How Green Are We?
Attitudes Towards Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion
Bachelor Thesis in Business Administration

Title: How Green Are We? Attitudes Towards Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion
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Abstract

Problem: Environmental consciousness is growing within the fast fashion industry. It is currently in the shadow of regular fast fashion and fighting the skeptical attitude from consumers. Although the demand for a more sustainable lifestyle is highly valued, the intentions of purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion are low. This causes researchers to ask why this is.

Purpose: The purpose of this qualitative research paper was to explore what factors affect the formation of intentions to consume eco-friendly fast fashion among females of Generation Y’s consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion. Two research question have been formulated to fulfill this purpose.

Methodology: In order to fulfill the purpose and to answer the two research questions, a qualitative research approach was adopted. Focus groups and semi-structured interviews were used in the empirical data collection process. The chosen target group were females of Generation Y and the sample was chosen through convenience sampling.

Conclusion: This empirical study identified five key factors affecting female’s consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion; knowledge and awareness, style, convenience, skepticism and financial situation. It was furthermore concluded that the sample did not intend to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion and therefore do not perform the behavior.
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Chapter 1. Introduction

This section will give the reader a background of the topic and provide a justification of its importance. The problem will be presented along with the purpose and aim of the study, followed by the research questions and delimitations. Lastly, the key terms will be presented.

1.1 Background

President Obama stated in an interview with the New York Times in 2016 that “What makes climate change difficult is that it is not an instantaneous catastrophic event. It’s a slow-moving issue that, on a day-to-day basis, people don’t experience and don’t see.”. This statement is in agreement with the statistics of rising CO₂ emissions (World Bank, 2016). These changes have a negative impact on our planet by raising both land and water temperature, rising sea levels, changing animal life cycles and ecosystems and creations of more droughts and wildfires (UNFCCC, 2016). In 2015, the Swedish government set up sixteen environmental goals for how the Swedish environment should look like in 2020. These goals vary from air pollution to a rich environment for plants and animals (Miljömål, 2017). Even though Sweden has been recognized as the “goodest” country on Earth, when it comes to serving the interests of the population and at the same time avoiding damaging other nations and the environment, there are still aspects of climate initiatives that could be improved (The Good Country, 2016).

There is a greater amount of green products entering the market today than ever before (Neiva de Figueiredo & Guillén, 2011). One could argue that a green product is a good that, throughout its lifecycle, is less harmful to the environment. This could include everything from the supply chain and assembly line to the recycling process of the product. The assortment of green products varies from everyday products to long-term products aiming to establish a more sustainable environment. Green products that are currently on the market includes; clean energy, new recyclable materials, water management, green tourism, food, as well as fashion. It is crucial for companies to invest in producing green products, since it supports improvements of quality of life on Earth (Neiva de Figueiredo & Guillén, 2011).

National Geographic (2014) have completed an in-depth analysis of green consumption over the past nine years. The research shows that the entire planet consumes more green than ever. This indicates that green knowledge is widely known and affects consumer’s behaviors and views on consumption. By spreading more knowledge about environmental changes and
producing more green products, consumers are influenced to strive for a more sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyle (National Geographic, 2014). However, there is a growing skepticism of green products and consumers are questioning how green some products actually are. This skepticism creates barriers for future movement towards an eco-friendlier world (Bates & Kristofek, 2008).

Previous research on consumption has shown that many countries around the world have evolved into mass consumption societies. According to Matsuyama (2002) a mass consumption society can be defined as “a society in which […] the majority of families enjoy the benefits of increased productivity and constantly expand their range of consumer goods”. Materialism and possession are two main factors of the existence of mass consumption. Possession have for many decades been strongly related to status, self-confidence, symbolism and a way for individuals to express their own interests. Historically, fashion is a possession that has been seen as a symbol of wealth. Previously, the importance was the actual materials such as wool, satin and fur, whereas today it has shifted towards the amount one possesses (O’Cass, 2004). The focus is not only on exclusive clothing, consumerism has developed into a fast moving, worldwide phenomenon where new fashion trends are out on the market within weeks. Fast fashion is closely connected to mass consumption, since the purpose of fast fashion is low prices, high level of accessibility (both online and in stores) as well as new clothing trends constantly being produced (Ekström et al., 2012). However, an increase of availability of eco-friendly fast fashion has been seen during the last decade. Fast fashion companies have launched eco-friendly alternatives aimed at attracting consumers into the field of eco-friendly clothing. Although these initiatives are being launched, they are produced in a significantly smaller quantity and placed in the shadow of regular clothes (Joy et al., 2012).

1.2 Problem
The emergence of the fast fashion industry has led to the development of a consumption society with a throwaway mentality. On average, each Swede purchases around thirteen kilos of clothes each year and eight kilos are thrown away. Between 2000 and 2010, the private clothing consumption increased by 50% in Sweden. This consumption of textiles account for around 2-3 percent of Sweden’s total emission of dangerous greenhouse gasses (Naturvårdsverket, 2017). Ekström et al. (2012) states that this consumption society has led to short term and unsustainable consumptions, which negatively affects the environment. Furthermore, Ekström
et al. (2012) suggests consumers to purchase more environmentally friendly clothes in order to change this trend into more long-term and sustainable consumption patterns.

Environmentally friendly fashion was first launched in Sweden in early 1990’s and in 1995 the first sustainability-labels and guidelines were introduced to the fashion industry (Jiborn, 1999). Svensson (2009) states that most Swedes perceive themselves as living a sustainable lifestyle, however, research has shown that attempts to introduce environmentally friendly products on the Swedish market have been done with little success (Hedström, 2013). When browsing through the websites of fast fashion chains such as H&M and Gina Tricot one can find that they are offering environmentally friendly collections. However, when the researchers looked into why consumers purchase these collections over the regular ones, little information and previous research was found. Furthermore, little research was found to exist on what influences consumers in their purchase decision of eco-friendly clothing items. Thus, an interest to explore this within the fast fashion industry occurred.

Strong sense of fashion, high purchasing power and a desire of living a sustainable lifestyle are characteristics commonly associated with Generation Y (Ekström et al., 2012). These characteristics of Generation Y can be seen as somewhat contradicting as, according to Ajzen (1991), attitudes and intentions are good predictors of behaviors. Thus, it was of interest to explore how this group of individuals think and act when it comes to being environmentally friendly while purchasing fast fashion. Little to no research was found to exist of the relationship between Generation Y and living a sustainable lifestyle. Furthermore, research of the differences between the genders perceptions on eco-friendly consumption has not been the subject of much research. However, research has shown that females have higher purchasing desires than men (Ekström et al., 2012). Thus, the researchers decided to focus this empirical study on females within Generation Y.

1.3 Purpose and Research Questions
Consumption of environment friendly products has shown to be increasing. However, this may not have necessarily transitioned into the fast fashion industry. The purpose of this qualitative research paper was to explore what factors affect the intentions among females of Generation Y to consume eco-friendly fast fashion. Furthermore, the study tried to uncover how these intentions may be used in order to predict the females’ consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion.
The expectation was that the knowledge uncovered can lead to valuable insight into green consumer behavior in the fast fashion industry. To be able to complete the purpose, female’s attitudes, perceptions and behaviors in relation to environmentally friendly fast fashion was explored. The following research questions were formulated:

*RQ1: What factors affect females’ intentions to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion?*

*RQ2: How can these intentions be used to predict females’ consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion?*

### 1.4 Delimitations

This study did not focus on males’ attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion. Females of other generations than Generation Y were not considered for this study. Furthermore, this study did not focus on how companies might benefit from a greater understanding of females’ attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion. The researchers were aware that eco-friendly clothes do not only exist within the fast fashion industry, however, this study did not consider any other industries. Although this study was conducted through a lens of Theory of Planned Behavior, it did not emphasize the direct relationship between perceived behavioral control and behavior.

### 1.5 Key Terms

Chapter 2. Frame of Reference

In this section, the reader will be presented with theories, concepts and definitions that are central to the study. The researchers draw upon these when forming their empirical study and this section will allow the reader to better understand the conducted study and its results.

2.1 Marketing

Marketing may be defined from both a societal and a managerial perspective. The societal definition describes marketing as “a societal process by which individuals and groups of individuals obtain what they need through creating, offering and freely exchanging products and services of value with each other” (Kotler, 2009). The managerial definition of marketing states that “marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” (AMA Publishing, 2013).

Marketing is not an end in itself but a part of business management, which must serve the business as well as society. Marketing must act with the general public in mind and exists beyond demand and supply (Lazer, 1969). Marketers should create a sense of purpose for the firm in order to help solve societal problems. The aim of marketing is to create value and to persuade consumers into consuming goods and services. Further, marketers should develop a community, societal obligations and commitments, and recognize the challenges that come with being a business with social impact. In order to communicate relevant marketing, a company should be guided by their target audience. The attitudes, values, beliefs and needs of this audience should be considered by marketers when designing marketing communication initiatives. When this is done correctly, a company is able to evoke the desired purchase patterns from the target consumers (Lazer, 1969). A number of sub-sections exist within marketing, such as digital marketing, content marketing and green marketing (Lazer, 1969), and this study was concerned with green marketing.

2.1.1 Green Marketing

Green marketing is defined as “marketing that meets the present needs of consumers and businesses while preserving or enhancing the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (Armstrong, Kotler & Parment, 2009). Green marketing is innovative, with the consumer in focus and involves full use of all company resources. Furthermore, green marketing has a long-
term goal aimed at developing, communicating and growing environmental mission-focused business activities (Kumar, 2016; Crane & Peattie, 2005). Green marketing questions consumption ideologies, critically investigates the ecological impacts of marketing and raises the criticality of addressing environmental issues of marketing (Lazar, 1969).

In the 1980’s and 90’s, companies started communicating green slogans and claims about their products. However, this was often done without backing up their claims with actual greenifications concerning their manufacturing and other business operations. This became known as companies jumping on the green bandwagon and negatively affected companies who were putting out actual efforts in creating sustainable products (Wagner, 2003). Wagner (2003) suggests that an insufficient amount of knowledge about green consumer behavior was available at the time in order for companies to accurately communicate green messages to their consumer.

There are a number of aspects that may be considered when defining a green product, including materials, production processes, transportation and distribution. Saini (2013) argues that products may be considered green if they: conserve water and/or energy, prevents contributions to air, water and land pollutions, uses renewable, responsibly sourced materials, produces little environmental impact, and is manufactured in an environmentally conscious way. Delafrooz et al. (2013) argues that organizations and consumers have a responsibility to purchase green products in order to help preserve the environment. Moreover, they state that even though consumers have different attitudes and commitments towards green consumption, they all contribute and play a vital role in helping the environment. Concerning how to define a green fashion item, no one unanimous definition has shown to exist (Friedman, 2010). Different individuals seem to have their own views and definitions, for example, designer Oscar de la Renta describes it as “a commitment to the traditional techniques, and not just the art, of making clothes” whereas Anya Hindmarch, designer, says “I would define the ideal as locally sourced materials that don’t pollute in their creation or demise (preferably recycled) and with limited transportation to achieve the completed product.” (Friedman, 2010). Thus indicating that a number of factors such as personal values, past experiences and behaviors plays a role when determining what constitutes as green fashion.
2.2 Consumer Behavior regarding Green Products

Consumer behavior is used throughout marketing and may be defined as “the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires” (Solomon, 2015). Factors that influence consumer behavior are important to examine in order to be able to understand why consumers purchase a certain product over another. Consumers’ habits, values, conveniences, personal health concerns and individual responses to social norms influence their decision to purchase a certain product or brand (Barber et al., 2012).

In recent years, the term green consumer behavior has emerged. Green consumer behavior is defined by Wagner (2003) as “behavior that reflects concern about the effects of manufacturing and consumption on the natural environment”. Researchers suggest that consumers who are more aware of environmental issues may be more likely to display green purchasing behavior than an unaware consumer (Lee & Moscardo, 2005). Bates and Kristofek (2008) findings reveal that consumer’s green behaviors are complex and based on various personal motivations and characteristics. The researchers argue that green consumer behavior can be altered with regards to different environmentally friendly issues (Bates & Kristofek, 2008). Furthermore, it has been shown that consumers have difficulty with evaluating how environmentally friendly a product is. The greenness of a product has caused consumers to be skeptical and confused (Wagner, 2003). The inability to evaluate how environmentally friendly products are, is a major challenge for marketers to overcome in order to sell their products. Consumer behavior within fashion does not normally fall in accordance with consumers’ perceived green behavior (Perry & Chung, 2016).

2.3 Consumer Behavior regarding Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion

Fast fashion is a form of business strategy that companies have applied to the market because of high demand and to gain economic growth (Fletcher, 2008). The strategy has affected other industries by having a quick production line that causes their products to be launched faster than other retailers. Fletcher (2008) suggests that the increasing pace of society pushes consumers to make quicker decisions, which may lead to higher consumption. Even though fast fashion is directly related to power and prosperity, it is seen as one of the causes to a non-environmentally friendly lifestyle since it promotes a mass consumption purchasing behavior.
Fast fashion chains have a comparative advantage within the fashion industry due to their unique positioning where they constantly provide the market with new products at a high pace. Furthermore, much of their clothing is trend based, which attracts a majority of Generation Y. This comparative advantage leads to consumers purchasing new clothes at a higher pace and contributing to mass consumption (Fletcher, 2008).

When looking into the fast fashion industry, it is found that eco-friendly alternatives do exist. However, Joergens (2006) argues, based on the findings of her study, that ethical issues have little effect on consumers purchase intentions. Rather factors such as personal needs and style were suggested to play a role in formation of fashion-related purchase intentions (Joergens, 2006). Bates and Kristofek (2008) suggest that to be able to increase people’s involvement in being eco-friendly, a stronger connection must be made between the environment and individuals’ day-to-day life. Environmentally friendly products are increasing in both the agriculture and the energy industry, alternatives have also emerged within the fashion industry. Eco-friendly fashion can be defined as “the positive impact of a designer, a consumer choice, a method of production as experienced by workers, consumers, animals, society, and the environment” (Thomas, 2008). However, it has been found that fast fashion initiatives towards sustainability feeds skepticism (BSR, 2009). This skepticism can be referred to as greenwashing and may be defined as “the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company (firm-level greenwashing) or the environmental benefits of a product or service (product-level greenwashing)” (Cuerel Burbano & Delmas, 2011). The skepticism can be based both on the reputation of the brand or on the misleading information regarding their marketing of their eco-friendly initiatives (Cuerel Burbano & Delmas, 2011).

2.4 Theory of Planned Behavior
Theory of Planned Behavior was proposed by Icke Ajzen in 1991 and is being used to explore consumer behavior (see figure 1). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of Ajzen & Fishbein’s Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) developed in 1975, both theories suggest that certain human behaviors can be determined by an individuals’ intention of performing a specific behavior. An intention may be defined as “a determination to act in a certain way” (Merriam-Webster, 2017). Ajzen (1991) believes that intentions are used to identify the motivational factors that influences behavior. TPB suggests that the stronger one’s intention is to carry out a specific behavior, the more likely it is that the behavior will be carried
out. However, some researchers question TPB by saying that an intention-behavior gap exist when it comes to certain behaviors. For example, Carrington et al. (2010) found that this gap exists in the minds of ethically minded consumers. Their research showed that consumers with the intentions of being ethically conscious and purchase ethical products did not always follow through with their intentions and often purchased non-ethical products instead.

![Theory of Planned Behavior](image)

*Figure 1. Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991)*

Ajzen (1991) states that intentions solely cannot evoke behavior, other factors such as an availability of the right context and resources must also be present. Furthermore, he states that the resources needed are for example time, money and skills related to a specific behavior. Simply, the likelihood of a behavior achievement is affected by the individual’s availability of resources and opportunities needed to successfully carry out the behavior. Furthermore, TPB suggests that the intentions that guide behavior are influenced by three different factors: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

### 2.4.1 Attitudes
TPB suggests that attitudes are the degree to which an individual favors or disfavors the evaluation of a behavior or an object (Ajzen, 1991). According to the ABC-model of attitudes, there are three components that form attitudes. These three components are; affect, behavior
and cognition. Affect refers to an individual’s feelings or affections towards a product. Whereas behavior uses previous behavior in order to evaluate an object. Lastly, cognition involves the brain activities and emphasizes the characteristics and functions needed in order to form an attitude (Solomon et al., 2013). The three components are always a part of an individual’s attitude, the only difference in outcome of the attitude is in which order the components are arranged.

According to Solomon et al. (2013), the affect-component of an attitude is linked to positive or negative feelings. Researchers have in recent years stressed the importance of the emotional reaction caused by objects in order to change behaviors and consumption patterns. Furthermore, it is suggested that the effect of value should being taken into consideration when encouraging new behaviors (Solomon et al., 2013). However, Olson and Kendrick (2008) argues that even though attitudes can be formed by the cognitive origin, if an individual is found in a situation where neither information nor feelings exists, individuals tend to evaluate their previous behavior towards the object in order to form attitudes.

Even though eco-friendly initiatives are being launched within the fast fashion industry, there has been research arguing that the attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion are rather skeptical (Joy et al., 2012). One reason for this skepticism is that consumers are questioning how fast/mass production, shipping and cheap material can be eco-friendly. This causes consumers to question these products and it therefore creates a gap between green intentions and purchasing behavior, which results in a low chance for intentions to lead to behaviors (Joy et al., 2012). Consumers today possess a larger amount of knowledge and interest in companies’ corporate social responsibility, which affects consumers purchasing behavior. Thus, if consumers’ attitudes are positively related to the company's initiatives, consumers would more likely be positive towards eco-friendly fast fashion (Cowan & Kinley, 2014). However, according to Joy et al. (2012), that is not the case due to misleading information given by companies.

### 2.4.2 Subjective Norm

Subjective norms refer to social influences, pressures and norms that affect one's intentions, which in turn determines behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms may reveal an individual’s beliefs of how the social group will perceive them if they perform a certain behavior. Attitudes
and subjective norms are closely linked as an individuals’ beliefs and social norms affect and form their attitudes towards certain things and thus lead to a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Bandura (1977) conducted a study on social learning, in which he found that individuals tend to act in the same way as their social surrounding. From this research he formulated the Social Learning Theory, which suggests that humans are active information processors who will observe the behaviors, norms and beliefs of their surroundings and act in accordance. Furthermore, the theory suggests that individuals will continue their behavioral pattern until they receive negative attentions, such as punishments, for that behavior. Ajzen (1991) suggests the similar with TPB; subjective norms and normative beliefs will influence an individual's perceived behavior control. These factors will in turn affect the level of an individuals’ intention to perform a behavior and thus determine whether or not a behavioral action will occur. Relating to consumption of green products, research by Arvola et al. (2008) suggests that positive and self-rewarding feelings affect the formation of these intentions. Depending on an individual's social norms he or she will develop positive and self-rewarding feeling towards different products. Thus, social norms have different impacts on the intention formation regarding different products.

Al-Swidi et al. (2014) found that subjective norms play a larger and more direct role than perceived by other researchers in impacting intentions and consumer behavior. Subjective norms are closely related to normative beliefs, which refer to an individual’s perception about whether or not their social groups will agree or disagree with a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms and normative beliefs thus suggest that individuals will act in a way that they think that their social surrounding would act or see fit to act. This means that social norms and normative beliefs that are favorable towards a certain behavior will lead to stronger behavioral intentions, and vice versa. Furthermore, Terry et al. (1999) argues that self-identity should be added as a predictor of intentions and behavior. Self-identity refers to the collection of identities an individual occupies in social structures. The self is seen as an active creator of social behavior and an individual’s self is perceived to be highly influenced by the membership to certain social groups. Self-identity reflects an individual’s membership of different social groups and is thus closely linked to subjective norms and normative beliefs (Terry et al., 1999).

The notion that social norms and normative beliefs affect an individual's intention-formation process also seems to be applicable to consumers purchase intentions of environmentally friendly fashion. Cowan & Kinley (2014) found that as society applies social pressures on an
individual to display environmentally friendly actions, that individual have stronger tendencies to purchase environmentally friendly clothes. Furthermore, their study found a positive correlation between social norms and intent to purchase environmentally friendly fashion items (Cowan & Kinley, 2014).

2.4.3 Perceived Behavioral Control
The perceived ease or difficulty of completing a certain behavior is referred to as perceived behavioral control (PBC). TPB assumes that the reflections of past experiences and anticipated obstacles contributes to an individual's PBC (Ajzen, 1991). The addition of PBC to TBP is one of the main differences from Ajzen’s previous theory, Theory of Reasoned Action. Ajzen (1991) argues that, as a general rule, when there is no perceived difficulty with performing a specific behavior, it can accurately be predicted by intentions alone. The most relevant factors related to PBC are past experiences and obstacles that one anticipates will occur. If one has encountered difficulty with a certain behavior before, one is less likely to go through with it again as they perceive to have less control. Furthermore, if there is a greater perceived amount of resources and opportunities, research has shown that this will result in a greater PBC of the behavior and vice versa (Ajzen, 1991). Research by Bandura (1977), within self-efficacy has shown that the confidence individuals have in their ability to complete a task greatly influences their behavior related to that task. This supports Ajzen's (1991) statements and findings concerning PBC and its importance in predicting behavior. It has been found by Arvola et al. (2008) that previous knowledge and experiences with the product in question seems to be of importance when forming purchase intentions regarding these products.

Ajzen (1991) argues that it is the perception of a certain behavioral control that is decisive when determining behavioral impacts and intentions. This is because the perception of the amount of control a certain individual has of a behavior is solely determined by that individual. People do not necessarily perceive behaviors with the same ease or difficult. The perception of the individual’s behavioral control may vary across situations and actions (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, both a high PBC and a PBC exists. Yzer (2012) states that individuals with high PBC are usually more motivated and argues that these individual will be more determined to follow through with the behavior. On the contrary, an individual with low PBC will be less motivated and give up easier on performing the behavior (Yzer, 2012). The level of PBC an individual experience, is a major factor of whether or not they intend on following through with a specific behavior.
Furthermore, an individual’s perception of the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior contributes to the individual’s intention of performing a behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

2.4.5 Intention and Behavior

TPB suggests the existence of a direct correlation between intentions and actions and that the final outcome of the theory is behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Furthermore, intentions are seen as a function of subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and attitudes towards a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In accordance with TPB, research by Fishbein (1980) suggests that the overall strength of an intention has a direct effect on how well the behavior is performed in the end.

A limitation with this theory is that it assumes that people act rationally in their behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). As this is not always the case, Bates and Kristofek (2008) proposed the existence of an intention-behavior gap. This gap suggests that even though individuals have the intention to go through with a certain behavior they sometimes fail to perform this behavior (Olson, 2012). In behavioral psychology, this type of discrepancy is referred to as cognitive dissonance and is defined as “the inconsistency between an individuals’ behavior and attitudes, beliefs and opinions” (Festinger, 1957). This becomes especially interesting as it has been seen to be the case with consumption of green products (Young et al., 2009). Research has shown that consumers sometimes fail with going through with their intentions of purchasing green products. This has been attributed to the highly complex and difficult consumer decision-making process related to the adoption of a sustainable lifestyle (Young et al., 2009).

Ajzen (1991) argues that intentions serve as indicators of how much effort an individual is willing to exert in order to perform a behavior. Generally, the stronger an intention is to perform a specific behavior, the more likely that individual is to perform it (Ajzen, 1991). Relating this to the purchase behaviors of eco-friendly fast fashion, it may be argued that consumers who display the strongest intentions and possesses the most motivational factors will in the end be more likely to purchase these products. However, research has shown that consumers create these intentions based on factors such as style, fit and price, rather than considering the environmental or ethical impact of their purchases (Joergens, 2006). Furthermore, research by Bates and Kristofek (2008) suggests that environmental issues are seen as intangible, which makes it difficult for consumers to grasp and relate to them. This may be related to the findings
by Barber (2012) who found an inconsistency between consumers’ perception of their responsibility towards environmental issues and their actual purchase behaviors. It was found that consumers understand the importance of acting eco-friendly and taking actions directly related to saving the environment. However, when purchasing products, it was found that consumers chose regular products over eco-friendly ones in most instances (Barber, 2012).
Chapter 3. Methodology

In this section, the reader is presented with the chosen methodology for carrying out the study. A justification of the chosen approach, sample, method and type of analysis will be presented. Moreover, the data collection process will be explained along with how questions were composed.

3.1 Research Philosophy

Interpretivism was the philosophical approach used for this study and may be defined as the “belief that reality is socially constructed, filled with multiple meanings and interpretations, and that emotions are involved.” (Hurworth, 2017). This means that interpretivists sees the reason for providing theories as providing an understanding of direct lived experience rather than an abstract generalization (Hurworth, 2017). Furthermore, the philosophy allows a deeper understanding of social actors (i.e. individuals) and their differences as human beings. This study therefore collected data and further understanding based on the different individuals own reality (Saunders et al., 2009).

The interpretivist standpoint was apparent throughout this study. Firstly, the introduction discusses the general facts of climate changes and harmful behaviors of consumption. Followed by the problem that discusses the current consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion and its growing potentials. However, when critically reading the previous research done on the topic, there has been found that the consumers own thoughts and understanding of consuming fast fashion has not been emphasized enough. Therefore, one could argue that, by adopting the interpretivist philosophy, the researchers were able to explore what consumers’ attitudes and feelings towards eco-friendly fast fashion truly are. Other similar philosophies, such as positivism, argues that the end product of a social observation research could be generalized to the ones already existing and defined by physical and natural scientists (Saunders et al., 2009). Therefore, it was believed that the positivism approach was not appropriate to apply since it generalizes the reality of the social actors and not validating all of them. The interpretivist philosophy allowed the study to take all the collected data into consideration since it emphasized the social actors and their individual ways of interpretation their everyday social roles.
3.1.1 Ontology
Ontology concerns the nature of reality; it can be argued within this research that there were multiple realities taken into considerations. Subjectivism holds an opinion that all individuals have a subjective way of viewing reality and was thus the applied ontology in this empirical research (Saunders et al., 2009). Furthermore, this standpoint suggests that all opinions are important. This indicates that this study contained realities from previous research, combined with the realities of the empirical data and the researcher’s realities.

An individual’s reality is based upon their subjective opinions and understanding of the world. Thus, there are as many realities existing as there are individuals. Subjectivism was used in order to emphasize these diverse standpoints, and to argue for an ongoing change of reality, which indicates that each and every day an individual's’ reality changes on a daily basis due to changes in the environments and circumstances. Objectivism is the opposite of subjectivism and argues for a general reality that the common agrees upon. Ratner (2002) argues that a situation is most likely to be a mix of them both, with one being more dominant than the other. Subjectivism can be reflected on whether it holds objective comprehension or not, meaning that values can be of objective nature within subjectivism (Ratner, 2002).

3.1.2. Epistemology
Epistemology is the study of knowledge and what can be considered as acceptable knowledge within a field of study. Through different philosophies, knowledge can be interpreted through different lenses (Saunders et al, 2009). The epistemology approach applied to this study argues that knowledge is individual and subjective, which indicates that knowledge for one individual may or may not be considered to be knowledge for another. For this research, the researchers viewed knowledge through the lens of subjectivism in order for all data to be valid and taken into consideration.

3.1.3 Abductive Reasoning
For this research, abductive reasoning was applied. The abductive reasoning correlated well with the qualitative methodology, since it emphasizes the understanding of human reasoning (Anderson, 2005). Professor Christopher Hookway (2005) defines this type of reasoning by saying that, “abductive reasoning accepts a conclusion on the grounds that it explains the available evidence”. In order to understand why females do or do not purchase eco-friendly fast fashion, abductive reasoning was used. Furthermore, the abductive approach strengthens
the qualitative methodology chosen because it only accepts a conclusion from the evidence provided from data collection. Compared to a deductive approach, that directs mostly its focus on scientific research and testing theory, an abductive research allowed this research to reach conclusions and build upon existing theories within social science (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.2 Research Strategy
This study aimed to explore intentions of females’ consumer behavior towards eco-friendly fast fashion. Explore refers to “a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalization leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life” (Stebbins, 2001). In order to carry out this aim, action research (AR) was applied as the research strategy. AR is a process that involves identifying a research objective or question and conducting a literature review to gain a deeper understanding of the context. After this, the researchers move into the design-phase where the relevant data relevant to the research question is collected and analyzed. Results are identified and reported based on the analysis of the empirical findings. Ideally, these results lead to reflections of ideas for improvements, further studies and the cycle continues (Saunders et al., 2009). Furthermore, a strength of AR is that it focuses on development and change. Thus, leaving room for learning from mistakes and improvements throughout the process (Nørgaard & Sørensen, 2016). In this study, the researchers were able to reflect on the results after every focus group and semi-structured interview and thus improve their ability as interviewers and moderators, which led to more accurate results.

The rationale behind using this research approach is that it gave the researchers the ability to identify relevant research objectives, questions and to develop a relevant theoretical framework on which the research was based upon. Mackenzie et al. (2012) have suggested that the use of AR lead to the development of social actions and reflections upon the actions by the participants. This, in turn, leads to new understandings of the topic in question, both by the participants and researchers and thus leading to new areas of inquiry (Mackenzie et al., 2012). Furthermore, AR is a scientific strategy used to study resolutions of key social and organizational issues using participants that directly experienced these issues (Nørgaard & Sørensen, 2016). The purpose of AR is to develop practical knowledge which can be useful for people in the conduct of their everyday leisure lives (Blackshaw, 2009). Thus, this strategy seemed as the most suitable one to apply in order to gain insight into females’ attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion as it allowed the researchers to use the females themselves as the
participants as they are the ones who possess direct experiences with the topic.

3.3 Research Approach

When conducting research, researchers must choose whether to use a qualitative or quantitative research approach. In quantitative research projects, data is gathered with the purpose of testing a hypothesis. Qualitative research on the other hand, is a more exploratory approach used to increase a researchers’ understanding of reasons, opinions and motivations (Byrne, 2001). Since this study attempted to explore females’ intentions towards purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion, a qualitative research approach was chosen. This allowed the researchers to find patterns in thoughts and opinions and to gain deeper understanding of the problem, as compared to a quantitative research approach which involves numerical data that displays little information regarding opinions and behaviors (Byrne, 2001).

Common qualitative research methods include studying individuals or groups of individuals with the use of unstructured or semi-structured methods, such as focus groups, individual interviews and ethnographic fieldwork. These methods may be used individually or in combination in order to create methodological triangulation, which can increase the validity of the study (King & Horrocks, 2010). When using a qualitative research approach, sample size is usually smaller than in a quantitative approach (Byrne, 2001). The qualitative research approach is exploratory, contextual and uses passive observations, open-ended questions and analysis of participants’ behaviors in order to draw conclusions (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). There are a number of benefits associated with using this approach when conducting research. Firstly, it allows the researchers to confront the consumers, go beneath the surface and gain a holistic view of consumer behavior. This quality was helpful for the researchers when trying to uncover the meanings and behaviors behind consumers’ eco-friendly purchase patterns within fast fashion. Furthermore, this strength allowed the researchers to collect in-depth data from relevant consumption of fast fashion, which provided the study with useful insights, attitudes and opinions. Secondly, qualitative research studies are often related to high quality control. Since semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted in small groups and in a specific place, it was easier for researcher to predict, control and manage possible limitations. Lastly, qualitative research approaches are beneficial as they are simple to organize and the process of completing a qualitative research can be done relatively fast, as compared to quantitative research processes (Mariampolski, 2001).
3.3.1 Triangulation
Methodological triangulation is described as using different methods to address the same research problem (King & Horrocks, 2010). The rationale behind using methodological triangulation is that it enhances the validity of the research by eliminating limitations of individual methods. The use of methodological triangulation is beneficial in order to find confirmation of findings as the hopes are that the data collected from the different methods will match (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). Triangulation can help to identify, explore and understand various aspects of the chosen topic and thus strengthening the findings and enriching interpretations (Rothbauer, 2008).

Methodological triangulation may be performed in two ways; across method or within method. Across method means that the researchers use both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Within method on the other hand, means that the researchers use two or more different methods, either quantitative or qualitative, but not both (King & Horrocks, 2010). Within method triangulation was applied in this study by combining focus groups and semi-structured interviews when collecting empirical data and thus the researchers conducted a multi-methods study. This approach allowed the researchers to be more rigorous when exploring factors associated with intentions to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). However, the claim that triangulation enhances validity has been the face of many disputes in recent literature. Some researchers argue that it may not be possible to truly integrate the results obtained using two or more methods. These researchers pose the question of what happens if the two methods produce conflicting accounts of a phenomenon. However, others argue that triangulation is the best way to avoid the intrinsic limitations of a single method (King & Horrocks, 2010). Aware of this dispute, the researchers chose within method triangulation in order to collect different yet complementary data to achieve a more holistic perspective of the topic. By comparing and contrasting the results from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews, the researchers were able to draw parallels and gain relevant insights into the topic in order to make sound conclusions.

3.4 Methods of Data Collection
3.4.1 Focus Groups
For this study, one of the data collecting methods was focus groups. Krueger (1994) described focus groups as “carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area
of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment”. A group interview or interviews of different styles often involve a great deal of interaction between the moderator and the respondents, where many direct questions are asked. In focus groups, the moderator leads the group with a great integration between the respondents, and in that way collect the data needed. It is thus the interactions between group members and the moderator that defines a focus group and its purpose (Halkier, 2010). In this study, focus groups were conducted in order to limit the restrictions of the participants and their thoughts and opinion about the chosen research areas. By conducting focus groups, a deeper understanding of participants’ attitudes and feelings towards the chosen topic will be presented. It evoked a conversation between the participants, and further analysis could therefore be done. Dillon and Barclay (1997), mean that the moderators will direct the conversations but not control it, which guides the participants towards in-depth answers.

This study applied focus groups due to the strengths of having multiple individuals interact and discussing which provides thoughts, norms and social behavior. It would cause a less focus on the individual's personal thoughts, in order to take advantage of the group dynamics and the thoughts and beliefs that are generated through a group conversation (Halkier, 2010). However, semi-structured interviews were used as a complementing approach in order to capture individuals’ opinions regardless of a group setting. The group setting can cause participants to feel intimidated which limit their personal opinions and thoughts.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews
The purpose of a research interview is to improve knowledge (Wengraf, 2001). There are three forms of interviews; structured, semi-structured and unstructured, for this research semi-structured interviews were conducted. A semi-structured interview is a form of qualitative research that is planned and prepared like all other forms of research activities. Wengraf (2001) states that semi-structured interviews are used to explore key points in depth. The questions asked during the semi-structured interview are only partially prepared and thus the interviewer will improvise during the interview. Semi-structured interviews are designed with the intention that the questions are phrased and formulated openly to generate a response from interviewees that will lead to more questions that cannot be planned in advance since they are based on the interviewee's response (Wengraf, 2001). Interviewers are provided with the flexibility to probe the responses made by the interviewee due to the semi-structured part of this method (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).
By using semi-structured interviews, the sample were able to freely discuss their thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion. In order for the discussion to be relevant, a well-prepared and good interviewer is of importance (Wengraf, 2001). The interviewers’ task was to ask questions that led the interviewee to discuss different topics that provided in-depth and contextual information to the researchers. Semi-structured interviews usually consist of a process where the interviewer aims for theory-construction and theory-verification (Wengraf, 2001). Thus, by using semi-structured interviews in this study, the researchers were able to ask the participants questions about TPB and eco-friendly fast fashion in an attempt to see how and if the theory was connected to the topic.

3.5 Sampling Method

There are various methods of sampling that may be used when recruiting participants to a study. The first thing to determine is whether to use a probability sampling method or a non-probability sampling method. In a probability sampling method, every individual of a population have an equal chance of being selected whereas in a non-probability sampling method, the population do not have an equal chance of being selected. (Vogt, 2005). For the purpose of this research, a non-probability sampling method was used due to time and resource restrictions that did not allow the researchers to use probability sampling. Examples of non-probability sampling methods include convenience-, snowball-, quota- and theoretical sampling. Convenience sampling was used when finding participants for the focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Convenience sampling may be referred to as opportunistic or accidental sampling, which means that the researcher uses a sample that is easily accessible and readily available (Koerber & McMichael, 2008). Even though this is the technical definition of a convenience sample, this method often requires some sort of effort to find, reach and recruit participants. The reason for using convenience sampling was due to the time restrictions of the research. Convenience sampling is efficient to use as it takes less time to recruit participants, the researchers simply ask individuals of the population whom they know and hope that they are willing and able to participate. The population chosen for this research was females of Generation Y in Jönköping, Sweden. When recruiting participants, the researchers focused on recruiting females at Jönköping University as this was the most accessible way to gain participants. The aim was to recruit females of different ages, with different occupations and who studied at different faculties within JU in order to get a diversity of the sample.
Snowball sampling is another sampling method that could have been used, this means that the researchers ask few individuals to participate and then get them to refer you to more individuals who may be willing to participate (Rothbauer, 2008). This method, however, was ruled out as it was perceived to take longer time than convenience sampling. Furthermore, in order for snowball sampling to be successful, the initial volunteers must know other suitable candidates and be willing to recommend them to the researchers. This was another reason for ruling out snowball sampling as the volunteers do not have an incentive to spend time indicating and recommending other participants and thus it may be hard to motivate individuals to do it.

### 3.5.1 Generation Y

This empirical study targeted females within Generation Y. Generation Y is a generation without one set definition, but is often referred to as both millennials and trophy kids. One of the most common age definitions of Generation Y is individuals born between the years 1980 and 2000 (Viswanathan & Jain, 2013). Studies of Generation Y has been done within a number of different fields. However, little research has been done on their intentions and behaviors towards eco-friendly fast fashion. This generation was chosen due to their high involvement in corporate social responsibility, as well as, for being the most enlightened generation throughout history (Valentine & Powers 2013). The generation is described as well-educated trendsetters who are highly involved in technology and society (Viswanathan & Jain, 2013). Generation Y sees shopping and mass consumption as a lifestyle and base their consumption on both needs and wants (Valentine & Powers 2013). These factors and characteristics made Generation Y an interesting and suitable target for this empirical research.

### 3.6 Composition of Questions

There are three different ways of asking questions in a qualitative research approach; structured, semi-structured or unstructured. Since focus groups and semi-structured interviews were chosen as the methods for data collection, semi-structured questions were asked. This means that questions are open ended and supposed to generate thoughts, opinions and discussions of the topic (Saunders et al., 2009).

When composing questions, the researchers used the components of TBP; attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control, intentions and behavior, as guidelines. Since this theory was used to uncover consumers’ behaviors, attitudes and values towards environmentally-friendly fast fashion, it was seen as the appropriate tool to guide the questions for the empirical
data collection. Questions were composed regarding each component of TPB with the aim of receiving a comprehensive view of the samples’ thoughts and opinions. See Appendix C and D for the focus group question guide and the semi-structured question guide.

3.7 Empirical Data Collection

3.7.1 Focus Groups

The data collection process was conducted meticulously and sequentially and started with focus groups. The participants were sent invitations to attend one of five focus groups held within a two-week span. Krueger (2015) states that, for non-commercial focus groups, the optimal size is five to eight individuals. The focus groups conducted consisted of five to six participants and were held by two researchers, one lead moderator and one assistant moderator. This technique was used since it has been shown to be the most effective and efficient method to get the most out of a focus group (Krueger, 2015). The focus groups were between one and one and a half hours long and were recorded using laptops and smartphones to make sure that nothing would be missed or forgotten by the researchers. This technique of recording was essential to the research since it will be transcribed for the researchers to be able to correctly interpret and analysis the data. All participants signed a consent form (see Appendix A) to participate at the beginning of the focus group.

The focus groups were held in a classroom at Jönköping International Business School to ensure a safe and calm environment. The participants were seated around a table in a quiet room and were provided with coffee and snacks to create a suitable environment. The questions for the focus groups were prepared beforehand to pose the best possible questions to acquire as much relevant data as possible, the focus group guide can be found in Appendix C. There were some unscripted questions asked by the moderators during the discussions to get the participants to elaborate and probe their thoughts and opinions. Furthermore, some statements made by the participants lead to follow-up questions to gain more knowledge and insight into thoughts and opinions held by the participants. The moderators guided the participants with their questions while the whole group discussed different topics.

3.7.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews (in this section referred to as interviews) were conducted with five females, recruited through convenience sampling. After the participants were recruited, the researchers and participants communicated to find a time and place for an interview that would
suit both parties. Only one researcher was present during the interview. The participant was given a consent form, which she was to read through and sign in order to assure informed consent by the participant, this consent form can be found in Appendix B. Upon receiving the consent form, the participant was briefed about the aim of the interview and that it would focus on discussing the participants’ thoughts, experiences and attitudes on environmentally friendly fast fashion. The interviewer used a laptop and smartphone to record the interview. The interview was guided by the interview guide that can be found in Appendix D. The interviews took place in group rooms at Jönköping International Business School, the interviewer and interviewee were sitting on opposite side of a table and the participants were offered a cup of coffee before starting the interview.

The interview started with the participant stating name, age, occupation and favorite store. The interview continued with general questions about the environment and general questions about fashion in order to put the deeper and contextual questions about environmentally friendly fast fashion into context. The interviewer kept an encouraging language and body language in order to keep the interviewee comfortable and willing to share her points of views. Furthermore, the interviewer used techniques such as probing and breaks in the conversation for thought processing in order to get as much information as possible from the interviewee. Some of the interviewees’ comments and opinions led to follow-up questions that were not in the interview guide and other answers naturally transferred the conversation to the next question. Upon completing the interview, the interviewee was asked if she had any thoughts, questions or comments that she would like to add to today's discussion. After this, the interviewee thanked her for participating and concluded the interview.

3.8 Ethical Considerations
When conducting research, it is important to consider ethical aspects to develop a legitimate methodology and to act in a morally sound way (Saunders et al., 2009). The researchers took precautions in the method to ensure that the research was conducted in an ethical manner. The sample were given a consent form (Appendix A & B) which they had to sign before starting. The consent form stated that participation was voluntarily and that a participant was allowed to withdraw her participation at any point during the interview or focus group. Furthermore, they were informed that they would be anonymous throughout the study. Any reference to names in this paper are fake names to protect the participant's identity.
3.9 Quality of Data Collected
In order to achieve highest possible quality, errors and biases need to be reduced. There are a number of different terms that was considered when assuring quality. Researcher objectivity is an important concept. In the data collection stage, objectivity refers to the researcher's ability to put their biases, thoughts and opinions aside to accurately and fully collect the data needed (Saunders et al., 2009). The researchers exercised objectivity in the empirical data collection process by recording all focus groups and semi-structured interviews from start to finish and practiced probing during the interview order to make sure that everyone had a chance to share their opinions.

Saunders et al. (2009) refer to validity and reliability as two important concepts to assess the quality of primary research. Validity refers to the truthfulness of findings (Whitttemore et al., 2001). More specifically, it concerns whether or not the findings are really related to the research (Saunders et al., 2009). Validity is hard to create due to the need of subjectivity, rigor and creativity of qualitative research. (Whittemore et al., 2001). To achieve high validity in this research process, the researchers were guided by previous research and secondary sources when forming the frame of reference and choosing an appropriate method. Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection methods and analysis processes will generate consistent findings (Whittemore et al., 2001). To assess reliability, the researchers should pose three questions: Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions? Will similar observations be researched by other observers? Is there transparency in how sense was made from the raw data? Furthermore, there are four threats to reliability that researchers should be aware of when conducting research. These four threats are participant bias, participant error, observer bias and observer error (Saunders et al., 2009). To overcome these threats, the researchers focused on maintaining objectivity and awareness of the threats when designing the research in order to prevent them from occurring.

3.10 Data Reduction
After collecting the primary data, the data was transcribed in order to comprehend the knowledge and information gathered. According to Saunders et al. (2009), it was important for researchers to transcribe the data with the right tone and not just the words that were spoken. The entire setting and nonverbal communication, such as nodding from participants, are important to take into consideration (Saunders et al., 2009). The researchers separated the transcribed data into smaller units of categories and thereafter followed the process of
categorizing and coding. The categories lead to the formation of factors that will be analyzed by the researchers (Saunders et al., 2009). The findings were structured into categories in accordance of Theory of Planned Behavior in order to get a more comprehensive view of how the findings relate to the purpose of the research and the theoretical framework. The used categories are presented below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Categories of data collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Focus Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Fast fashion consumption habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Knowledge and beliefs about the fast fashion industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1 What is environmentally friendly fast fashion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.2 What does environmentally friendly fast fashion look like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.3 Where can environmentally friendly fast fashion be found?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Subjective norm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Perceived behavioral control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 The extent to which environmentally friendly fast fashion is purchased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Fast fashion consumption habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Knowledge about the fast fashion industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Knowledge about environmentally friendly fast fashion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 What does environmentally friendly fast fashion be found?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 What does environmentally friendly fast fashion look like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Where can environmentally friendly fast fashion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Subjective norm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Perceived behavioral control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 The extent to which environmentally friendly fast fashion is purchased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.11 Data Analysis

Data analysis methods for qualitative research varies from other methods of research. Flores & Alonso (1995) argue that the method of focus groups does not usually have a clear structure method for data analysis and interpretation. Other researchers argue this to be the case since focus groups provide a tacit understanding and thus, depending on the purpose, the analysis can take various forms (Morgan, 1997). Regarding semi-structured interviews Saunders et al. (2009) emphasizes on the interactive nature between the data collection and data analysis allows for the emergence of themes, patterns and relationships.

The analysis approach that best suited this research was the thematic analysis as it fitted with the purpose and philosophy of this research and therefore it was used to analyze the data.
Thematic analysis involves identifying, analyzing and interpreting patterns of meaning (Clarke & Braun, 2016). For this research, the analysis approach looked for common themes within: attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, intentions and consumer behavior. Thematic analysis is a systematic approach that involves three stage: general coding, development of descriptive themes, and generation of analytical themes (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Furthermore, the thematic analysis is flexible and allows for identification and analysis of themes across data (Clarke & Braun, 2016). This was particularly useful as this research study conducted both focus groups and semi-structured interviews.
Chapter 4. Empirical Findings

In this section, the results from the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews will be presented in two separate sections. This will give the reader an understanding of what was uncovered during the data collection process.

For this research, five focus groups were conducted with five or six participants in each, with additionally five semi-structured interviews with one individual in each. This resulted in a sample of 33 women between the ages of 20-28 and the majority of them were students. The focus groups and semi-structured interviews were conducted between 14th and 29th of March 2017. The time of the focus groups varied from 60 minutes to 90 minutes whereas the semi-structured interviews varied between 20 minutes to 45 minutes. All of empirical data was conducted in English. See Table 2 and Table 3 below for more information about participants, their names are fake in order to protect their identities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of participants</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Name of participants</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elsa</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Linn</td>
<td>Student (JIBS)</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Vilma</td>
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<td>Lina</td>
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<td>Rakel</td>
<td>Student (JIBS)</td>
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<td>Petra</td>
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<td>Ellinor</td>
<td>Student (JIBS)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filippa</td>
<td>Student (HEALTH)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Student (JIBS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Märta</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Josefinna</td>
<td>Student (JIBS)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Focus group participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of participants</th>
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<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Rosa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sina</td>
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<td>Tilde</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline</td>
<td>Student (JIBS)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>Student (JIBS)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Semi-structured interview participants.
4.1 Focus Groups

4.1.1 Fast Fashion Consumption Habits

The participants were asked about how much time, money and attention they devote to consumption of fast fashion on a monthly basis. The general answer was that they devote more time browsing online or reading fashion magazines than to actual shopping. A number of participants expressed a habit of browsing through online shopping sites and looking at different clothing items and putting them in their basket without going through with the purchase as an interest or pastime activity.

Petra: “Or walking around in stores? Or looking online?”

Paulina: “Because browsing is a totally different thing...hehe”

Alice: “Yes the same for me, I can browse everyday but I can’t buy things every day. And how much I spend... I’m not sure, this month I bought kind of a lot of stuff. But next month maybe I won’t...”

A minority of the participants stated that they had little or no interest in shopping and thus reported spending less time, money and attention towards fast fashion. These individuals stated a preference of only going shopping when they had a need for a specific product.

Elsa: “I don’t like going shopping...I get bored after an hour.”

Brittney: “I don’t like stores, it’s hot, it’s people, and it’s bad music”

When asked about what factors they find important when purchasing clothes, price, quality, style and fit were frequently mentioned. Some participants stated that they consider different factors depending on the item in question.

Doris: “When it comes to for example jackets I do not mind if they are a bit more expensive because then I look at quality so that I can have them for a longer time. But when it comes to party tops I do not consider quality that much because I will not wear them as often.”

It was furthermore stated by a majority that they look at the labels inside clothes to find the washing directions as they wanted it to be as easily washed as possible. Some participants stated that they look at labels in order to be able to exclude items that contain animals.

Therese: “I don’t like materials that you have to iron after you wash them. But I always look for materials so that there is no animal products in it, like wool or fur.”
4.1.2 Knowledge and Beliefs about the Fast Fashion Industry

The participants were asked “What do you think of when you hear the term fast fashion?” and the answers to this question was varying.

Lily: “A lot of negative things.”
Alva: “I don’t know if I believe that it is so bad for the environment as everyone says it is.”
Bianca: “I do not know what it is.”
Britney: “McDonald’s.”
Therese: “Sounds like H&M, fast produced. Maybe not so environmentally friendly.”

Some participants expressed skepticism and negative beliefs towards environmentally friendly fast fashion. When asked where they think this skepticism comes from, the majority answered that it comes from information and scandals that they have read about in media regarding various fast fashion chains.

Alice: “Greenwashing is a concept where a company might label their products as environmentally friendly or say it is when it is actually not. Like it doesn’t reach the standards.”

Elsa: “When H&M say that they have eco-friendly products I think “Yes, absolutely, maybe the cotton is a bit better and more eco-friendly” but it does not raise my trust for the company, it feels more like a PR stunt.”

It was understood that few participants had little, or no knowledge about labels, what they mean and what the clothing consists of. Some participants did not understand why some materials from animals would have some consequences to the animal itself.

Ashley: “Is wool bad? Because you have to cut the fur of the animal for it to function right?”

4.1.3 Knowledge and Perception about Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion

4.1.3.1 What is Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion?

The sample were asked to discuss what environmentally friendly fashion means to them. The results of this discussion included different aspects of production, such as fair labor conditions, the usage of eco-friendly materials, fabrics that have not been treated with chemical or unnatural dyeing processes, and sustainable logistics.

Therese: “The materials. How they are grown or if it's cotton for example. I think that
is environmentally friendly.”

Märta: “I think a lot about process of how clothing’s are made especially environmentally, because like water consumption and that kind of stuff has a big impact.”

Brittney: “Labor workers and wages. And how they're (clothes) made.”

Petra: “Yea and maybe a product that wasn’t shipped halfway across the world before it got here.”

Linn: “I would say they have reduced a lot of waste, unnecessary things that affects the environment.”

4.1.3.2 What Does Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion Look Like?
The sample were asked to describe what an environmentally friendly product looks like to them. The results indicated that there was a rather consistent view of how eco-friendly fast fashion is perceived to look like.

Doris: “I see tank tops and the basics.”

Alva: “Unnatural clothes can have bright colors [...] but eco-friendly clothes have natural colors since it should come from the nature.”

Bianca: “I think of materials, like cotton and bamboo.”

4.1.3.3 Where Can Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion Be Found?
Regarding where to purchase environmentally friendly fast fashion, results showed some variance. At first instance, most participants stated that they did not know where to find it. However, when continuing discussing the topic some participants realized that some of the common fast fashion chains have eco-friendly alternatives. H&M, Gina Tricot and Lindex came up as examples. Some participants speculated in that most fast fashion chains probably have eco-friendly alternatives but that information from the companies were lacking for them to be sure.

My: “I know that H&M have their green labels.”

Therese: “Gina Tricot have this new denim campaign. [...] It's a commercial where the number of claps (in the video) is the number of eco-friendly jeans they will make this year.”
4.1.3 Subjective Norm

The participants were asked to discuss how influenced they felt by their social surroundings and by social media. The results showed that participants generally get inspired by social media and social surroundings. However, in a situation where their opinions differ from that of the individuals in their surroundings, most participants stated that they would follow through with their own opinions.

Astrid: “If it is something that I really like but my friend does not like it, then I think I would try to convince my friend to like it.”

Doris: “If my grandma or someone who has the opposite taste in clothes as me says that it is ugly I think I would be like “Oh but you don’t understand” but if a close friend who knows my style would say that she didn’t like it then maybe I would reconsider.”

4.1.4 Perceived Behavioral Control

Questions related to the participants perceived behavioral control include questions such as “Would you consider spending 30 extra minutes researching where to find environmentally friendly clothes before going shopping?” and “As consumers, what makes it difficult for you to purchase environmentally friendly fast fashion?”

The overarching answer to the first question was no. Most participant did not want to spend time to look up where to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion, but would rather that the information came to them from the companies.

Alva: “It depends on how interested one is but if someone is interested then sure I think that person would spend that extra time. However, everyday life is stressful and one has so much to do all the time so I don’t really think that people would do it.”

Considering the second question about what companies should do, the general answer was to provide more knowledge. The sample agreed that there is insufficient information available for consumers about eco-friendly fast fashion. What many participants added to this was that they wanted concrete information regarding the difference between standard and eco-friendly items.

Astrid: “Advertise it! And tell what it is really made of [...] the difference between eco-friendly and standard products so we get the actual facts.”

Some participants answered the second question by stating that due to the limited student
budget, they did not have enough financial resources to fully carry out their desired consumption habits.

Bianca: “As a student, price is a determinant of what I can buy.”

Alva: “Take away the price difference (between regular and eco-friendly fast fashion).”

4.1.5 The Extent to which Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion is purchased
Regarding whether or not participants had purchased any environmentally friendly fast fashion items, the majority answered that they had one or two eco-friendly clothing items. However, it was often added to this that they had not purchased these with the intention of being environmentally friendly, but rather due to other factors, such as style.

Furthermore, the participants were asked to discuss whether or not they find it important to purchase environmentally friendly fast fashion. The general findings showed a perceived importance. However, the majority of the participants stated that they would not purchase an item due to the sole reason that it is eco-friendly. Factors perceived to play a bigger role are the style and fit of the item in question.

Molly: “I want to say that I do. Or like, because buying ordinary clothes or going shopping just because, it is not that friendly for the environment at all. So I would want to be more, or like value it more.”

My: “But I feel like it is such a different thing from buying an environmentally friendly product. If you want to buy milk, you could easy buy ecological. But if you want to buy clothes, for example a black shirt. Then you go for the cheapest and look best, I don’t go for the environmentally friendly one.”

4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews
4.2.1 Fast Fashion Consumption Habits
Regarding consumption of fast fashion, the interviewees reported to spend quite some time browsing fashion online, however, time devoted for actual purchases was found to be significantly less. A majority of the sample reported their purchases to be planned rather than spontaneous. Some variety was reported with individuals saying that they usually found everything but the specific items they were looking for, which resulted in spontaneous purchases. Caroline described her shopping consumption as: “always spontaneous”.

Stina: “I have to plan...I have made so many mistakes where I have bought
spontaneously things I don’t need or products I don’t use...I think about it more now since I don’t have so much money.”
Rosa: “I don’t buy that much clothes. [...] I would say, it is planned in some way. It could be that I buy something that I have looked at for a long time for example. I normally see something and then I think about it for a little bit and then maybe purchase it.”

4.2.2 Knowledge about the Fast Fashion Industry
The sample had little knowledge about the term fast fashion, however, they were all familiar with the bigger companies within the fast fashion industry.
Rosa: “Not the general term no. I guess it is mass production or, I have no clue. I have never heard about it. I would guess that it is mass production and that the purpose is to have it as cheap as possible and sell as much as possible.”
Jenny: “I can think of two ways either it's something that's like produced locally and fast in that way or it's something that makes it easier for the company to make it fast but it's not that environmentally.”

4.2.3 Knowledge about Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion
4.2.3.1 What is Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion?
The sample showed little knowledge concerning what environmentally friendly fast fashion is. They had little information about various fast fashion companies and their environmentally friendly products.
Caroline: “I don’t know much at all.”
Stina: “I don’t know much; I know they (H&M) have put down a lot of energy towards recycled materials.”
Rosa: “Fast fashion was that clothes needs to be out within weeks etc. But I would say that fair trade once again come to my mind. That the working conditions are good and maybe as small amounts of chemicals as possible.”
Tilde: “I think it's hard to make something fast and eco-friendly because I think that process takes a while so I don't know if something can be fast and eco-friendly at least not one hundred percent. That’s what I wonder because I know it takes time to make some clothes so if they make it fast it has to be something.”
4.2.3.2 What Does Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion Look Like?
The general image held by participants about environmentally friendly fast fashion products was basic clothing.

Stina: “Maybe more simpler clothes...that the material is more natural.”

Caroline: “I don’t know, it could be what you and I are wearing, I think it has to do with the fabric.”

Jenny: “I see this like bags with different prints on them you know a tote, with different prints and t-shirts and stuff but I mostly see those bags.”

Rosa: “I would say, it could look in any way possible. But when I think of eco-friendly fashion I think mostly of cotton, as material because I feel like it’s been talked about the most. But don’t see a specific thing in front of me.”

4.2.3.3 Where Can Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion Be Found?
The interviewees showed little to no knowledge concerning where environmentally friendly fast fashion could be found. When participants were asked the following “How aware are you about eco-friendly fast fashion and do you know where you can locally purchase it?” the participants responses were similar.

Stina: “I would have to say no; I have no idea where.”

Caroline: “No I don’t where to purchase it and I don’t know much about it either.”

Rosa: “No, I have no idea. I did not even know what fast fashion was before this interview.”

4.2.4 Subjective Norm
Concerning subjective norm, the questions asked how influenced the sample are by others in their purchasing behavior and whether the participants would rather go shopping by themselves or in a group. The participants showed various results and some participants reported to be inspired rather than influenced by their surroundings and social media.

Rosa: “A little bit from Instagram maybe. If someone is wearing something nice I might look it up to see where it’s from. [...] I only buy black and most people think that’s boring so. And plus that no one can really say that “you can’t wear that” to something black since you can match black with everything...”

Caroline: ”I would say, pretty much, if I see someone who has a real nice jacket then I wouldn't hesitate to ask where she bought it.”
4.2.5 Perceived Behavioral Control

In order to study the perceived behavioral control, the participants were asked if they would consider spending 30 extra minutes before going shopping in order to find environmentally friendly clothes. They were also asked about what makes it difficult for them, as consumer, to purchase environmentally friendly clothes.

To the first question, the participants said that they would consider spending 30 extra minutes to go shopping.

Rosa: “Yes why not? If I was to adopt that think then absolutely. And now it is so easy to ask people and ask in the stores where and if they have it in eco. Then it is not even 30 minutes then it is 10 seconds for you to just ask and they can guide you.”

Stina: “Yes I could because I already do research so I could easily do that.”

Concerning the second question, the participants had various answers. A few admitted that they did not know, but that it could be due to the supply chain or product price:

Rosa: “Well, I don’t know the production cycle and the supply chain, but I could think that non eco is easier to produce quicker. [...] That could be a possible stop for eco-fashion.”

Tilde: “I think it's because it's more expensive I think that's the problem.”

4.2.6 The Extent to Which Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion Is Purchased

The participants were asked whether or not they had purchased any environmentally friendly fast fashion items. The majority indicated that they had but without the intention of being eco-friendly.

Caroline: “I think so but I am not sure.”

Stina: “Yes I am sure I have.”

To provide further insight into how they perceived consumers of environmentally friendly clothes the participants were asked “Who do you think purchase these clothes? Is it certain people or groups?”

Caroline: “Everyone, I think so because [...] I think people buy without knowing.”

Stina: “I think younger people [...] around 25-30 years old [...] more educated people who understand the meaning of purchasing it.”
Tilde: “The vegetarians. I don't know if they're like a group, maybe they are, I think they are like the main target.”

Rosa: “I could think that people who are very environmentally concerned buy eco-clothes. Or on the other hand, they might not even buy that because then something is wrong with it... Like it goes against their values, maybe due to mass consumption?”
Chapter 5. Analysis

This section takes the empirical findings from both the focus groups and semi-structured interviews and presents an integrated analysis. It will give the reader a deeper understanding of how the empirical findings are linked to the theories presented in the frame of reference and the research questions.

5.1 What Factors Affect Females Intentions to Purchase Eco-Friendly Fast Fashion?

Through the empirical findings, the researchers identified five reoccurring factors that affected the formation of intentions. These five factors were: awareness and knowledge, skepticism, convenience, style and financial situation.

5.1.1 Awareness and Knowledge

The empirical findings suggested that cognitive processes are an essential part in the formation of attitudes towards purchasing environmentally friendly fast fashion. The two components of cognition that was shown to be of greatest interest were awareness and knowledge. In TPB, Ajzen (1991) suggests that intentions are used to identify motivational factors that evoke certain behaviors, thus these results suggest that knowledge and awareness may be motivational factors.

The lack of awareness and knowledge can be seen as an obstacle to performing a certain behavior, as it affects ones’ attitudes towards that behavior. The empirical findings show that the sample had high levels of awareness about environmental issues, thus indicating that their PBC towards performing environmentally friendly actions should be rather high. However, this was not perceived to be the case as only a few participants reported that they engaged in eco-friendly activities. This indicates that there may exist an intention-behavior gap between the perceived importance of being environmentally friendly and carrying out environmentally friendly behaviors. Furthermore, the participants indicated low levels of awareness concerning environmentally friendly fast fashion, thus making it hard for them to form an intention to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion. The participants showed to possess a rather high level of knowledge and awareness about the most common fast fashion chains in Sweden and their range of products. When asked specifically about these chains eco-friendly products, results were different. The majority indicated that most fast fashion chains only had a selection of basic t-shirts and blouses in eco-friendly material. This, however, is not entirely correct. Common
fast fashion chains eco-friendly product ranges are rather similar to their normal product range. Connecting this to TPB, one can argue that when the sample shows little or no knowledge and awareness regarding environmentally friendly fast fashion they in turn have low PBC. PBC is seen as being an aspect that influences intentions, which in turn leads to behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Since the lack of knowledge leads to low PBC, this in turn suggests that the sample will form weak or no intentions of purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion and thus they do not carry out this behavior. One can argue, through this research, that knowledge provided by companies about their eco-friendly initiatives is a key aspect to evoke eco-friendly consumer behavior. If knowledge is not provided, the participants do not know that it exists and thus will not have any incentives or motivations to purchase it.

Evidence of cognitive dissonance was seen in the sample. They were asked to discuss how important it is for them to save the environment and what they do to contribute to this. A discrepancy was found as most participants answered that it was of high importance to save the environment, but at the same time they do little to save the environment and only do something if it was convenient and beneficial for them. Judging by the tone of voice and body language of participants when answering this, one can conclude that they felt uncomfortable when stating their difference in beliefs and behaviors.

Along with having little or no awareness and knowledge of environmentally friendly fast fashion, it was reported that virtually no one in the sample intentionally purchased eco-friendly fast fashion. This may be attributed to the short attention span of Generation Y (Microsoft Corp, 2015), which may make it more difficult for this generation to gain awareness and knowledge about certain things. In order to decrease the intention-behavior gap and cognitive dissonance, providing knowledge to raise awareness was found to be the key solution in this empirical study. The sample repeatedly called for more information to be provided by the companies in order to raise their awareness and knowledge.

5.1.2 Skepticism
Skepticism of eco-friendly products was a recurring attitude among the sample. The skepticism was linked by certain participants to the term greenwashing. The participants stated that they did not trust larger companies such as H&M, due to many scandals that has been published about them. According to Cuerel Burbano and Delmas (2011), skepticism is derived from past experiences with a company. This was seen in the empirical findings when participants brought
up H&M’s child labor scandal and said that these types of scandals caused them to be skeptical towards the company. Participants had difficulty viewing fast fashion chains as eco-friendly when they produce a large amount of new fashion products at a high rate. That in turn creates a negative attitude and skepticism towards fast fashion chains. It is important to note that several participants did not state that they would stop shopping at H&M, rather that they simply did not trust the company’s eco-friendly initiatives.

The unanimous opinion among participants was that they felt that it was important to save the environment. However, they indicated a certain degree of skepticism towards how eco-friendly fast fashion companies’ initiatives actually were. This skepticism displayed by the sample is an attitude. According to the ABC model, an attitude is the formation of: affect, behavior and cognition. This provides insight into a conflicting attitude the participants displayed, where the affect to save the environment, does not result in the corresponding behavior. The empirical findings revealed that most participants would buy a clothing item based on style and fit, regardless of its eco-friendliness. It became apparent that the attitude towards saving the environment was weaker than the attitude towards purchasing clothes that looks good and fits the best. According to Solomon et al. (2013), the affect component is an emotional reaction that can cause consumption patterns to be altered among. If saving the environment was as important to the participants, as stated, it should be able to cause an emotional reaction to change their consumption patterns.

**5.1.3 Convenience**

Convenience was another factor identified by the researchers as having an effect on the sample’s intentions to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion. Convenience can be linked to PBC, as it is the ease of performing a behavior, similar to the convenience of purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion. The various factors that influenced participants’ convenience included: product price, product placement, ease to buy and access to information.

The majority of participants indicated that purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion was inconvenient for them. They had little or no information of where to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion or what separates an eco-friendly item from a regular item. This affected their ability to purchase an environmentally friendly alternative. Thus, the sample formed no intention of purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion. According to Ajzen (1991), a perceived less amount of opportunities and resources will result in decreased PBC and therefore one is less likely to go
through with a behavior. The participants whom were unaware of where to purchase and what eco-friendly fast fashion is, lacked both opportunities and resources to do so. Thus, it perceived to be inconvenient for them to purchase it. This indicated that they had low PBC and could not go through with the behavior. Furthermore, the empirical findings revealed that most participants were not looking for environmentally friendly fast fashion to start with.

The participants stated that, in stores, they had not seen any eco-friendly fast fashion and that it was inconvenient for them to find it themselves or do research on the matter. Participants would rather have the information given to them than actively searching for it. This could be argued to be specific for Generation Y, as there has been research showing that they would prefer information to be given to them rather than do actual research themselves (Noble, Haytko & Phillips, 2009). Regarding this aspect, results differed between focus groups and semi-structured interviews. The interviewees stated that they would spend time to research eco-friendly fast fashion whereas focus group participants would not. This may be attributed to Bandura’s (1971) Social Learning Theory, which suggests that individuals will conform to their social surrounding. The researchers speculated if the focus group participants had answered differently if they would have taken part in a semi-structured interview rather than a focus group.

5.1.4 Style

Throughout the discussion of purchasing behavior of eco-friendly fast fashion, it was found that consumers often purchase clothing based on style and not dependent on how it was produced. As Joergens (2006) states in her findings, eco-friendly fast fashion has little or no effect on the consumer's purchasing decision due to them shopping accordingly to personal interests. The sample aligned with this, since they stated that the most important factor when buying clothes was style. However, it can be argued that the chosen sample holds insufficient knowledge about eco-friendly fast fashion. The sample felt that clothing was a way to express themselves and therefore style was important. Style is connected to acceptance, individuality and prestige, which have a high level of social influence. Even though style may be argued as individual, in many cases it is dependent on the acceptance of the society and based upon others beliefs of what is style (Fernandez, 2009). Furthermore, fast fashion chains have not only produced basic collections, but also exclusive and everyday clothing. It can therefore be assumed that the samples current knowledge about eco-friendly fast fashion is low, which causes them to only purchase accordingly to style.
5.1.5 Financial Situation
The empirical findings identified an individual’s financial situation as a factor influencing intentions to buy eco-friendly products. Many participants assumed that the price of eco-friendly fast fashion was more expensive and would therefore not purchase it. This may be attributed to the fact that little or no knowledge was possessed by the sample about eco-friendly fast fashion. The assumption could derive from the fact that most ecological food products are slightly more expensive than their non-ecological counterpart. Paul and Rana (2012) findings support this, as they found that consumers experienced ecological food to be costly. The participants’ knowledge of the expensiveness concerning eco-friendly fast fashion could alter their attitude negatively, as many participants stated that compared to a regular product, an eco-friendly product should be the same price.

Furthermore, participants stated that, in the future, when they achieve financial stability they might be more prone to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion. This was further supported by Gleim et al. (2013) findings, which reveal that price is a significant barrier to purchasing environmentally friendly products. Since price correlates with one’s financial situation it can be argued that with an improved financial situation, price would no longer be an inhibiting factor to the consumption of environmentally friendly products. Relating to Ajzen’s (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, it can be argued that economic stability would give the participants more resources and ease their PBC to perform this particular behavior.

5.2 How Can These Intentions Be Used to Predict Females’ Consumption of Eco-Friendly Fast Fashion?
5.2.1 Intention and Behavior
The sample showed a rather low consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion and it was indicated that no intentions were formed. The sample were able to identify factors affecting their intention formation related to eco-friendly fast fashion consumption. However, they identified them as having a negative effect on their intention formation. For example, some individuals felt highly skeptical towards eco-friendly fast fashion and thus that impacted their intention formation negatively. Other individuals recognized that too little information was available about it and that they would have to do research by themselves in order to purchase it. Thus, they perceived it to be inconvenient for them to form intentions and go through with it. Furthermore, it was found that the five factors identified must not all be present when forming intentions of buying or not buying. Rather, the presence of a single or two factors were
sometimes enough for the sample to justify why they do not purchase eco-friendly fast fashion. These findings are in accordance with the findings of Joergens (2009) who found that ethical issues seemed to play a rather small role when consumers form intentions of what to purchase. The empirical findings of this study suggested that the sample do not consider the environment as a key determinant when purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion.

The majority of the sample indicated that they are spontaneous shoppers and had no further cognitive evaluations of the product before purchase. Research has shown that spontaneous buyers are not ideal for companies developing eco-friendly initiatives (Wagner, 2003). Eco-friendly consumers reflect on production cycles and materials in order to evaluate the greenness of products (Wagner, 2003). However, since the spontaneous individuals of the sample indicated that they do not evaluate products based this, they will not intentionally purchase eco-friendly fast fashion and thus they may slow down the development of this type of fashion. Furthermore, the sample indicated that in order to get them to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion, the companies should focus on visual merchandising. As reported in previous sections, consumers are lazy and want information to readily available to them. Thus, the sample indicated that if companies have signs, tags and labels in their stores that directs the consumers towards the eco-friendly alternatives, they would be more likely to purchase it. This may also help steer spontaneous consumers to purchase eco-friendly alternatives.

Previous research into green consumer behavior has shown the existence of an intention-behavior gap (Bates & Kristofek, 2008). However, the empirical findings of this study did not find this gap. It was found that the sample did not develop any intentions and thus an intention-behavior gap was not able to be formed.

5.2.2 Marketing Communications
As the sample indicated that they did not have intentions of purchasing eco-friendly fast fashion, they were asked to discuss what companies can do to change this. It was found that the sample wanted knowledge to be given to them by the companies. Furthermore, the sample suggested improvements of the marketing of eco-friendly initiatives. Thus, companies may find it beneficial to use a push promotional strategy as it is used by companies to effectively push products out on the market and to the customers (Corniani, 2008). However, the sample also indicated that too much and too direct advertising initiatives about eco-friendly products may easily be interpreted as greenwashing and lead to skepticism. Some participants stated that it
may be perceived as a PR stunt, rather than an informational message if companies use a too aggressive push strategy. Alternatively, the sample suggested companies to be more transparent and provide the consumers with information regarding the difference between eco-friendly and regular products and giving them an incentive to purchase the eco-friendly ones over others. Wagner (2003) argues that if companies are not transparent regarding eco-friendly initiatives, it may backfire as consumers will perceive the trustworthiness of the company to be lower. Furthermore, since Generation Y has been found to be a generation that lacks brand loyalty (Viswanathan & Jain, 2013), it is of great importance for companies to be transparent and informative.

5.3 Modified Theory of Planned Behavior

Based on the analysis above, five recurring factors affecting consumers’ intentions to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion was identified. These factors are awareness and knowledge, convenience, skepticism, style and financial situation. With these factors in mind, the researchers created a modified Theory of Planned Behavior related to eco-friendly fast fashion purchase behaviors (see Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Modified Theory of Planned Behavior for Environmentally Friendly Fast Fashion.](image)
This theory suggests that when dealing with behaviors towards eco-friendly fast fashion, these factors should be considered as well. The extent to which these factors are present, were in this empirical study found to affect eco-friendly fast fashion purchase intentions. The most influential factor identified was awareness and knowledge. This factor was seen to affect the remaining four factors as well as intentions directly. Thus, this factor was put above the other ones. Individuals who possessed low levels of the identified factors were found to not develop these intentions and thus not purchase eco-friendly fast fashion. Furthermore, all these factors can be related to Ajzen's (1991) already existing factors; attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control. However, by developing this theory, the researchers are able to better pinpoint specific aspects within these three factors that may be directly related to intentions towards environmentally friendly fast fashion.
Chapter 6. Conclusion

In this section, the purpose of the study will be fulfilled by answering the proposed research question and concluding the findings from the empirical data collection and analysis.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore what factors affect the consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion among females of Generation Y. The research identified five factors: awareness and knowledge, skepticism, convenience, style and financial situation. They were shown to have either a positive or negative effect on the samples consumption of environmentally friendly fast fashion. If positively affecting the sample, these factors may create intentions, which in turn might lead to eco-friendly fast fashion purchases, in accordance to TPB. Furthermore, if negatively affecting the sample, these factors would not create intentions.

This study identified that the sample held both positive and negative attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion. It was found that positive attitudes existed towards both fast fashion and eco-friendly products. However, when put together, negative attitudes arose. The sample exhibited a skeptical attitude towards the business model of eco-friendly fast fashion due to the complexity of being green while producing at a high pace. It was found that the sample perceived fast fashion as positive in terms of personal benefits. However, in a global context they displayed a negative attitude towards it. This because fast fashion allows them to purchase cheap and stylish clothing, and at the same time, they recognize that it is harmful to the environment due to the construct of the business model.

It was found that consumption of fast fashion was largely determined by an individual's personal style. The sample reported to purchase what they find good looking and reasonably priced, regardless of the eco-friendliness. Furthermore, the willingness to purchase eco-friendly fast fashion may exist when purchasing clothing that requires less involvement, such as, for example, socks and tank tops. Knowledge and awareness was identified as the key factor affecting eco-friendly consumption, thus it can be concluded that providing relevant marketing is crucial to create eco-friendly consumer behavior within the fast fashion industry.
Chapter 7. Discussion

This chapter will conclude the research paper by discussing possible implications and contributions of the findings. This section also presents the reader with suggestions for further research within the field.

7.1 Discussion of Empirical Findings

Referring back to the purpose of this thesis, a number of factors related to females’ intentions to consume environmentally friendly fast fashion were identified. It was found that the consumption of fast fashion, both eco-friendly and normal, among females of Generation Y is a rather straightforward process. They simply purchase items within their financial means that they find stylish and fits them well. The sample stated that they would not purchase an item for the sole reason that it was eco-friendly. Thus suggesting that it may be of interest for fast fashion chains to emphasize production of stylish and trendy eco-friendly alternatives in order to successfully penetrate the market.

The empirical findings indicated that females of Generation Y are lazy and prone to choose the most convenient option that requires the least amount of effort. At the same time, they described that they believed that saving the environment was important and urgent. However, saving the environment is not always convenient and requires active efforts. The sample indicated an understanding and awareness of environmental issues. They tended to distance themselves from these issues by arguing that it is more important that companies and industries take active actions against this rather than individuals. Their reasoning behind this was that it is the companies that emit greenhouse gasses and other pollutants that destroy the environment, thus they should take active actions against it. However, what they fail to consider was that companies operate due to demand from consumers, e.g. the sample. Thus, it might be argued that they are as responsible as the companies to actively take actions towards a better environment.

7.2 Contributions

Environmentally friendly fast fashion remains a rather unexplored field of academic research and further insights into the topic is needed as it is a topic that is rising in importance. This empirical study may be used to increase knowledge of the consumption of eco-friendly fast fashion in females of Generation Y and to inspire further research. A number of studies have
shown the existence of an intention-behavior gap when it comes to consumption of environmentally friendly products. However, the gap was not found in this empirical study. This was due to the fact that they perceive that not enough information exists about it to form an intention to purchase it and thus an intention-behavior gap cannot be formed. Furthermore, the findings can help to provide more knowledge and information about females of Generation Y’s consumer behaviors, attitudes and awareness regarding environmentally friendly fast fashion.

From a managerial perspective, the empirical findings of this study may serve as guidance for fast fashion companies in the process of producing and marketing their environmentally friendly initiatives. A number of factors affecting consumption and attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion were identified in this research. It may be of interest for marketers to take these factors into account when penetrating the market with eco-friendly fast fashion and to be able to effectively communicate with their target audience.

7.3 Limitations
This was a qualitative study conducted through focus groups and semi-structured interviews. The sample was chosen through convenience sampling, which means that the findings cannot be generalized because it is a non-probability sampling method. The sampling method resulted in a sample between the ages of 21 to 28. However, Generation Y ranges from 17 to 37, therefore it might be difficult to generalize the findings to the entire population. Additionally, this sampling method could be perceived as biased since most of the participants had previous relations with the researchers. It should therefore be noted that by conducting a qualitative research, researcher bias and participants’ biases could be an issue and should be taken into account when collecting and interpreting the data.

Furthermore, the authors found a limitation of not testing the semi-structured interviews and focus group guidelines before collecting the data. If pilot tests had been performed, the researcher could have received feedback for improvements. For this study, external participants were chosen for the semi-structured interviews. This could be a weakness since it might have added a depth to the study if the participants were participants from the focus groups instead. If the data were to be conducted with internal interviewees, the level of social norm could have been measured and contributed to further findings on the impact of social norms in the formation of opinions, beliefs and attitudes.
Lastly, the language restriction can be a limitation, since the data collection was conducted in English, with Swedish participants. This could result in the participants not being able to express their opinions in a correct manner due to English not being their native language. This restricts the study’s reliability due to language barriers. Therefore, it could be suggested to conduct the data in the participant’s native language to receive a higher reliability.

7.4 Further Research

One suggestion for further research could be to examine how different demographics affect eco-friendly fast fashion consumption. A quantitative study conducted on females, in the same age group, across Sweden might provide an understanding of potential variances in consumer behavior across demographics.

A majority of participants stated that purchasing an eco-friendly product made them feel good about themselves. Thus if marketers investigate how the hedonic value of purchasing eco-friendly fashion impacts consumer behavior, it could lead to improvements in their marketing communication. From the empirical findings it was shown that purchasing environmentally friendly products was, for the most part, not a habit among the sample. Thus, a curiosity arose among the researchers to conduct a longitudinal study in which participants only purchase eco-friendly products for a certain period of time to see whether a formation of eco-friendly consumption habits could occur.

Lastly, it is suggested to research into whether spontaneous consumers act as barriers for environmentally friendly fast fashion or not. It might be of interest to conduct a study of how spontaneous consumers affect environmentally friendly fashion as it might be useful for companies to better understand the performance of their eco-friendly fast fashion and how to penetrate the market.
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Appendix

Appendix A

Consent to Participate in Focus Group

You have been asked to participate in a focus group. The purpose of the group is to try and understand the attitudes and intentions of females in generation Y towards environmental friendly clothes. The information learned in the focus groups will be used as primary data for our thesis.

You can choose whether or not to participate in the focus group and stop at any time. Although the focus group will be tape recorded, your responses will remain anonymous and no names will be mentioned in the report.

There are no right or wrong answers to the focus group questions. We want to hear many different viewpoints and would like to hear from everyone. We hope you can be honest even when your responses may not be in agreement with the rest of the group. In respect for each other, we ask that only one individual speak at a time in the group and that responses made by all participants be kept confidential.

I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above:

Signed: __________________________________________ Date: __________________
Appendix B

Consent to Participate in Semi-Structured Interview

You have been asked to participate in a semi-structured interview. The purpose of the interview is to try and understand the attitudes and intentions of females in generation Y towards environmental friendly clothes. The information learned in the interview will be used as primary data for our thesis.

You can choose whether or not to participate in the interview and stop at any time. Although the interview will be tape recorded, your responses will remain anonymous and no names will be mentioned in the report.

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions. We want to hear many different viewpoints and hope you can be honest.

I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above:

Signed: ____________________________ Date: ________________
Appendix C
Focus Group Guide

Intro: This focus group will discuss clothing consumption and how you reflect when purchasing clothes. We will start by asking some general questions about your fashion consumption and then move on to eco-friendly fast fashion. The purpose with our thesis is to explore Swedish female attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion.

Is it ok for everyone if we record this focus group?

Participants:
Time:
Questions:
1) What’s your name, age, occupation, have you ever purchased an eco-friendly fashion product, and favorite store?

General questions about the environment
2) How would you define an environmentally friendly product?
3) How important is saving the environment for you?

General questions about fashion
4) What do you think of when you hear fast fashion?

Definition fast fashion: “Fast fashion is a form of business strategy that companies have applied to the market, because of high demand and to gain economic growth” (Fletcher, 2008). That means that new fashion items is quickly produced and out on the market within weeks.

5) How much time and money do you spend on clothes each month?
   a) How about online?
6) What do you know about common fast fashion chain, like H&M and Gina Tricot, and their eco-fashion initiatives?
7) How much do you value buying environmentally friendly clothes over regular clothes?
   a) If not - would you please elaborate or explain more?
8) What do comes to mind when you think of eco-friendly clothing?
   a) Describe the eco-clothes
General questions about consumer behavior

9) Would you rather go shopping by yourself or in a group?
   a) Do you go shopping in a group to actually purchase clothes or due to the social aspect of it?

10) How influenced by others are you when shopping?
   a) If you were for example to try on something you thought looked really good on you and you turned to your friend who was with you shopping but they thought it was ugly, would you still buy it?

11) Is your clothing purchases spontaneous or are they planned?

12) Would you consider putting in 30 extra minutes before you go shopping to find eco-friendly clothes?
   a) How would you prefer to receive this information?

Eco-friendly fast fashion

13) How aware are you about eco-friendly fashion and do you know where you can locally purchase it?

14) How much difference do you think it would make if you decided to start purchasing for example socks made only from eco-friendly materials?

15) As consumers, what makes it difficult for you purchase eco-friendly fast fashion?

16) What do you find important when purchasing clothes?
   a) Do you ever consider the information on the labels?

17) Do you feel that purchasing an environmentally friendly product fulfills any personal needs you have?

18) It is important to save the environment, but generally we don’t buy environmentally friendly products, why do you think this happens?

19) What advice would you give to a company producing eco-friendly fast fashion?

20) Is there anything anyone would like to add to today’s discussion?
Appendix D

Interview Guide

Intro: This interview will discuss clothing consumption and how you reflect when purchasing clothes. I will start by asking some general questions about your fashion consumption and then move on to eco-friendly fast fashion. The purpose with our thesis is to explore Swedish female attitudes towards eco-friendly fast fashion.

Is it ok for you if I record this interview?

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Favorite store:

General questions about the environment

1) How would you define an environmentally friendly product?
2) How important is saving the environment for you?
3) Do you believe that the majority of the public purchases environmentally friendly products?
4) What industries are you aware of that destroys the environment?

General questions about the fashion

5) Do you know what fast fashion is?

Definition of fast fashion: “Fast fashion is a form of business strategy that companies have applied to the market, because of high demand and to gain economic growth” (Fletcher, 2008). That means that new fashion items are quickly produced and out on the market within weeks.

6) Tell me about your clothing consumption.
7) How often do you purchase clothes?
8) How much do you spend on fashion? (Per month or year)
9) Is it often spontaneous purchases or do you plan before?
10) Where do you purchase clothes? (In stores, online etc.)
11) Do you shop alone or together with someone else?
12) How influenced are you by others when going shopping?
   a) (Friends, family, bloggers, celebrities etc.) (How?)
13) What do you find important when buying clothes?
   a) (Brand, style, fitting, quality, price, how they are produced)
14) Do you look at the labels in the clothes when you purchase them?
   a) (Why/Why not?)
15) What do you know about common fast fashion chain, like H&M and Gina Tricot, and their eco-fashion initiatives?

**Eco-friendly fast fashion**

16) What comes to your mind when I say eco-friendly fast fashion?
17) How did you come across this information/knowledge?
18) Do you perceive environmentally friendly fashion as something positive or negative?
19) If you were to describe eco-friendly fashion, what would it look like to you?
   a) Where does this picture you have come from?
20) Who do you think purchase these clothes? Is it certain people or groups?
   a) (Why/Why not?)

**Consumption of eco-friendly clothing**

21) Have you ever purchased an eco-friendly fashion product?
22) Do you have a desire to purchase more eco-friendly fashion?
   a) If yes: Do you feel that something is stopping you from doing it?
   b) If no: Why not?
23) As a consumer, what makes it difficult for you purchase eco-friendly fast fashion?
24) Would you consider putting in 30 extra minutes before you go shopping to find eco-friendly clothes?
25) How aware are you about eco-friendly fast fashion and do you know where you can locally purchase it?
26) How much difference to the environment do you think it would make if you decided to start purchasing for example socks made only from eco-friendly materials?
27) Do you feel that purchasing an environmentally friendly product fulfills any personal needs you have?
28) Do you think that companies target a certain target group?
   a) Yes: why? Would you please describe the type of person?
   b) No: why not

29) How harmful do you perceive that the fast fashion industry is on the environment?

30) Generally, individuals agree that it is important to save the environment, but generally we don’t buy eco, why do you think this happens?

31) What advice could you give to a company producing environmentally friendly fast fashion?

32) Do you have any questions or comments about this interview or topic? Otherwise, thank you for today!