

Interview Template

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Date	28/01/26	Position Title	Student

Hypothesis

University students are aware that clothing waste is an important environmental issue, but this awareness rarely leads to action. This is due to lack of relevant solutions, limited time, and social or cultural barriers regarding second-hand clothing.

Introduction

Hello, thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

My name is Isabella Caputi, and I am currently studying at Universidad de los Andes. The purpose of this interview is to explore students' perceptions, habits, and experiences related to clothing waste and second-hand clothing, specifically within the context of universities.

Before we begin, I would like to ask for your permission to record this interview. The recording will be used only for academic purposes as part of a university project, and it will not be accessed or shared beyond this context. Your participation is voluntary, and your answers will be kept confidential.

Is it okay if I record this interview?

Interviewee: Sure, it's alright.

Interview questions

Demographic questions

Q1. Tell me a little bit about yourself, how old are you? What program are you studying?

All right, so I'm 23 years old. I'm a student at the economics program at Los Andes University. And this is my last semester at the university.

Purpose: *To contextualize clothing consumption habits according to age and to provide academic context that may relate to awareness or attitudes toward sustainability.*

General and focused Curiosity questions

Q2. What is your current opinion regarding clothing waste at your University?

Well, I think clothing waste is actually a very important kind of big problem today. The reason I think this is because many people buy clothes very often because they're cheap and easy to find and have a lot of diversity, especially with fast fashion. So it's really, really accessible for everyone. So because of this, I think people stop using clothes very quickly. The clothes they buy and the clothes that they have been having for a while. And even when they are in, the clothes are still in good condition, even though they're new or they're old. So I think this creates a lot of waste and people don't always think about what happens to the clothes after they stop using them or throw them away.

Purpose: *To evaluate awareness of the problem.*

Q3. How conscious would you say you are about sustainability in general in your daily life?

Well, I try to be conscious about sustainability in my daily life, but I am not always consistent. It's not easy to try to be sustainable in all aspects in life. But I care about the environment and I like the idea of being more sustainable. But as I was saying, sometimes it's difficult because sustainable options aren't always the easiest or the fastest or even the cheapest. For example, when I am busy, I usually choose what is more convenient instead of what is more sustainable. Like the decision I make at the moment, despite the fact that I try to be sustainable in general.

Purpose: To understand general sustainability awareness.

Q4. Do you think there is a gap between knowing about sustainability and actually acting on it?

Yes, I definitely think there is a big gap between knowing and acting, and I think it happens to me all the time, and I think it happens to many people, not only university, but here specifically. I think many students know that sustainability is important, it's an important topic, and they talk about it, but when it comes to actually changing habits and changing their ways of life, it is harder. not only in the university, but inside their households and with their friends and everything. I think it's not easy at all. I think this happens also because students have little time, little free time, many responsibilities, and sometimes they just don't see the immediate benefits from acting sustainably. They just have a lot of odd things in mind. That's what actually drives their actions.

Purpose: To explore awareness AND action.

Q5. And since you're talking about time, how often do you stop using clothes that are still in good condition during the year if you have little time?

Usually one or two times per year, especially when I take a good amount of time on a weekend to organize my closet. When I do this, I realize that I have many clothes that I don't use anymore. All types of clothes, shoes, jackets, shirts, everything. And even though they're in good condition, there's just a bunch of them that I don't use anymore. So that's what I think is good about sustainability. It's not that I don't like them or that they're damaged or they don't work anymore. It's just that I just don't wear them and probably won't take advantage of them in a way that I could have done before.

Purpose: To identify potencial waste.

Q6. Since you mentioned that you stopped wearing a lot of clothes, what is the main reason for you to stop using certain clothes?

I think the main reason is that my taste or style changes over time. I think that doesn't only happen to me, but to probably everyone in the world, especially in a young age, like a university age, because it's changing so frequently. I also think that throughout your university life, you change your style also towards comfort too. So it's not just about looks, but also about comfort. So yeah, sometimes I buy clothes that I like at the moment, but after some time I don't feel comfortable wearing them or I don't like it as much. So yeah, I think it's all about the trends and the way the trends change very fast. So clothes actually feel old really, really fast, even if they are still fine, like good looking, also in good shape, like they're not damaged or anything, but they just don't go along with the trend.

Purpose: To Understand why clothes are discarded.

Q7. And do you think, talking about trends, university students contribute significantly to clothing wastes? Why or why not?

Yeah, definitely. I think university students contribute a lot to clothing waste. As I was saying before, we as students and young people are very influenced by trends, social media, pressure to look good at university and also trying to be comfortable. So it's not easy to find that match between comfort and good looks. And then because of these, students buy new clothes often and stop using them quickly, which naturally increases a lot of clothing waste.

Purpose: To understand responsibility perception.

Q8. Okay, and now talking about what you do with the clothes that you don't longer use, what do you usually do?

Well, I would say most of the time I just keep them in my closet. I feel bad throwing them away to the garbage. So I tell myself that maybe I will use them again at some moment in time. Sometimes I give clothes to family members, but I don't do it very often. Donating is something I think about too, but I don't always know where to go and don't have the time either. So I just postpone it every time or mostly.

Purpose: To understand current disposal behaviors.

Q9. You mentioned that you usually keep clothes even if you don't use them anymore. Why do you think you end up doing that?

I think it's because I feel guilty throwing them away, as I was saying before. But at the same time, I don't take action to donate or sell them. I also think I might need them in the future, even if that almost never happens. So they just stay there taking space in my closet and nothing really changes with them.

Purpose: To explore emotional and practical reasons behind inaction.

Q10. Have you ever bought second-hand clothes? If you have, can you describe that experience? If you haven't, why not?

Yes, I have bought secondhand clothes a few times. It was usually in thrift stores. Sometimes I found nice things, but it took a lot of time too. Also, I wasn't always sure about the quality or about if the clothes would last, the durability. And I like the idea though of buying secondhand, but in the practice, it was not always easy.

Purpose: To explore previous exposure to second-hand consumption.

Q11. Would you be open to buying second-hand clothes if they came from other students at your university? Would you feel more comfortable with that?

Yes, I think I would be more open to that. If the clothes are from other students, it feels more familiar and safe. And I think it would be pretty easier to trust the quality and the style of people that I live with almost every day. Also, it feels a bit more personal, like helping someone similar to you to get some money or whatever, like to get a new source of income from the clothes that they no longer use.

Purpose: To evaluate openness to peer-based, localized solutions.

Q12. What is the main reason why you do not buy or sell second-hand clothes more often?

I think the main reason is convenience. There is no easy platform to do it practically, and it feels like a lot of work also. Selling clothes means taking pictures, uploading them, talking to people, getting to social media more often. And as a student, sometimes it feels like it's easier to just buy something new instead of going through that whole process.

Purpose: To identify perceived barriers to participation.

Q13. You mentioned that sustainability is important to you, but that you don't always act in a sustainable way. **How does that make you feel?**

It makes me feel a little guilty, to be honest. I know that I could do more and make better decisions, but sometimes it feels overwhelming. As a student, I have many responsibilities, little time, and sustainability ends up being something I definitely think about, but I don't always prioritize. And I want to be more responsible, but I also want things to be easy and accessible. Now, if there were simpler options, I think I would feel more motivated and less frustrated.

Purpose: To explore emotional responses and internal conflict related to sustainability behaviors.

Q14. Would you find useful a mobile app only for Universidad de los Andes students where they can sell or exchange clothes? Why?

Sure. Yes, I think it would be very useful. Mainly if the app is only for students, it will feel safer and more organized. It will also make the process much easier. I think many students would be able to participate if it was simple and fast and it could really help reduce clothing waste inside the university.

Purpose: To test acceptance of a solution aligned with the hypothesis.

Conclusion

Thank you very much for your time and for sharing your experiences and opinions with me. This interview was very useful for my project, and I really appreciate your openness and honesty. If you have any questions later or would like to add something, please feel free to contact me. Thanks again for your help. Bye.