

Pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours of young adults in shaping the market offer in the international dimension

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The objective of the article is to identify selected pro-environmental behaviours (along with their determinants) of young adults from Polish and Spanish universities and to determine which of them should be taken into account in shaping the market offer of modern international companies.

Research Design & Methods: The basis for the conclusions was qualitative research conducted with the use of an online questionnaire. The survey covered students of Polish universities, from whom 540 completed questionnaires were obtained, and students of a Spanish university – 54 questionnaires. The analysis of cross-tabulation in various sections was carried out using the Pearson Chi-square statistics, the contingency coefficient and Cramer's V coefficient.

Findings: Young adults from Spain less often than respondents in Poland believe that their lifestyle is environmentally friendly and are more critical of the intensity of involvement of modern people in pro-environmental activities. The positive opinion of Polish students about themselves does not correlate with their behaviour – they participate in protest marches or monitor the network activity of pro-environmental organisations less often than Spanish students. In the case of respondents from Spanish university, essential determinants of their pro-environmental activity turned out to be the following variables: “a source of income” and “a form of study”, while for students from Polish universities, these were “gender” and “a year of birth.”

Implications & Recommendations: The pro-environmental elements of the product offer will be appreciated faster in the Spanish market than in the Polish market. At the same time, the offer with such elements will be more popular among younger people, women, and people from big cities. It will be easier to convince the Spanish community of the restrictions on using private cars in urban spaces. The pro-environmental elements of the job offer will be essential only for almost 20% of candidates from Spain and nearly 10% of applicants from Polish universities.

Contribution & Value Added: Describing the intensity of pro-environmental behaviour of young adults from selected universities in Poland and Spain. Separating statistically significant relationships between selected pro-environmental behaviours of young adults from the Polish and Spanish markets and their demographic characteristics.

Article type: research article

Keywords: pro-environmental attitudes; consumer behaviour; young adults; the Polish market; the Spanish market

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INTRODUCTION

Climate issues, ecology, and the circular economy are terms that are increasingly present in today's reality. They are so important that they affect all areas of modern human life. Therefore, it becomes obvious that entrepreneurs are interested in whether and how to include them in shaping the market offer (Kramarz *et al.*, 2019).

The aim of the article was to identify selected behaviour (along with their determinants) of pro-environmental young adults from Polish and Spanish universities, as well as to determine the impact they can exert on shaping the market offer of modern enterprises in the international dimension. The basis for the conclusions drawn is literature studies and questionnaire surveys of young adults from Poland and Spain. The choice of the students as respondents was dictated by the assumption that they, as university graduates, would constitute the core of the managerial staff in the coming years and thus the most opinion-forming group in society (Proszowska, 2021). It can be assumed that they will be the first to make highly innovative and socially responsible decisions, which may include considering pro-environmental aspects in market decisions. For this reason, analysing the determinants of their behaviour may prove helpful in forecasting the principles of creating future marketing strategies.

The selection of the sample was non-random and purposeful (to reach the respondents considered to be the most opinion-forming). At the same time, it can be considered a convenient choice.

The detailed research areas included, among others: the respondents' attitude to the natural environment, their interest in the activity of pro-environmental organisations, the respondents' attitude to restrictions in car use, the importance of the employer's pro-environmental orientation and pro-environmental aspects of purchasing decisions. The analysis of the obtained results helped to determine, among others if demographic characteristics of young adults influence their pro-environmental behaviour.

Due to the qualitative nature of the analysed information, the χ^2 (Chi-square) test and Cramer's V coefficient was used in the analysis process. A number of multi-way tables were prepared from which the tables significant for the assumed test power were selected. The contingency coefficient was also used to assess the strength of the relationship.

The original elements of this article, in comparison with available publications, include the description of the intensity of pro-environmental behaviour of young adults from selected universities in Poland and Spain and the separation of statistically significant relationships between selected pro-environmental behaviour of young adults and their demographic characteristics for the Polish and Spanish market.

The paper consists of a literature review, a description of the methodology of the research process conducted, research results and conclusions. The research involved young adults from two Polish universities (Krakow) and one in Spain (Malaga). The main focus of the research was to identify differences between pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours of students studying in Poland and Spain.

LITERATURE REVIEW (AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT)

The growing awareness of the dangers associated with climate change and broadly understood environmental protection contribute to the change of human behaviour. Certainly, they occur at different rates in different societies. This study concerns young adults, belonging to the "Z" generation, who are born between 1995 and 2012 (Herring, 2019).

According to Hatalaska (2022), young adults are aware of pro-ecological behaviour and are ready to live this way. Wierzbiński *et al.* (2021) point to a strong correlation between the ecological behaviour of young consumers and their ecological awareness.

The academic community appears as the subject of research in the field of pro-ecological behaviour from the perspective of scientists' behaviour: behaviour of academics (Fawehinmi *et al.*, 2020) and students (Karimi, 2019) and the role of universities in shaping their pro-ecological behaviour (Chakraborty *et al.*, 2017.).

Ciążela (2019) also deals with the subject of pro-ecological behaviour of students of Polish universities. The most frequently undertaken form of pro-ecological behaviour was "Cleaning up the world" campaign. Over 1/3 of the respondents signed a pro-ecological petition at least once.

For Escher and Petrykowska (2015), actions taken by young consumers are not always consistent with their views. It is necessary to intensify the conducted environmental education to educate young consumers about pro-ecological views and to cause consistent behaviour with them (Onwe *et al.*, 2020).

Łęska and Kuś (2018) present slightly different results. Their group of respondents is characterised by a high level of environmental awareness and a sense of responsibility for the surrounding environment. The belief in individual influence is reflected in pro-ecological behaviour.

Actions for protecting the natural environment were more often undertaken in rural areas than in cities (Bednarek-Gejo *et al.*, 2012).

According to Janczarska-Bergel (2019) the causes of the low resource of natural science knowledge and environmental awareness are multidimensional. They drew attention to the need for changes in environmental education.

Pro-ecological activities are mainly based on saving water and energy and segregating rubbish, but they are related to economic issues (Nguyen, 2020), not conscious pro-ecological attitudes. Few of the inhabitants work actively to protect the local environment. There is a need for wider promotion of pro-ecological behaviour and the role of education in this topic (Kirylyuk, 2015). It is confirmed by Radzymińska *et al.* (2015).

Patrzalek (2016) writes about pro-ecological habits shaped in households in the form of economical use of water, energy or gas and refraining from buying excess products and products harmful to the natural environment. The students of the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences point to the necessity of coercion in implementing and promoting pro-ecological behaviour (Balińska *et al.*, 2019). Today's students will be responsible for society's decisions in the future, so their environmental education is of great importance for progress towards sustainable development (Vicente-Molina *et al.*, 2013). Women are more inclined to engage in environmentally friendly activities.

The promotion of pro-ecological attitudes and behaviour has been the subject of scientific studies for many years (Aoyagi- Usui *et al.*, 2003; Félonneau & Becker, 2008).

Eco-innovations are becoming more and more fashionable. Jansson *et al.* (2010) pointed out that values, beliefs, norms and habits determine the will to reduce and adopt eco-innovation. The combination of factors connected with attitudes and practices has proven to be influential determinants of restrictive behaviour and the willingness to adopt eco-innovations (Stanek-Kowalczyk, 2021).

According to Tezel and Giritli (2019), environmental protection, sustainable development, pro-ecological behaviour are topics that combine, complement and create a particular inextricable whole, determining changes and increasing the need for their appearance in various spheres, including sports. It is necessary to introduce new technological solutions enabling functioning in the changing climate (Kellison & Orr, 2021). The indication of the sports context is to show how many spheres are related to activities aimed at environmental protection. Playing sports can also be pro-ecological behaviour because taking care of ourselves and our loved ones, we make fewer medical appointments and take fewer medications.

At every step, you can see the influence of social media on everyday life, shopping, building relationships, and promoting various types of attitudes or behaviour, including pro-ecological ones (Gupta & Syed, 2022).

Online product review has both a direct and indirect impact on your intention to buy organic products (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020).

Despite the significant increase in environmental and sustainable development challenges, environmental attitudes have not changed significantly over the 10 years (Primc *et al.*, 2021). Working to disseminate pro-environmental attitudes in society should make this type of behaviour absolutely natural and obvious for future generations.

Based on the literature review, the aim of the research was defined. Due to the qualitative nature of the research, no research hypotheses were set, but research problems and questions were posed, which are presented in the introduction to this article.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary studies were conducted in the period from 15.12.2021 to 30.01.2022. The research was qualitative – it took the form of online questionnaire research – the students received a link to the questionnaire and filled it in on their own. The final version of the questionnaire was developed on the basis of the analysis of the available research results, the results of the authors' own research and the summary of focus group interviews with selected groups of young adults, which helped to refine both the questions of the research questionnaire and clarify the selected answer proposals.

Assumptions for the Statistical Analysis of the Research Results

The data collected during the survey created thirty variables, including 21 dependent variables and nine grouping variables. The number of observations for students of Polish universities was 540 and for the Spanish university, 54. All the variables are qualitative variables, more specifically nominal ones. Therefore, many kinds of statistical multivariate analyses cannot be performed. From among the methods that can be applied, the analysis of cross tabulation in various sections was selected.

Cross tabulation allows to identify relationships between the variables whose values are listed in it. The significance of the relationships found is tested using the Pearson Chi-square (χ^2) statistic, which is the basis for the most common significance (or independence) test for qualitative variables (TIBCO, 2017). The Chi-square test becomes significant as the deviation from this expected pattern increases. The value of the chi-square statistic and its significance level depend on the total number of observations and the number of cells in the table. The formula to calculate χ^2 is as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{(O_j - E_j)^2}{E_j} \quad (1)$$

where:

O_j - the size observed for a given group;

E_j - the size expected for a given group;

k - the number of groups.

Then determine the number of degrees of freedom should be determined (df):

$$df = (p - 1)(r - 1) \quad (2)$$

where:

r, p - the sizes of the categories for the first and second variable.

After calculating χ^2 and the degrees of freedom, the critical value χ^2 for the adopted significance level p (assumed $p = 0.05$) should be read from the statistical tables. When the calculated value of χ^2 is lower than the critical value, there is no reason to reject the null hypothesis about the independence of the studied variables. When the calculated value of χ^2 is greater than the critical value, then we reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis about the existence of a relationship between variables.

The contingency coefficient is a measure based on chi-square statistic values of the relationship between two qualitative variables. Its value is always between 0 and 1 (0 means independence of variables), its maximum value depends on the size of the table. The contingency factor can only reach 1 for an infinite number of categories (Siegel, 1956; TIBCO, 2017). The formula for the contingency coefficient (C) is as follows:

$$C = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{\chi^2 + n}} \quad (3)$$

where:

n - the number of observations.

Cramér V Factor defines the level of dependence between two nominal variables, at least one of which has more than two values. The coefficient takes values between 0 and +1 (inclusive), and the closer the score is to 0, the weaker the relationship between the examined features.

The coefficients of contingency and V Cramer can be interpreted only when the chi-square indicates the existence of a significant relationship between the variables. In order to verify whether the sample size is sufficient to detect the investigated relationships, a test from the group of tests based on χ^2 – goodness of fit test for contingency tables was carried out. As a type of power analysis a post hoc compute achieved power test was chosen. The level of significance was assumed $\alpha = 0,05$. The G*Power 3.1 program was used for the calculations.

Based on this, assuming the power of the test $(1 - \beta) > 0,95$, a limit number of degrees of freedom (different for different tables) was specified, which allows the above condition to be met. Whereas, according to Cohen (1992), the effect size is low if the value of r varies around 0.1, medium if r varies around 0.3, and large if r varies more than 0.5.

Table 1. Analysis of test power

χ^2 tests – Goodness-of-fit tests: Contingency tables		
Analysis:	Post hoc: Compute achieved power	
Input:	Effect size	0.3
	α err prob.	0.05
	Total sample size	540
	Df	67
Output:	Noncentrality parameter λ	48.6
	Critical χ^2	87.108
	Power $(1 - \beta$ err prob)	0.9515

Source: own calculations in G*Power,2022.

As shown in Table 1, the test power exceeding 95% is achieved with a maximum of 67 degrees of freedom, therefore, some cross tabulation was rejected.

As part of the analysis of the research results for Polish universities, based on 189 cross tabulations, taking into account the assumed significance level α (0.05 was assumed) and the number of degrees of freedom, 21 tables were selected for further analysis.

For Spain, the sample was only 54 observations; therefore, a similar power test (as in Table 1) gave the results from several to several dozen per cent, assuming a small number of degrees of freedom and the effect size = 0,5.

Presentation of the Studied Populations

The students of three universities took part in the study: the Cracow University of Economics (Poland), the AGH University of Science and Technology in Cracow (Poland) and the University of Malaga (Spain), both full-time and part-time studies.

After the verification of the obtained results, the analysis process covered the answers contained in 540 questionnaires filled in by the students of the Polish universities and 54 students of the Spanish university. The main assumption of the conducted research process was to observe differences in the behaviour and attitudes of Polish and Spanish young adults. However, the different number of respondents in individual countries meant that a complete analysis of the research conducted in Poland was carried out, and the Spanish market research was considered a pilot study. The obtained results limit full inference but simultaneously make it possible to define preliminary assumptions and plan further detailed analysis.

In the surveyed group (table 2) in Poland, women constitute 55.93% of the respondents, while it is 68.51% among Spanish university students. In Poland, most of the respondents are first-cycle students (95.45%), both undergraduate and engineering, while the Spanish respondents are mainly second-cycle students (92.59%).

Most of the respondents are dependent on their parents (in Poland – 70.93%, in Spain – 72.22%), for the rest their main source of income is their own professional work. More than half of the respondents (in Poland – 52.22%, in Spain – 59.26%) live in large cities (over 50,000 inhabitants).

As for the nature of the place of residence, the largest group in Poland lives in rented rooms or flats (45.18%), a large proportion of the respondents also live with their parents (31.30%), many fewer people live in a dormitory (15.37%), and the least of them declare living in their own apartment (8.15%). In Spain, living with parents is the most popular (51.85%), while renting a room came second (38.89%). Over three-quarters of the respondents from the Polish universities (76.11%) study full-time, among the respondents from the Spanish university there are as many as 94.44%.

Table 2. General characteristics of the studied populations

Gender of the surveyed respondents							
Women		Men				Other	
68.51%	54.44%	31.48%	45.19%	0%	0.37%		
Level of study of the surveyed respondents							
1st degree (undergraduate studies)		1st degree (engineering studies)		2nd degree (master's degree)			
1.85%	51.30%	5.56%	43.15%	92.59%	5.55%		
Year of birth							
1978-1999				2000-2004			
42.59%	15.74%	57.41%	84.26%				
Source of income for the surveyed respondents							
Parents				Own professional work			
72.22	70.93%	27.78	29.07%				
Place of residence (a city)							
Up to 5,000 inhabitants		More than 5,000 and less than 50,000 inhabitants		At least 50,000 inhabitants			
7.41	29.26%	33.33	18.52%	59.26%	52.22%		
Place of residence of the respondents (a form of ownership)							
The space under the management (or co-management) of the respondent				Space managed by external entities			
55.56%	39.44%	44.44%	60.56%				
Place of residence (details)							
Own flat		Living with their parents		Dormitory		Rented flat (room)	
3.70%	8.15%	51.85%	31.30%	5.56%	15.37%	38.89%	45.18%
Form of studies							
Full-time studies				Part-time studies			
94.44%	76.11%	5.56%	23.89%				

Note: due to the large size of the table, some indications of the given results and the number of cases were omitted; the first numerical value given for a given answer is the percentage of indications for the research carried out at the university in Spain, the second value is the percentage of indications of the research from the Polish universities.

Source: own research, 2022.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main goal of the research process carried out was to identify selected pro-environmental behaviour (together with their determinants) of Polish and Spanish young adults and to determine whether they should be taken into account in the process of shaping the market offer of modern international companies.

As part of the online survey, the respondents answered questions concerning their selected pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour (table 3.).

Most of the respondents are convinced that their attitude towards the natural environment can be considered pro-environmental. They most often believe (73.33% of the respondents from Spain and 59.26% of the respondents from the Polish universities) that the level of environmental awareness and the intensity of involvement of modern people in pro-environmental activities is rather average (people are aware of the problems, but it is difficult for them to change their current habits). Young adults do not feel the need to fight to improve the condition of the natural environment – more than half (59.26% – Spain; 59.63% – Poland) not only have never taken part in a demonstration to improve the climate, but it has not even occurred to them. They hardly monitor the activity of pro-environmental organisations on social media. Limiting car traffic in city centres is considered necessary by slightly more than one-fifth (22.22%) of the Polish universities and as many as 46.30% of the respondents from

Spain. Most surveyed young adults do not intend to quit working for a company with a negative ecological image (applying for a job with a non-ecological employer) – both from the Polish universities and the Spanish one.

Table 3. Distribution of the respondents' responses regarding their pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour

Do you think that your present lifestyle can be considered environmentally friendly?									
Rather not		Sometimes yes, and sometimes not			Rather yes		Definitely yes		
9.26%	6.30%	55.56%		44.07%	35.18%	44.26%	0%	5.37%	
How do you rate the level of environmental awareness and the intensity of involvement of modern people in pro-environmental activities?									
The little activity, people live as if they assumed that these activities are unnecessary, because nature can handle it by itself		The low level of activity, people have more important problems and the environment has to wait		The average activity level, people are aware of the problems, but find it difficult to change their habits			The great commitment of the society is seen, but the financial outlays for these activities are still too low		
7.41%	7.78%	14.81%	11.67%	59.26%	73.33%	18.52%	7.22%		
Do you take part in marches and demonstrations for the benefit of the natural environment?									
No, it has never occurred to me		No, but I post positive comments, e.g. under such information in social media		I was planning to participate, but I have a lot of other activities and I haven't managed to do it		I have participated in them (a few times at most) and for the company rather than for the real need to express my views		Yes, I often take part in such demonstrations	
59.26%	59.63%	18.52%	19.82%	11.11%	14.44%	9.26%	3.52%	1.85%	2.59%
Do you monitor the activity of pro-environmental organizations (people) in social media?									
No, I never do		Yes, I monitor some		Yes, I follow and actively comment on their entries		Yes, and I also run such a channel on social media			
40.74%	48.89%	48.15%	49.26%	11.11%	1.67%	0%		0.18%	
Would you accept a city center ban on private cars in your city?									
I will not agree to it in my life		It will be very hard for me, but somehow I will accept it			Yes, I consider such a decision necessary for the benefit of the residents				
22.22%	28.89%	31.48%	48.89%	46.30%		22.22%			
When choosing an employer, will you pay attention to their ecological image?									
I'm not going to pay attention to that		I will look at this matter, but a negative ecological image will not prevent me from applying for a job			Definitely yes and I will not apply for a job in a company with a non-ecological image				
20.37%	28.52%	61.11%		62.59%		18.52%		8.89%	
Do you follow the producers' ecological approach to the production process when making purchasing decisions?									
I do not notice such markings and never take them into account		I notice the existence of such information and markings, but do not take them into account		I notice such information and I am pleased when I buy "bio" products, but it is not necessary		Only in the case of nutritional products, because it directly affects my health		Yes, I always look for such information and the lack of it means that I give up the purchase	
0	16.30%	42.59%	20.55%	48.15%	40.37%	1.85%	18.89%	7.41%	3.89%

Note: due to the large size of the table, some indications of the given results and the number of cases were omitted; the first numerical value given for a given answer is the percentage of indications for the research carried out at the university in Spain, the second value is the percentage of indications of the research from the Polish universities.

Source: own research, 2022.

Analysis of the Research Results of the Respondents from the Polish Universities

Using the χ^2 test for multiple-choice questions, a statistically significant relationship was found between the answer to the question of whether the respondent considers their lifestyle to be environmentally friendly and the declared age ($\chi^2=10,29$; $p=0,02$, $V=0,14$). Older people (born 1978-1999) were more often convinced that they live ecologically than younger people (2000-2004). It may be a real reflection of the behaviour of both age groups or the greater awareness of young adults that makes them more critical of the same behaviour.

By analysing the involvement in marches and demonstrations for the benefit of the natural environment, it was found that there is a statistically significant relationship between this variable and the variable "place of residence – a city" ($\chi^2=17.81$; $p=0.01$; $V=0.13$) and the variable "gender" ($\chi^2=44.26$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.20$).

It has never occurred to take part in such a demonstration to:

- 71.51% of the people living in towns of less than 5,000 inhabitants;
- 72.95% of the men;
- 48,64% of the surveyed women.

There is a statistically significant relationship between the monitoring of the pro-environmental organisations' social media by the respondents and the variable "gender" ($\chi^2=37.75$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.19$) and the variable "year of birth" ($\chi^2=10.72$; $p=0.01$; $V=0.14$). Women most often declare that they follow several such profiles (60.20%), and men that they never look at such profiles (63.11%). Among the people born before 2000, 62.35% never look at such profiles (this is their most common answer), and among people younger than them, the dominant response is "Yes, I watch a few" (52.09%).

A statistically significant correlation was observed between the answer to the question whether you would accept a ban on entering the city centre for private passenger cars in your city, and the variable "place of residence – a form of ownership" ($\chi^2=36.17$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.12$), the variable "a source of income" ($\chi^2=17.51$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.12$), the variable "gender" ($\chi^2=23.77$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.15$) and the variable "year of birth" ($\chi^2=15.57$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.17$). Opponents of this restriction include, among others:

- 42.60% of those living with their parents;
- 35.05% of the people who make a living from their own professional work;
- 26.37% of those dependent on parents;
- 23.47% of the women;
- 35.66% of the men;
- 17,65% of the people born before 2000;
- 30,99% of the persons born after 2000.

The existence of a statistically significant correlation was also noted between the variable containing the answers to the question of whether, when choosing an employer, you will pay attention to their ecological image and the variables "gender" ($\chi^2=51.97$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.22$) and the variable "a source of income" ($\chi^2=7.72$; $p=0.02$; $V=0.12$).

The following are not going to pay attention to the ecological image of the employer:

- 16.33% of the women;
- 43.44% of the men;
- 36.94% of the people who make a living from their professional work;
- 25.06% of the respondents are dependent on their parents.

There is a statistically significant relationship between the answer to the question of whether, when making purchasing decisions, you follow the producers' ecological approach to the production process and the gender of the respondents ($\chi^2=42.46$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.20$). It is the women who most often declare (49.66% of them) that they notice such information and are happy when the products they buy have such features. Still, it is not necessary (29.51% of the men most often see the existence of such information but do not consider it).

When analysing literature sources in the field of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour of young adults, a large number of publications on this topic can be observed, but at the same time they deal with slightly different areas of fundamentals and behaviour. The obtained research results on pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour of young adults concern a relatively narrow topic in this field, which makes a direct comparison with the results presented in the literature review difficult.

At the same time, it should be noted that today's changes in attitudes and behaviour are also a result of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which severely limits the possibilities for comparisons with research results from an earlier period.

Therefore, the authors of this article do not refer to earlier research results (treating them as a general background to their findings) but focus on comparing the study groups.

Analysis of the research results of the respondents from the Spanish university

For the Spanish university students, only 54 completed questionnaires were obtained. The smaller group of responses resulted in a smaller number of relationships that could be observed.

In the study of the behaviour of the young adults from the university in Spain, four statistically significant relationships were distinguished (the χ^2 test for the multiple-choice questions) between the answers to the following questions and the selected variables listed:

- whether you monitor the activity of pro-environmental organisations (people) in social media and the variable “a form of studies” ($\chi^2=8.35$; $p=0.01$; $V=0.40$);
- whether you would accept a ban on driving private cars in the city centre and the variable “a form of studies” ($\chi^2=11.12$; $p=0.00$; $V=0.45$);
- whether when choosing an employer, you pay attention to their ecological image and the variable “a source of income” ($\chi^2=9.33$; $p=0.01$; $V=0.42$);
- whether the ecological activity of producers influences the decision to purchase the products they offer and the variable “a source of income” ($\chi^2=8.29$; $p=0.04$; $V=0.39$).

In this part of the research, the values of the Cramer V coefficient deserve attention, which are higher than those obtained during the analysis of the responses of the respondents from the Polish universities, which would suggest that the relationships identified in the studies of the Spanish university students are stronger.

The analysis of the research of the respondents from the Polish universities allowed to distinguish the variables “gender” (six statistically significant relationships) and “a year of birth” (three relationships) as potential determinants of the differentiation of pro-environmental behaviour of young adults. For the respondents from the university in Malaga, the most important variables were: “a form of studies” and “a source of income” (two statistically significant relationships each).

The emerging differences may result from the fact that the Spanish university students were clearly younger than those of the Polish universities. Based on this information, a thesis can be made that the behaviour of young adults is initially determined by their source of income (a very similar distribution of the responses from both the students of the university in Malaga and the university in Cracow), and only later the gender is important.

The research process described here partly confirms the findings presented in the literature review. It can be assumed, following the cited authors, that climate and environmental well-being underlie many of the life decisions of the young adults surveyed and that this process is intensifying. The authors of this article confirm that the intensity of sensitivity to pro-environmental themes depends on various economic and political conditions and on the demographic characteristics of young adults, as detailed within the presentation of the research results.

As indicated within the research results described, there are differences between the attitudes and behaviours of young adults from Spain and Poland.

CONCLUSIONS

As part of the realised research process, it was determined what the attitude of the selected young adults from the Spanish university and their Polish counterparts to selected pro-environmental behaviour have.

It was found, among others, that students from the Spanish university, compared to their colleagues from Cracow universities, are more aware of the need to increase expenditure on pro-environmental activities. They are more critical about the assessment of the environmental performance of their lifestyle.

It can be presumed that the need of a more intensive introduction of the pro-environmental aspects to both the offers for the sale of goods and the job offers will be noticeable in the first place on the Spanish market. It will be crucial in relations with women from larger cities. Men are less interested in ecological information than women. Women are more willing to engage in various activities for the natural environment, and it can be assumed that they will look for such elements more often than men when making their market decisions.

The Spanish market research is subject to a higher degree of uncertainty due to the small size of the research sample from that market. The results obtained in this phase will be verified in subsequent studies. Particular attention will be paid to the variables “gender”, “a year of birth”, and “a source of income”, as those that most often appeared as an element of statistically significant dependencies in the research process.

The results obtained will be of great relevance to managerial decisions made in companies with regard to new product launches (particularly in international markets). The results obtained need to be confirmed on larger samples and using qualitative research methods such as ethnographic research, projective techniques and experiments. Such research would enable a more accurate analysis of the actual behaviour of young adults and not just their declarations and attitudes—authors of the paper plan to continue and develop this research in this area.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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