work. In: S. Patole (eds) Management and Leadership – A Guide for Clinical Professionals", Springer, Cham, pp. 241-255, January 2015, ISBN 978-3-319-11525-2.
- [11] M. Mladenov, "Model-based approach for assessment of freshness and safety of meat and dairy products using a simple method for hyperspectral analysis", Journal of Food and Nutritional Research, vol. 59, issue 2, pp. 108-119, June 2020.
- [12] www.adobe.com
- [13] www.pantone.com