



ESJ Social Sciences

## Lifestyle as a Branding Strategy for the Sustainable Brand

*Giancarlo Scozzese, PhD*

Department of International Human and Social Sciences,  
University for Foreigners, Perugia, Italy

*Margherita Gelli*

Graduated in International Communication and Advertising, Italy

[Doi:10.19044/esj.2023.v19n22p1](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2023.v19n22p1)

---

Submitted: 01 June 2023  
Accepted: 15 August 2023  
Published: 31 August 2023

Copyright 2023 Author(s)  
Under Creative Commons CC-BY 4.0  
OPEN ACCESS

*Cite As:*

Scozzese G. & Gelli M. (2023). *Lifestyle as a Branding Strategy for the Sustainable Brand*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 19 (22), 1. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2023.v19n22p1>

---

### Abstract

The increasing need for concrete action to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis is pushing the younger generation towards more sustainable lifestyles to demand that companies pay more attention to the environment, human rights, and more general issues of social justice. Today, distrust of institutions is at an all-time high, and consumers expect more from the companies to which they are attached. At this point, brands can make a positive contribution to addressing these issues. On this basis, it becomes clear how important this can be for corporate strategy, as the companies that are able to inspire and earn long-term loyalty are the ones that are able to take on the role of point of reference in the society. The assumed role is crucial in the purchasing decisions of more conscious consumers and can be achieved, for example, through a brand position on a social issue or by offering a value system rather than a lifestyle proposition. It helps a brand that represents the lifestyle of a group of people driven by a strong desire to belong there and disrupt the status quo, to connect with customers and make its offer competitive. A lifestyle brand characterised by high symbolic power and a strong emotional connection with its target audience, by offering action to protect the environment, stimulates cultural change that appears critical in relation to hyper-consumption and the resulting environmental impact. This, however, enables its customers to gain greater satisfaction from their purchasing choices and represents a real opportunity to build a sustainable

brand.

---

**Keywords:** Branding, lifestyle, marketing, sustainable, strategy

## **1. Introduction**

### **Critical Consumption**

Western society is described as a consumer society because of the predominant role that consumption, perceived as action, plays in social dynamics.

Consumption can be defined as a social behaviour of a routine nature, involving the acquisition and use of goods and services, through which people interpret the world and organise meanings. Indeed, the consumption process can be interpreted as a communicative act through which a certain self-image can be communicated to others. However, the preference for one brand over another takes on a symbolic meaning through which the consumer manifests his/her personal lifestyle, commitment to certain values, and the sharing of certain cultural tendencies (Olivero & Russo, 2022).

One of the fundamental concepts for explaining and understanding consumer behaviour is the concept of lifestyle (Ibid.). Consumption and lifestyle are closely intertwined, with the former being a visible instantiation of the latter (Berzano & Genova, 2011). In fact, lifestyle can be defined as "a non-verbal mode of expression that is shaped primarily by consumer goods and attitudes and in particular by the symbolic meanings they convey" (Ibid.). Today, consumption has become a form of entertainment rather than need satisfaction, which entails huge ethical and environmental problems. The realisation of this fact has prompted many people to challenge the traditional consumer culture by experimenting with alternative forms of consumption. In this regard, trends based on a re-evaluation of what it means to 'own' and the value attached to material objects and those related to what is commonly referred to as an 'ethical living', the most prominent of which are minimalism and the simple living, are very relevant. The key difference between these lifestyles lies in the value attributed to material possessions. On the one hand, while minimalism encourages people to value objects and use them in a symbolic manner, choosing not to accumulate them, on the other hand, simple living, by contrast, views them only from a functional point of view. Whatever value is attributed to material objects, both, have the potential to contribute to a critical cultural shift in relation to hyper-consumption and its impact on the environment, while enabling people to obtain personal benefit and satisfaction from their lifestyles (Martin-Woodhead, 2021).

The emergence of new lifestyles in which less consumption by choice can improve subjective well-being can be considered a kind of 'alternative hedonism' (Soper, 2020; 2008).

Soper argues that any anti-consumerism ethics must "appeal not only to altruistic compassion and concern for the environment, but also to a more disinterested attitude towards the benefits of diverse consumption" (571). This is ultimately because a non-consumption or anti-consumption lifestyle has to be personally appealing and enjoyable in order to become popular (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Jackson, 2005).

There are two main reasons why people adopt the philosophy of anti-consumerism. On the one hand, it is for personal benefits, such as the intangible benefits of living a simpler lifestyle, the adoption of healthier habits, and the economic benefits in terms of savings. On the other hand, there is a growing concern for the environment, which is encouraging more and more people to adopt more environmentally friendly methods.

The global environmental crisis is perceived as a severe threat to the extent that some people begin to experience a 'chronic fear of environmental doom' known as 'eco-anxiety' (Clayton et al., 2017). In this regard, philosopher Zygmunt Bauman (2017) made a sharp observation: "the image of unstoppable 'progress' comes with the threat of loss, rather than promising new goals' [...]. The word 'progress', as we continue to call it by inertia, evokes fear of imminent catastrophe rather than the joy associated with the emergence of new comforts". This is especially true of the millennial generation, who, according to numerous surveys, "for the first time since World War II express fear of losing rather than improving the social status achieved by their parents". Furthermore, most of them "expect the future to bring worsening living conditions rather than pave the way for the progress that marks their parents' personal history and that their parents have taught them to expect by working" (Bauman, 2017).

Today, the value of the environment and sensitivity to waste reduction seem to have taken on a personal significance that was previously unthinkable. Indeed, today's consumption seems to be defined by "a kind of forward-looking interest focused on society rather than the individual" (Olivero & Russo, 2022). According to Tosi (2006), "an increasing number of people are choosing consumption styles that are no longer determined solely by economic criteria, such as the best price or most convenient product, or criteria that can be attributed solely to taste preferences or personal health and well-being. The wide range of behaviour can be traced back to a type of orientation that shares an altruistic dimension and an interest in social issues, which imparts a 'political' character to consumption" (Paltrinieri, 2012).

Roberta Paltrinieri, in her book titled "Felicità Responsabile" (*en. Responsible Happiness*), argues that "a fundamental aspect of our existence is that we live in 'imaginary worlds' consisting of 'sentient communities' in response to people's need to experience approval and a sense of belonging" (Paltrinieri, 2012). The communities described by Paltrinieri "find fertile

ground in the use of Web 2.0 tools, where prosumerism is an established process”. They are also “able to move from shared imagination to collective action, because of less corporate control over prosumer activities and greater resistance from the prosumers themselves”. Indeed, the prosumer becomes a creator of social values and meanings precisely through the opportunities offered by the new communication technologies, thereby shaping social and productive culture (Ibid.).

Over the past two decades, citizens have increasingly used political consumerism and lifestyle activism to advance their political goals. Citizens purchase goods and services in accordance with their environmental, social or ethical values (Micheletti, 2003; Stolle & Micheletti, 2013).

Political consumerism is a way of practising politics in everyday life through the orientation of one's purchases, and it seems to refer to “that active minority of conscious, informed and highly gifted people in terms of cultural and social capital, who turn directly to companies to demand more attention to the environment, respect for human rights and more general issues of social justice” (Paltrinieri, 2012).

In this regard, the sociologist Fabris (2003) defines the neo-consumer as “the critical consumer who has a real opportunity to shift market balances and steer companies towards environmentally and socially compatible choices”. [...]

According to Fabris, the neo-consumer niche is still a niche because of its small size, but it is destined to grow as the limitations of the economic model become more and more evident at the structural level (Paltrinieri, 2012).

### **Self-expression**

Modern consumers are becoming attached to fewer and fewer brands that they consider truly special. Hence, creating an emotional attachment to a brand is a key issue in the modern marketing world. One of the strategies to achieve this goal is to match the personality of the brand with the self-concept of the consumer. Indeed, consumers are attracted to brands with a certain personality because they believe they can express their identity, their self-concept, and convey this in their relationships with others through it (Aaker, 1999; Belk, 1988).

According to Aaker (2009), consumers can get functional, emotional, and social benefits from the purchase of a product. Functional benefits depend on characteristics in terms of product utility and functionality, emotional benefits refer to a brand's ability to stimulate emotional responses when buying or using a product, whereas social benefits enable a person to express commitment to a particular lifestyle by responding to a man's innate need to feel as part of a community based on common values and interests.

Consequently, factors related to the individual self can have a strong influence on consumption habits, as people wish to maintain a positive self-image and can confirm it through consumption experiences (Dunning, 2007). This is because a person's possessions are viewed as an extension of their personality (Belk, 1988).

According to Andreoni (1989, 1990), involving in sustainable action evokes feelings of 'warm glow', making people feel satisfied and proud of a 'positive' perception of themselves. In this regard, numerous studies have shown that consumers are more likely to get involved in pro-environmental actions if they experience hedonic pleasure or positive effects from such behaviour (Corral-Verdugo et al., 2009).

Indeed, it has been demonstrated that positive emotions such as pride and optimism can motivate the maintenance of sustainable behaviour over time (Peter & Honea, 2012). Also, positive environmental actions lead to the cultivation of a sense of hope, which in turn increases climate engagement and sustainable behaviour (Feldman & Hart, 2018; Smith & Leiserowitz, 2014). Beyond wanting to see themselves in a positive light, people want to see themselves as being consistent. For example, self-consistency research shows that a consumer who takes part in a sustainable behaviour for the first time often maintains the sustainable behaviour in the future. Consequently, taking such measures may increase the chances of subsequent sustainable behaviour (Van der Werff, Steg & Keizer, 2014; Bodur, Duval & Grohmann, 2015).

### **Lifestyle Brand**

Nowadays, brands are no longer identified only with the goods produced; they are producers of content rather than goods, contributing to the creation of experiences that people naturally want to participate in (Olivero & Russo, 2022). However, the preference given to one brand over another takes on a symbolic meaning, through which the consumer expresses his/her personal lifestyle, commitment to certain values, and the sharing of certain cultural tendencies (Ibid.).

Lifestyle brands are brands that, in contrast to others, aim to sell products through the marketing of a particular lifestyle. They are brands that embody the values, interests, views, aspirations and opinions of a particular group of people, helping to define their own lifestyle. "Lifestyle, understood as a social form, is a set of practices endowed with a common meaning and relational significance, which appears as a distinctive shared pattern in the community" (Bersano & Genova, 2011). Lifestyle makes a person feel part of a group with which he/she shares the same practices, and at the same time differentiates himself/herself from other groups. In this case, the purchase of a lifestyle brand is not as much determined by the functional aspect or characteristics of the product, but rather by the 'emotional benefit' that the consumer receives

from the interaction with the value system that the brand represents as a producer of content and experiences. Lifestyle brands originate from aspirational characteristics of cultural groups and, when used habitually and selectively, they become part of the identity of specific segments.

Effective strategies of lifestyle branding come from an understanding and appreciation of the specific cultural attributes and nuances of the psychographics of the target markets. As a result, it is important for the organisation to outline the category of target individuals in reasonable detail. In this respect, psychographic research provides an in-depth analysis of the population of consumers, revealing their psychological characteristics such as personality, interests, values, and beliefs. New followers become spokespersons and brand ambassadors by voluntarily associating their person with the brand in which they see recognition and for which they have a desire to be associated with. Thus, brands manage to retain the loyalty of their customers for a longer period of time, which shows that if the brand ceased to exist, it would have a negative impact on their lives (Marazza & Saviolo, 2020).

A lifestyle brand, unlike other brands, provides social benefits by offering a 'world-view' shared by a significant number of people who become customers because they feel represented in terms of views, opinions, and interests. Therefore, it is not so much the product as the brand itself that generates benefits, expressing the values and aspirations of a particular social group (Ibid.).

Unlike FMCG communication, which is structured around the benefits and functional attributes of the product, lifestyle brand communication is based on the articulation of the lifestyle proposition, using a highly aspirational language generally based on image aesthetics. In fact, in relation to lifestyle brands, implicit motives and symbolic elements prevail, which are much easier to be conceptualised and interiorised through image-based communication (Ibid.).

Another aspect that characterises and distinguishes lifestyle brands is the presence of a visionary leader who is able to perceive trends in society and position themselves as a point of reference for the community and as the main actor of the brand credo and manifesto. The presence of this figure is crucial due to his ability to express and articulate a lifestyle proposition, concretising the ethos and social identity of a significant group of people in the brand and its products (Ibid). Following the evolution of the market and social representation, lifestyle brands need to constantly transform as society changes, reinvent themselves, and represent the deep identity of groups of individuals across generations. Therefore, the role of the visionary leader does not end with the first product or brand approval, but it is essential to generate stories and narratives that can constantly feed the brand 'myth' in order to

always be able to represent the deep identity of groups of people across generations. So the visionary leader should rely on a team of professionals capable of turning the vision into reality, cultivating it daily in all manifestations of the brand. When organisational mechanisms are poorly structured or do not fully express the leader's vision, it is very difficult to ensure brand stability and its ability to evolve consistently across time, space, and categories. Often in such a situation, the brand has to re-establish trust and success season after season and cannot achieve or maintain lifestyle brand status over time (Marazza & Saviolo, 2020).

In fact, the original intuition behind a brand is doomed to weaken for a variety of reasons: it can be copied or developed by competitors, lose its characteristic relevance and novelty, or simply because social conditions that have created the background for the magical chemistry between a brand and its followers change. Over time, success begins to depend on the ability not to betray the spirit of the original and to maintain the interest of the target audience, guaranteeing brand integrity. To maintain this authority, the brand has to continue to innovate and invest in the historic product line to keep it relevant. They also have to continue the dialogue with the consumers of these products in order to capture all the nuances in the evolution of their culture and needs.

The success of brands with a high symbolic value is deeply linked to the context in which they are born and evolve. Their growing importance in many consumer goods sectors is the result of the confluence of two phenomena: the evolution of social identity with its impact on consumer behaviour and the evolution of the role of the brand in the social context. Today, institutional distrust is at an all-time high and consumers expect more and more from the companies with which they are associated. Hence, the positive contribution that brands can make to the world is fundamental to corporate strategy. In fact, when choosing a product, in addition to its characteristics and functionality, the positions taken by that company on political and social issues, its value system and the lifestyle it offers also matter.

Companies that are able to inspire and earn long-term loyalty are those that are able to take on the role of a reference point in society. Consequently, a brand's position on a particular social issue can be crucial to consumers' purchasing decisions. It is no coincidence that major brands often take a proactive stance on important social issues, such as environmental protection, racial issues, gender discrimination or gun control.

Furthermore, it should not be underestimated that consumers, especially critical ones, also want to play a 'proactive' role through their purchases, feel involved in valuable projects or support great causes. Thus, the positive contribution that brands can bring to the world is fundamental to corporate strategy, in which case lifestyle brands not only offer break points, innovation

and change, but they also encourage their customers and ambassadors through a 'Call to Action' to become spokespersons of the world-view they offer, directly participating in the transformation and disruption of the status quo.

In declaring and pursuing an ideal, a brand needs a sincere and transparent connection with consumers, and in order to do so, it has to equip itself with the best storytelling techniques (Grizzanti, 2020). Storytelling allows companies to 'humanise' themselves and convey the true essence of the brand, thereby establishing a closer and more personal connection with consumers.

Modern technology allows us to share more and more information and, therefore, make choices based, among other things, on the stories we tell. Brand journalism, or corporate journalism, is a communication strategy that many companies have been using recently. Through its journalistic techniques, the company focuses on creating stories and content revolving around the company's reality, telling stories through analysis of reliable information, and engaging with readers by providing answers to their questions in order to reinforce the brand vision, enhance its value, and create engagement.

## **2. Objectives of the Study**

So far, the lifestyle brand has been presented by reflecting on its social context and defining its main characteristics in marketing terms.

In order to explore the relationships that connect critical consumers with a sustainable brand, a survey was conducted using a questionnaire structured in such a way as to obtain a psychographic segmentation of basic personality traits, values and beliefs, and to explain the relationship that exists between product-personality-scenario in light of this.

Lifestyles are usually measured through the creation of items that enable homogeneous groups of consumers to be identified in it. The purpose of these items, especially in relation to market research, is to obtain the psychographics of consumers by focusing mainly on three macro dimensions: activities (A), interests (I), and opinions (O). Thus, these three aspects can be expressed in terms of cultural interests, leisure activities, the amounts they spend, beliefs and attitudes, right down to psychological variables and personality traits. In fact, there has been a growing tendency among scholars who have approached the study of lifestyles through consumption analysis to adopt a rather broad definition of 'consumption' itself.

In determining these aspects, the reference to 'value', which has always defined consumer behaviour and habits and ended up justifying even the most critical purchases, takes on particular significance. Designed to give stability and therefore clarity to volatile consumer behaviour, value represents a point of reference for the individual, society or group to which he/she belongs.

The objective of an ethical lifestyle brand is to inspire behavioural change consisting of a more or less permanent modification of its customers' habits, and since the latter cannot be identified through questionnaires, the analysis is subject to more or less favourable 'attitudes' towards certain types of behaviour.

A recent Google study<sup>1</sup> found that Italian consumers surveyed are looking for specific actions and brands to help them take such actions. In web searches, Italians' interest has shifted from big climate and environmental issues to specific actions. In this regard, Google Research shows that interest in topics such as 'climate change' and 'pollution' has declined in Italy in favour of more specific expressions such as "sustainable fashion" and "tree planting". This indicates a consumer willingness to approach sustainability more positively, demonstrating the need to perceive it within their reach.

This opens up the opportunity for brands to implement green marketing strategies that help people take practical and environmentally beneficial actions with companies themselves on a daily basis. People appreciate what companies do to protect the environment throughout the supply chain. Consumers are interested in knowing how committed companies are, but they are also skeptical of brand claims about being sustainable that are not backed up by real examples. Hence, companies should make an effort to demonstrate why they consider themselves virtuous and avoid making statements that are not backed up by specific initiatives. Sustainability has become an important factor in shopping choices, so much so that for 31% of Italians interviewed in a Google survey, it is more 'appealing' than design and style. Among 18-24 year olds, this figure rises to 37%, demonstrating Generation Z's interest in the environment and their desire to improve society.

### **3. Methodology**

To carry out the survey, a representative sample was selected using probability sampling.

The representative sample was drawn from the number of "critical consumers", i.e., those consumers who are guided by environmental and social criteria in their purchasing habits. In order to reach the target category, a survey created with Google Forms was shared through Facebook groups (private and public) dedicated to this consumer category. In particular, Facebook communities participated in the survey, which included:

---

<sup>1</sup>Raffaella Stratta (2022). 'A tutto verde: ecco cosa pensano i consumatori della sostenibilità in Italia' (en. Going Green: What Consumers Think about Sustainability in Italy), source: Google, Italy.

environmentalists, ecologists, environmental activists, minimalists, vegetarians, vegans, outdoor enthusiasts, sustainable fashion, mindfulness, and happy degrowth.

The sampling should be considered a probability sampling, as the choice of filling in the survey was at the discretion of the users of the aforementioned communities.

The questionnaire consists of four sections preceded by a privacy statement, with a total of 20 closed-ended questions. The first section aims to gather basic socio-demographic information from the participants, defining the sample by gender, age, and education level. In the second section, they were asked to express their level of agreement (on a scale of 1 to 4) on a number of items designed to assess subjects' engagement with environmental, health, and social (lifestyle) issues. In the third section, the respondents were asked to select the most personally relevant statement from those already given in order to assess personality traits and individual needs. Thus, the proposed response options were developed on the assumption of interviewing four possible categories of critical consumers: 'hedonists', who enjoy aesthetic experiences; 'environmentalists', who are motivated by a passion for nature; 'health-conscious', who focus on healthy lifestyles; and 'virtuous', who are motivated by social issues.

In the last section, they were asked to express their level of agreement on a number of items related to the main motivations for bonding with a sustainable brand, using a scale from 1 to 4, to assess the consumer's level of criticality and brand attachment.

#### **4. Results**

A total of 204 people responded to the questionnaire, of which 26.5% were men and 73.5% women. The predominance of women probably reflects their greater involvement in the topics under study (Figure A). Regarding age, generation Y (1981-1996) is the most represented group, followed by generation X (1965-1980) and Z (1997-2012), which are slightly less. The Boomer generation (1946-1964) is significantly less represented, which is probably due to their lower presence on social media (Figure B). In terms of educational level, the sample appears to be highly educated: 59% have a university degree or have attended courses after graduation, 37% have a high school diploma, and 4% only have a secondary school diploma (Figure C).

The majority of respondents believe that they lead an environmentally sustainable (91%) and health-oriented lifestyle (74%) (Figure D, E). Approximately three quarters of the respondents stated that they were 'deeply concerned' about the current climate crisis (Figure D), expressing their concern with the highest rating. Moreover, the majority of respondents (62%) were very critical about their purchases, stating that they refrain from buying

goods that are not made using environmentally friendly methods or materials (Figure G), and that they sometimes feel guilty about the environment after making a purchase (Figure H). Therefore, this may be related to the high level of school education of the respondents. Education and greater access to information may contribute to the development of a strong self-awareness and a more critical attitude towards one's consumption choices.

About 69% said that they were not satisfied with the range of products on the market, which confirms that there is 'unmet demand' in terms of marketing. 76% of respondents stated that they get satisfaction from their sustainable purchases, knowing that they are doing something for the environment (Figure M). Positive emotions, such as pride and optimism, encourage consumers to cultivate a sense of hope, motivating them to maintain sustainable behaviour over time.

The interest of consumers in increasing their awareness through the adoption of a sustainable lifestyle was very significant (53.4%) (Figure N). 33.3% considered it very important for a sustainable brand to pay more attention and care to the consumer's needs (Figure K), while 31.4% considered following current trends to be a more important characteristic of a sustainable brand. Reflecting their own ideals is less important (22.5%), followed by the characteristic of being proactive (12.7%).

As for the aesthetic aspect, 61.7% rated it as 'very decisive' when purchasing a sustainable product (Figure R), while 63.2% (Figure Q) considered the brand's ability to excite through an expression of mood or state of mind that reflected their own personality to be important. Of particular importance is the percentage of respondents who consider it essential that a brand's point of view matches their own (73.5%) (Figure Q). Almost all respondents place a high responsibility on the brand to educate and inform consumers on ethical, social, and environmental issues (90.2%) (Figure T), considering its contribution in offering environmentally-oriented actions to be fundamental (98.1%) (Figure O).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, given the increasing need for concrete action to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis and the growing tendency of younger generations to experiment with 'new' forms of consumer satisfaction, lifestyle branding proves to be a viable option for creating a sustainable brand that benefits both consumers and the company itself.

For consumers, the benefits of the lifestyle product offerings are mostly of a social and relational nature. Among these, above all, a sense of belonging to a social circle prevails, in which the individual receives the satisfaction of having his/her ideals recognised. In fact, for the consumer, part of the pleasure associated with a so-called 'sustainable purchase' comes from a feeling of pride

in his/her choice and the emotional involvement favoured by a perception of 'participating in the change'. Thus, the lifestyle brand acquires the human traits that make it socially active and capable of exerting its 'influence', acting as an inexhaustible source of inspiration, novelty, and entertainment for the critical consumer and helping him/her to gravitate towards the desirable lifestyle.

For a sustainable brand, inspiring environmentally friendly action while providing a hedonistic experience is now a major challenge facilitated by the growing communication potential of digital media and web technology. In addition, promoting product durability and the quality of materials used allows the company to combine the sustainability dimension with high-end positioning. Offering a lifestyle that inspires a certain way of living turns out to be an important opportunity to increase the category of its products through a broad spectrum such as 'wellness', 'home decor' and so on. Moreover, by adopting a broader perspective, in addition to the benefits of an economic nature, a company can also gain benefits of a social nature. However, these are manifested both in the constant research aimed at offering alternative and increasingly 'effective' solutions to address climate change and in the active role of the brand, which becomes a promoter of actions and ways of thinking in favour of a universal ideology that works for a good which is as common as it is valuable, i.e., our environment.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors reported no conflict of interest.

**Data Availability:** All of the data are included in the content of the paper.

**Funding Statement:** The authors did not obtain any funding for this research.

### **References:**

1. Aaker, D. (2009). "Beyond functional benefits", *Marketing News*, (September).
2. Aaker, J.L. (1997). "Dimensions of Brand Personality," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34 (August), 347–56.
3. Aaker, J.L. (1999). "The Malleable Self: The Role of Self-Expression in Persuasion," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36 (February), 45– 57.
4. Andreoni, J. (1989). "Giving with Impure Altruism: Applications to Charity and Ricardian Equivalence", *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 97, Issue 6 (Dec., 1989), 1447-1458.
5. Andreoni, J. (1990). "Impure Altruism and Donations to Public Goods: A theory of Warm-Glow Giving", *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 100, Issue 401 (Jun., 1990), 464-477.
6. Bauman, Z. (2017). *Retrotopia*, Laterza.

7. Belk Russell, W. (1988). "Possessions and the Extended Self," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15 (2), 139–68.
8. Berzano, L. & Genova, C. (2011). *Sociologia dei lifestyles*, Carocci.
9. Black, I.R. & Cherrier, H. (2010). "Anti-consumption as part of living a sustainable lifestyle: daily practices, contextual motivations and subjective values", *Journal of Consumer Behavior* 9: 437–453.
10. Bodur, H., Duval, K. & Grohmann, B. (2015). "Will You Purchase Environmentally Friendly Products? Using Prediction Requests to Increase Choice of Sustainable Products", *Journal of Business Ethics* 129 (1):59-75 (2015)
11. Clayton, S., Manning, C. M., Krygsman, K., & Speiser, M. (2017). *Mental Health and Our Changing Climate: Impacts, Implications, and Guidance*.
12. Corral-Verdugo, V., Bonnes, M., Tapia-Fonllem, C., Fraijo-Sing, B., Frías-Armenta, M., & Carrus, G. (2009). "Correlates of Pro-Sustainability Orientation: The Affinity towards Diversity," *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 29 (1), 34–43.
13. Dunning, D. (2007). "Self-Image Motives and Consumer Behavior: How Sacrosanct Self-Beliefs Sway Preferences in the Marketplace", *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 17 (4), 237–49.
14. Fabris, G. (2003). *Il nuovo consumatore verso il postmoderno*, FrancoAngeli.
15. Feldman, LP. & Hart, S. (2018). "Is There Any Hope? How Climate Change News Imagery and Text Influence Audience Emotions and Support for Climate Mitigation Policies", *Risk Analysis*, 38 (3), 585–602.
16. Grizzanti, G. (2020). *Brand Identikit. Trasformare un marchio in una marca*, Fausto Lupetti Editore.
17. Jackson, T. (2005). "Live Better by Consuming Less?: Is There a "Double Dividend" in Sustainable Consumption?" *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, 9: 19–36.
18. Marazza, A. & Saviolo, S. (2020). *Lifestyle Brands. A Guide to Aspirational Marketing*, Etas.
19. Martin-Woodhead, A. (2021). "Limited, considered and sustainable consumption: The (non)consumption practices of UK minimalists", *Journal of Consumer Culture*.
20. Micheletti, M. (2003). "Political virtue and shopping: Individuals, consumerism, and collective action". New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
21. Olivero, N. & Russo, V. (2022). *Psicologia dei consumi*, McGraw-Hill Education.
22. Paltrinieri, R. (2012). *Felicità Responsabile. Il consumo oltre la società dei consumi*, Franco Angeli. Peter, Paula C. e Heather Honea (2012),

- "Targeting Social Messages with Emotions of Change: The Call for Optimism", *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 31 (2), 269–83.
23. Smith, N. & Leiserowitz, A. (2014). "The Role of Emotion in Global Warming Policy Support and Opposition", *Risk Analysis*, Vol.34, No. 5 DOI:10.1111/risa.12140
  24. Soper, K. (2008). "Alternative Hedonism, Cultural Theory and the Role of Aesthetic Revisioning". *Cultural Studies* 22: 567–587.
  25. Soper, K. (2020). *Post-Growth Living: For an Alternative Hedonism*, Verso Books.
  26. Stolle, Dietlind & Micheletti (2013). "Political Consumerism. Global Responsibility in Action", Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
  27. Tosi, S. (2006). *Consumi e partecipazione politica. Tra azione individuale e mobilitazione collettiva*, Franco Angeli.
  28. Van der, Werff Ellen, Linda Steg & Kees Keizer (2014). "I Am What I Am, by Looking Past the Present: The Influence of Biospheric Values and Past Behavior on Environmental Self-Identity", *Environment and Behaviour*, 46 (5), 626–57.
  29. 29. [www.thinkwithgoogle.com](http://www.thinkwithgoogle.com), Stratta R. (Set. 2022), A tutto green: ecco cosa pensano i consumatori della sostenibilità in Italia, source: Google, Italy, Consumer Survey, Feb. 2022

## Appendix

### I. Questionnaire offered to study participants

#### Section 1 - PRIVACY STATEMENT

This research is conducted for a thesis in Communication and Advertising at the University for Foreigners in Perugia. Before you start filling in the questionnaire, we assure you that the information provided will be treated strictly anonymously and confidentially (in accordance with article 7 of Legislative Decree 196/2003) and that the results of the survey will be used exclusively for scientific and educational purposes.

#### Section 2 - SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1) *Sex*

- Woman  Men

2) *When were you born?*

- 1946-1964  
 1965-1980  
 1981-1996  
 1997-2012

3) *What is your educational level?*

- Secondary school diploma  
 Diploma  
 University degree/postgraduate diploma

#### Section 3 - ENGAGEMENT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISSUES

For each of the following statements, express the degree of agreement using a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 means 'strongly disagree'; 2 = slightly agree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree.

4) *I live an environmentally friendly lifestyle (carefully separating waste, trying to limit energy consumption, etc.).*

1 2 3 4

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

5) *I live a healthy lifestyle (I do sports, follow a healthy and balanced diet, buy organic food, etc.)*

1 2 3 4

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

6) *I am very concerned about the current climate crisis*

1 2 3 4

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

7) *I refrain from buying a product that has not been made using environmentally friendly methods or materials*

1 2 3 4

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

8) *Sometimes I feel guilty about the environment before making a purchase*

1 2 3 4

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

## Section 4 - NEEDS, PERSONALITY, LIFESTYLES

For each of the following statements, select ONLY the most relevant to you.

9) *I make a purchase...*

- to express myself
- to feel fulfilled
- to get closer to an ideal lifestyle
- only when necessary

10) *Sustainable brands...*

- follow current trends
- reflect my ideals
- are more attentive to my needs
- are proactive

11) *Sustainable clothes...*

- are of better quality (buy less, buy better)
- are timeless (they are a must-have)
- are adaptable to different situations (less is more)
- respect the environment and the conditions for workers

12) *Through sustainable purchasing, I benefit from...*

- doing my part to protect the environment
- seeing my values/ideals recognised
- being able to express my personality
- belonging to a community that shares my point of view

13) *Living a sustainable lifestyle helps me to ...*

- have a more genuine life
- be proud of myself
- reduce my concern for the environment
- be more conscious

### Section 5 - BONDING WITH THE BRAND

For each of the following questions, express the degree of agreement using a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 means 'not at all important'; 2 = slightly agree; 3 = agree; 4 = very important.

14) *How important do you think it is for the brand to offer daily solutions to help protect our planet?*

1 2 3 4

Not at all important

Very important

15) *How important do you think it is for the brand to focus on helping people take environmentally friendly actions on a daily basis?*

1 2 3 4

Not at all important

Very important

16) *How important do you think it is for the brand to be able to excite through the expression of a mood?*

1 2 3 4

Not at all important

Very important

17) *To make me feel involved in buying the product, the visual content (photos, videos, images and graphics) of the brand should reflect my personal aesthetic taste.*

1 2 3 4

Not at all important

Very important

18) *How important do you think it is for a brand to adopt a point of view similar to yours?*

1 2 3 4

Not at all important

Very important

19) Do you think a brand should play a cultural role in cultivating sensitivity and responsibility towards social issues nowadays?

1 2 3 4

Not at all important

Very important

20) How satisfied are you with the range of sustainable products on the market? (1-4)

1 2 3 4

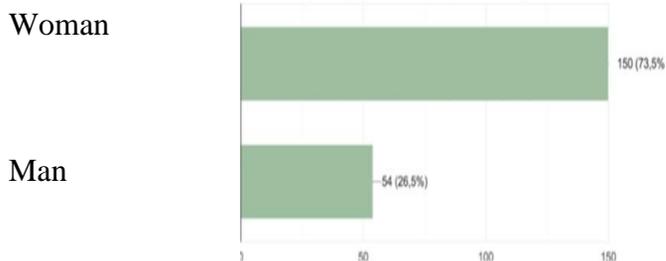
Not at all important

Very important

## SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

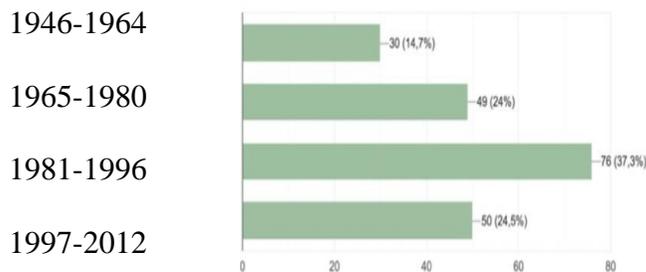
**Fig.A**

1) Sex  
204 responses



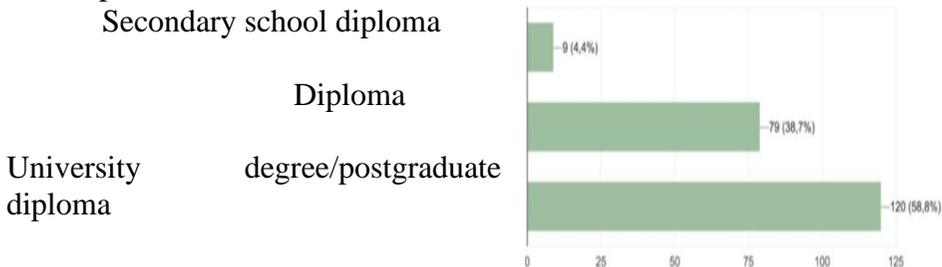
**Fig. B**

2) When was he/she born?  
204 responses



**Fig.C**

3) What is his/her educational level?  
204 responses

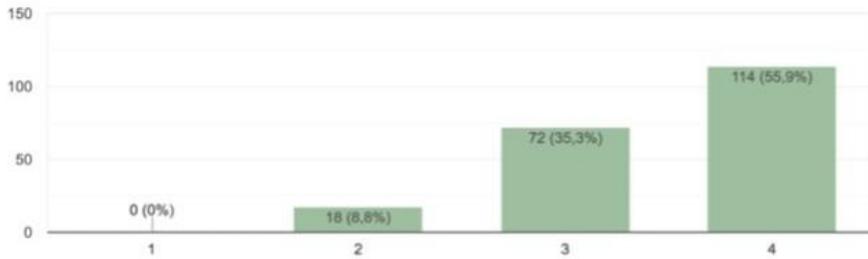


## ENGAGEMENT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISSUES

**Fig. D**

4) I live an environmentally friendly lifestyle (carefully separating waste, trying to limit energy consumption, etc.).

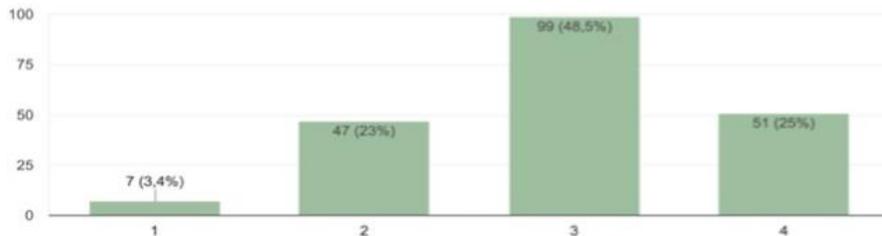
204 responses



**Fig. E**

5) I live a healthy lifestyle (I do sports, follow a healthy and balanced diet, buy organic food, etc.)

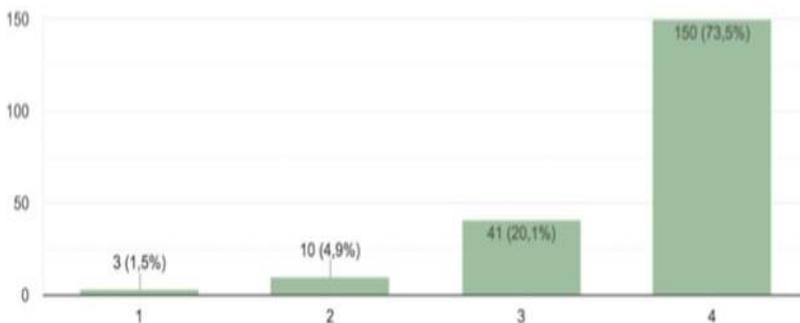
204 responses



**Fig. F**

6) I am very concerned about the current climate crisis

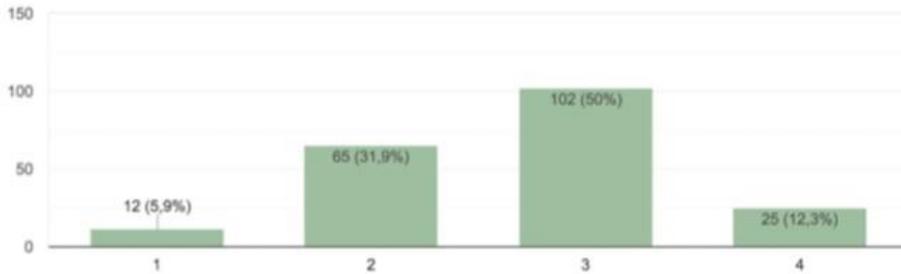
204 responses



**Fig. G**

7) I refrain from buying a product that has not been made using environmentally friendly methods or materials

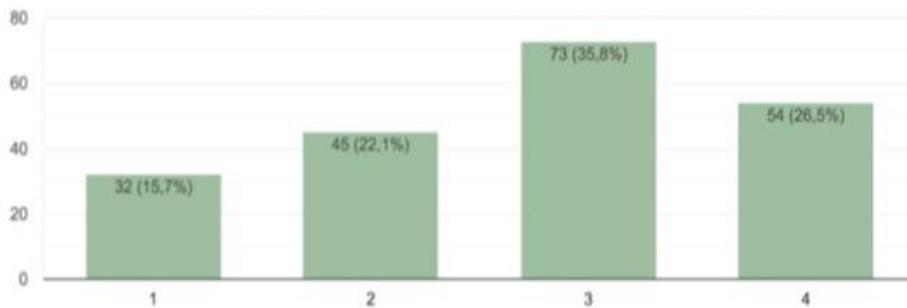
204 responses



**Fig. H**

8) Sometimes I feel guilty about the environment before making a purchase

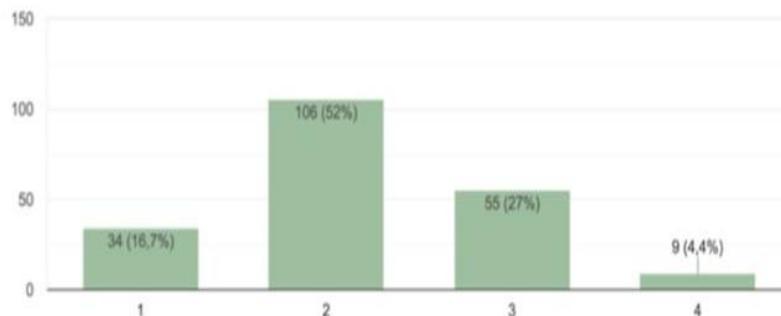
204 responses



**Fig. I**

9) How satisfied are you with the range of sustainable products on the market?

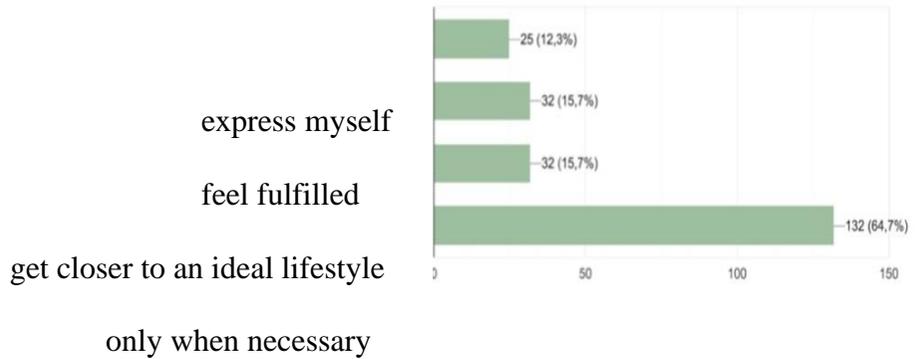
204 responses



## NEEDS, PERSONALITY, LIFESTYLES

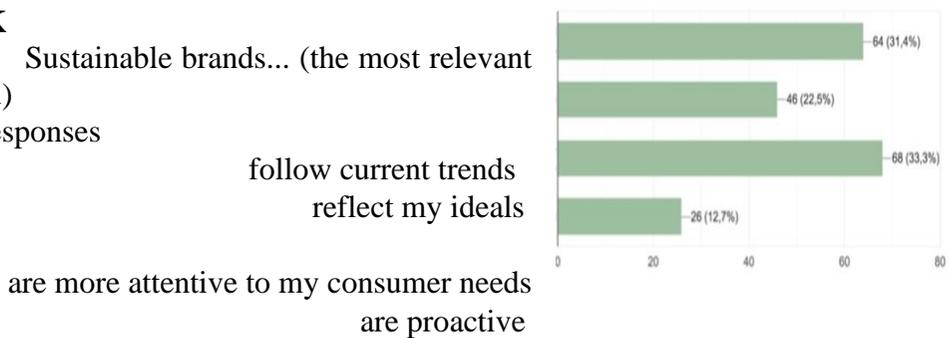
**Fig. J**

10) I make a purchase to... (the most relevant to you)  
204 responses



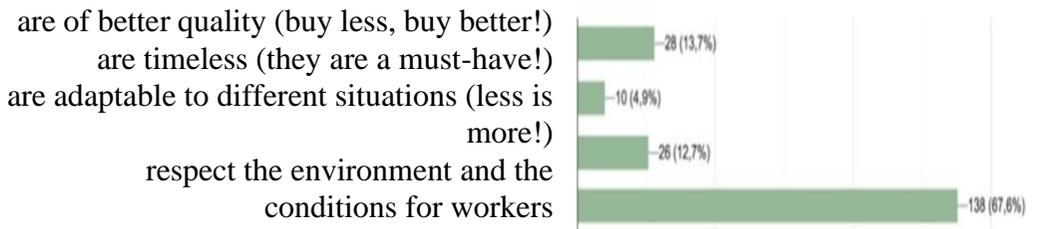
**Fig. K**

11) Sustainable brands... (the most relevant to you)  
204 responses



**Fig. L**

12) Sustainable clothes... (the most relevant to you)  
204 responses



**Fig. M**

13) Through sustainable purchasing I benefit from... (the most relevant to you)

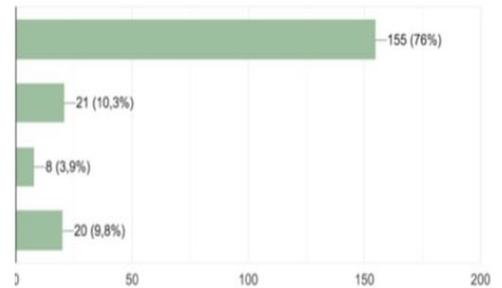
204 responses

doing my part to protect the environment

seeing my values/ideals recognised

being able to express my personality

feeling part of a community that shares my point of view



**Fig. N**

14) Living a sustainable lifestyle helps me to ... (the most relevant to you)

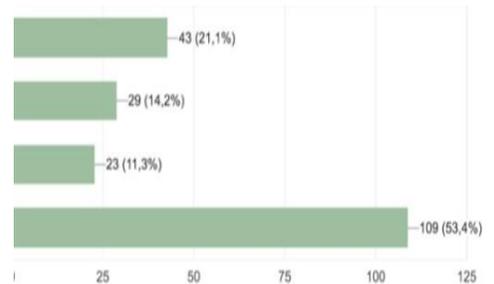
204 responses

have a more genuine life

be proud of my choices

reduce my anxiety about the current climate crisis

be more conscious

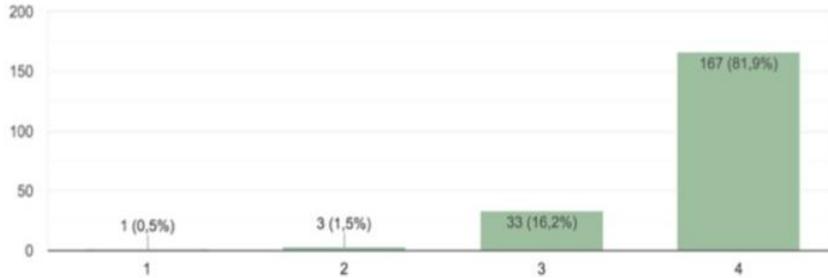


## BONDING WITH THE BRAND

**Fig. O**

15) How important do you think it is for the brand to offer daily solutions to help protect our planet?

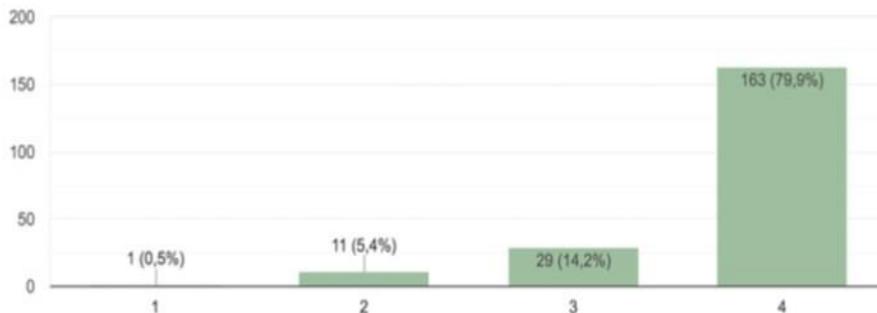
204 responses



**Fig. P**

16) How important do you think it is for the brand to focus on helping people take environmentally friendly actions on a daily basis?

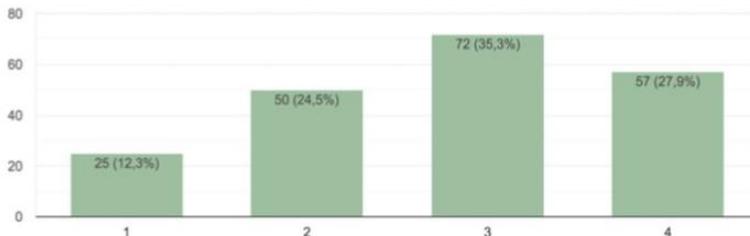
204 responses



**Fig. Q**

17) How important do you think it is for the brand to be able to excite through the expression of a mood conveying your personality?

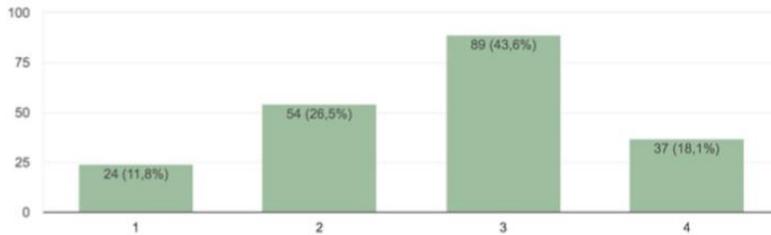
204 responses



**Fig. R**

18) To make me feel involved in buying the product, the visual content (photos, videos, images and graphics) of the brand should reflect my personal aesthetic taste.

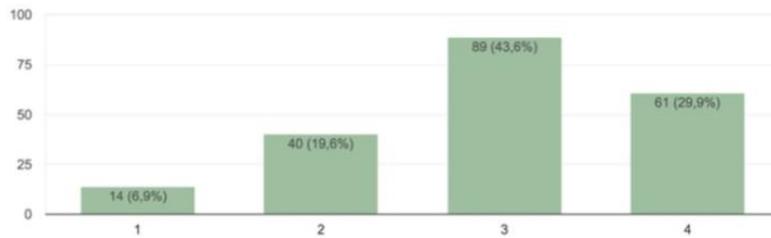
204 responses



**Fig. S**

19) How important do you think it is for a brand to adopt a point of view similar to yours?

204 responses



**Fig. T**

20) Do you think a brand should play a major role in educating and raising awareness of ethical, social and environmental issues nowadays?

204 responses

