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Understanding cognition of laundry habits to foster sustainable behavior

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Abstract

Behavior plays a crucial role in promoting sustainability. In semi-structured user-interviews, ten subjects provided information on their laundry habits. Most participants had little understanding of the unit kilowatt-hours and rarely used the eco-program. Some participants were unaware if their machine has an eco-option. They learned washing from their mothers or taught themselves. However, since the mothers did not know the eco-program, they could not pass on its use. Confronted with resource consumption of modern washing machines, some participants indicated plans for behavioral adjustment. The idea of displaying the price per washing cycle directly on the machine was evaluated positively by most participants. In conclusion, the majority had no conception of their electricity consumption or the eco-program. Results indicate that sustainability is hardly tangible for most people. Hence, making behavioral consequences accessible provides a good starting point for behavioral change.