CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE LABELS IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY

– A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

In the last decades sustainability has become a major topic in society. The population is growing, which has increased production and has resulted in a negative impact on the environment. The fashion industry has become a big contributor to the negative impact on the environment through fast fashion. Although consumers continue buying low price garments on a weekly basis, more and more consumers are becoming more aware of sustainability. As a result, sustainable labels have entered the industry with a controversy confusing consumers with the different labels available in all industries. It has also created doubt in the reliability of the labels expressed by consumers. Using sustainable labeling is a way of spreading information and awareness about sustainability and to understand how consumers prefer to receive information, and how this affects their purchasing behavior. This has lead to the purpose of the study, which is to explore Generation Y's attitudes towards sustainability and sustainable labels within the fashion industry.

The research was a qualitative study with an exploratory approach. The research used two focus groups from generation Y to collect empirical data about consumers' attitudes towards fashion sustainability. The sample was purposively chosen with generation Y being the most consumption-oriented generation of all time, and more socially and environmentally aware which was preferred in this study.

Conclusions that could be drawn from the study were that the participants knew about sustainable labels and could name several labels, although only in general and not in regards to apparel. The participants were also critical towards sustainability within the fashion industry due to overproduction and environmentally unfriendly materials that the industry uses, making consumer question the fashion industry's real intentions. There is an interest in sustainable clothing but it is perceived as too expensive and unavailable, where one must actively seek for sustainable products. A preferred way to receive sustainable information through labeling was to use a comprehensive regulatory requirement schemes, similar to the one the appliance industry uses.

Keywords: *Fashion, Fashion Industry, Consumer behavior, Sustainability, Sustainable labels, Higg Index,*

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1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction chapter provides a background to the study. The chapter continues with the problem discussion, the purpose of the study, the research questions and delimitations.

1.1 Background

In the last decades and especially in the 21st century, climate change has become a threat to humankind (Pereira, 2015). The population has been growing rapidly, which has put a pressure on production and has lead to an increase in carbon emissions (Mitchell, 2012). Also, the fast growth of demand has increasingly been using up natural resources (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2016). Thus, sustainability and sustainable development has become a well-discussed topic in the 21st century amongst researchers, marketers and consumers (Mitchell, 2012). Sustainability is a policy concept that originates from the "Brundtland Report of 1987", which is a document that is about the aspirations of humans towards a better life, and about the limitations enforced by environment (Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010). The concept has been defined as:

"Paths of human progress that meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland & Khalid, 1987 p. 29)

Additionally, the fashion industry has been one of the world's most environmentally destructive industries for decades (Henninger, 2015; Vlachos & Malindretos, 2015). The industry has been offering new products to the lowest prices while responding to consumer demands, which is a concept called fast fashion (Maegan & Yan, 2013). This modern way of producing and consuming is one of the main reasons the industry is extremely destructive (De Brito, Carbone & Blanquart, 2008). During the last two decades the needs and wants for the western population has increased (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2016). In the contemporary society, consumers do not purchase new products due to breakage and/or a certain needs (Pal, 2016). Instead they purchase due to weekly news, low prices and twenty-four-seven social media updates, which trigger consumers to update their closet with new products (Pal, 2016). By trend spotting, designing, producing and transporting apparel around the world within a few weeks time is what the fashion industry is all about, but affects the world negatively (Park & Kim, 2016). Nevertheless, some of the environmental issues are to blame for the fashion industries recklessness and greediness for higher margins; the industry has become an adopter and influencer regarding sustainability (Henninger, 2015). The industry has in the last couple of years shown great engagement and responsibility towards sustainable efforts and the process is an ongoing procedure with more and more companies taking action into their own hands by doing minor or major adjustments towards a more sustainable fashion production (Henninger, 2015). Some companies have even become transparent, which has become their whole business strategy, such as Nudie Jeans Co (Egels-Zandén & Hansson, 2016). Ortiz-Martinez and Crowther (2008, pp. 19) stated transparency as:
"The external impact of the actions of the organization can be ascertained from that organization's reporting".

On the other hand, being sustainable in the fashion industry is a great challenge for companies in many areas (Karthik & Gopalakrishnan, 2014). The fast changes in demand and impulse buying are only two of many problems, which have lead to overproduction in the fashion industry (Larsson, Mouwitz & Peterson, 2009). Not only is it the overproducing of clothes that is the problem, but also what happens when the product is "consumed", where one third of all clothes become waste (Larsson, Mouwitz & Peterson, 2009). There are many unanswered questions of what happens with the products after they are consumed (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2015). Will it be repaired, recycled, or thrown away? According to a study each person in Sweden waste 8 kg of textiles every year, also another study shows that 62% of Swedish people waste clothes that they do not want to use anymore (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2015).

However, different generations consume and waste differently (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2015). A generation that is consumption-oriented but also more socially and environmentally aware than other generations is generation Y (Millennials) (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2015). This generation was taught in school to be more environmentally aware and this has lead to them to think more sustainable, where previous generations were not taught in school instead they had to learn as adults (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2015).

Although there are generations that are more sustainably aware, they still consume and waste too much (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2015). Regarding the negative environmental impacts of the present fashion consumption behavior, there is a rising concern of sustainability issues within the fashion supply chain (Choi & Cheng, 2015). Therefore, retailers and organizations are working globally to decrease these numbers (SAC, 2017). According to Gill, Lopes and Kaye-Smith (2016) a way of decreasing these numbers is to make products with a better durability and to make products that can be recycled. As consumers are demanding sustainable products, companies are providing conscious collections, ecological cotton products and maintenance instructions to offer customers some kind of sustainable efforts to please the demand (Henninger, 2015). Sustainable labels are increasing more and more each day, showing that companies take action towards a more sustainable world, but the different labels, such as own labels and third-party labels have shown to make consumers confused (Leire & Thidell, 2005: Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004).

In contrary, looking at an industry with a successful labeling system is the appliance industry (Jeong & Kim, 2015). The industry has proven that a sustainable labeling system is of positive impact on consumers purchasing behavior. They have successfully managed to implement a labeling scheme that puts the decision of buying sustainable into the hands of the consumer. The energy-labeling scheme provides the customer with information about how energy efficient their appliance will be when being used, meaning buying high energy efficient (Green A on the energy label) the consumer will have the lowest cost of energy use when using the appliance (see energy label example in appendix A) (Mills & Schleich, 2010). Also resulting in a lower impact on the environment (Mills & Schleich, 2010). Compared to buying a less energy efficient product that will use more energy in the consumers' homes and therefore cost them more and also have a larger negative impact on the environment. Thus, by using an energy-labeling scheme, the balance of responsibility has been divided between companies and consumers (Jeong & Kim, 2015). Providing consumers with more energy efficient products through the energy-labeling scheme has resulted in consumers actually buying more conscious, which has lead to the EU decreasing the scale from A-F to A-D

(Mills & Schleich, 2010) (See more information about energy labels and consumer responses in appendix A).

1.2 Problem Discussion

As previously mentioned, the appliance industry is an industry that has a successful labeling system, and it has been shown that the energy-labeling scheme has had a positive and significant impact on the purchasing behavior of consumers. Reflecting that a small adjustment of transparency can affect consumers to buy more environmental friendly when the right information is provided. How come a transparent labeling method has not been tried in the fashion industry?

Sustainable labeling has for a long time been seen as a significant solution to increase sustainable purchasing decisions (Thøgersen, Haugaard & Olesen, 2010). Consumers have stated that they would consider sustainability and ethics in their purchasing decision if information would be available (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Also, too many sustainable labels have shown to make consumers confused regarding the differences between sustainable labels and therefore have created questionable doubt by consumers on how reliable all the labels really are (Leire & Thidell, 2005; Pedersen & Neergaard, 2006). There are over 445 active sustainable labels within 25 industries in 197 countries (Henninger, 2015). Out of these only 108 are active within the fashion industry (Henninger, 2015). Henninger (2015) highlights the question; why, out of 108 sustainable labels used in the fashion industry are only a few labels industry specific, and wonders why the fashion industry needs to use the sustainable labels from other industries instead of its own.

Therefore, are there too many labels that make consumers confused or is there a lack of information? Concluding that the labeling of sustainable products in the fashion industry is questionable and confusing for consumers. Also, lack in research beyond what already exists is needed in order to actually see how and why/ why not consumers adapt sustainable labels in order to understand the behavior of consumers.

1.3 Purpose & Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore Generation Y's attitudes towards sustainability and sustainable labels within the fashion industry. In order to do so, the following research questions are proposed.

To gain an understanding of consumer attitudes, consumers' general purchasing decisions were discussed in order to understand the true perception of consumers regarding sustainability.

RQ1 What are the motivations of Generation Y consumers when making a purchasing decision?

To understand generation Y's attitudes regarding sustainability and sustainable labeling, an additional goal was to understand their purchasing decisions specific to fashion and sustainability.

RQ2 How are Generation Y consumers' attitudes towards sustainable labels within the fashion industry?

Additionally, as the research aims to find possible suggestions on how Generation Y would prefer to receive sustainable information on a label, the last research question is proposed.

RQ3 What are consumers' thoughts on a transparent labeling scheme in the fashion industry?

1.4 Delimitations

Due to time and resources, limitations had to be set to keep the research relevant and within the timeframe. The research is written out of a consumer's perspective and the study focuses on consumers and their perceptions of the subject. Meaning that a company perspective is not prioritized in this research. Also, the study is conducted on Swedish people only. Due to time constraints, only two focus groups were conducted for the purpose of this research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The chapter provides the theoretical framework for the study, starting with consumer behavior in general and continuing with consumer behavior in the fashion industry. Secondly, sustainable labeling is presented and how sustainability is communicated, and ends with the Higg Index as an example how sustainability can be communicated to consumers.

2.1 Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior is the study of the process when groups or individuals buy, choose and/or use products or services in order to satisfy the needs and wants (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Consumer behavior is a process and is a vital part of marketing (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). It is defined as:

"The study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society" (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010 pp. 6).

2.1.1 Decision-making Process

In consumer behavior, the consumer has three distinctive roles, which are user, payer and buyer (Furaiji, Latuszynska & Wawrzyniak, 2012) where all the roles are part of a process called the decision- making process. It is a process that starts with consumers recognizing their needs and tries to find ways to resolve these needs (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). After the problems and needs have been established, the information search starts, then the evaluation and selection starts where they plan their purchasing decisions based on the information found, and finally go through with the purchase or not. After the purchase is done, there can be a post purchase process (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

According to Furaiji, Latuszynska and Wawrzyniak (2012) there are different types of decision-making processes based on what products that are in the process. The first one is called routine response behavior and that is when buying low-cost products, and products that are bought frequently (e.g. groceries) (Furaiji, Latuszynska & Wawrzyniak, 2012). The second one is called limited decision making and that is when a routine purchase decision and an extensive one is combined, it is usually when the consumer knows what he/she wants but needs to select the brand for the product (Latuszynska, Furaiji & Wawrzyniak, 2012. The third is the most complex and it is the extended decision making, this is when the consumer purchase infrequently products, more expensive ones, such as, home appliances, houses and cars (Furaiji, Latuszynska & Wawrzyniak, 2012). Hawkins & Mothersbaugh (2010) assert that consumer behavior research attempts to understand the buyer decision-making process, both individually and collectively, therefore marketers are working on a daily basis to understand specific consumers and groups. Knowledge of consumer behavior is critical for influencing decisions not only about which product to purchase but also about what kind of people that purchase the different products based on demographics and behavioral variables etc. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). It is important to know that customer needs are not only based on the practicality of the product, it is evidently more than the product itself, such as information about the product, where the product is available, the image of the company of the product, image of the product, the price and the production of the product (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

2.1.2 Factors Influencing Decision-making

In consumer behavior, there are both internal (psychological) and external (sociological) factors influencing consumers in their decision-making (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). External factors could be culture, subcultures, demographics, social status, reference groups, family and marketing activities. Internal factors could be perception, learning, memory, motives, personality, emotions and attitudes (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Marketers and companies should not consider psychological or sociological alone, they need to be combined in the pursuit of the best consumer market (Diamond & Diamond, 2013).

2.1.2.1 Internal Factors

A great internal factor that influences consumption is motivation (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Also, in order to understand consumer behavior, needs and wants need to be understood and distinguished and what motivates consumers (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Motivation occurs when a need is awakened that the consumer wishes to satisfy, and once a need has been activated, a state of tension appears that drives the consumer

to attempt to reduce or eliminate the need (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). This need may be a functional/ practical need, or it may be an experiential need, which involves emotional responses or fantasies (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Furaiji, Latuszynska and Wawrzyniak (2012) also state that consumers often buy products for their values instead of the function of the product. A product is more than the value, more than the primary function. In many aspects, consumers want more than the function, they look at the image of the product, image of the company and after-sale service (Furaiji, Latuszynska & Wawrzyniak, 2012). The desired end-state is the consumer's goal, whether the need is functional/practical or experiential, the need creates tension between the present state and the ideal state (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). The goal for the consumer is therefore to reduce the tension or for the tension to vanish. This is what drives the consumer (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Motivation can be described in different ways, as of its strengths, or as a directive strength pulling the consumer into a certain direction or as a reduction of the motivational tension (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Although, it is important to be aware that there are and will always be exceptions of behavior, and that consumption can satisfy more than just one need at a time (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) suggest that the same consumption behavior can be for different need and different times, there are no certain rules, only guidelines.

Additionally, in the contemporary society it is mostly the hedonic motives (e.g. the need for fun, emotional) that play a bigger role in purchasing decisions, but utilitarian motives (rational needs, function of products) are still there (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Emotional motives and rational motives are also highly discussed in consumer behavior. Consumers are motivated to buy for different reasons (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). Emotions are strong, relatively uncontrolled feelings that affect consumer behavior (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Emotions are therefore linked to needs, motivation, and personality and needs that are not satisfied create motivations that are emotional (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Unsatisfied needs become negative emotions, vice versa. As a result, products and brands that generate positive consumption emotions increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Status and prestige are often emotional motives with the brand name as a motive behind the selected purchase (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). Rational motives are based on careful selection of the product, e.g. depending on a low price and a good quality (Diamond & Diamond, 2013).

Furthermore, the self-concept is another major internal influencing factor. Sirgy (1982) came up with self-concepts where there are three different perspectives, which are the actual self, the ideal self and the social self. The actual self is how the person really thinks of herself/himself, the ideal self is how the person would like to be seen, and the social self is how the person thinks others see him/her (Sirgy, 1982). The self-concept is the idea one has of oneself within the social identity theory, and it consists of individual characteristics including body attributes, interests, abilities, and potentials (Sirgy, 1982). This means that individuals can define others as well. When defining others, one can define oneself, which means that individuals are part of a bigger group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). According to Solomon, Bamossy and Askegaard (2006) the overall explanation of the self- concept is the attitude a person has towards himself/herself, it is all about the attitude towards oneself and how it reflects on the consumption.

2.1.2.2 External Factors

Culture is a major factor that influences consumers. Culture can be defined as: "Culture is the complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society" (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010 p.42). Thus, culture is a concept that comprehensively includes almost everything that influences an individual's thought processes and behaviors (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). However, many aspects of the human behavior is learned, thus, culture affects many aspects in the way humans' behave (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Also, the contemporary society is complex and therefore culture does not provide specific descriptions for appropriate behavior, therefore, culture is described as how the majority of people act and think (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Culture often comes very natural, that people are not aware of it, most people act in the same way because it is natural (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Within the different cultures, there are also subcultures, such as ethnic groups, teens and people from certain parts of the country (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006).

Further, social status is another major external factor that influences consumption (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Social status is usually divided up into three categories, which are upper class, middle class and lower class (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). Consumers in the three categories consume differently because of the discretionary income (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). When a person has more of a discretionary income, there is a higher willingness to buy, and the more the discretionary income, the higher the social class (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Although, there is a higher willingness to buy in the upper class, it does not have to mean that they buy more. If a consumer has had a lot of money all of his/her life, the purchase behavior tends to be more conservative and qualitative (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). Although, there are consumer is in the upper class that are newly rich and have a completely different purchasing pattern, they buy more and less carefully (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). In the middle class, consumers are more cautious in how they spend their money but they still have money to spend on products they want and not necessarily need. In the lower class, consumers are very price conscious and have less to none discretionary income (Diamond & Diamond, 2013).

In addition, a well recognized external factor is reference group, which is "an actual or imaginary individual or group conceived of having significant relevance upon an individual's evaluations, aspirations, or behavior" (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006 p. 350). Reference groups that affect consumer behavior can include parents, friends, team members, classmates and/or other leisure activity enthusiasts (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). It can either be a large and formal group or it can be small and informal group, such as a group of friends or students (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006).

2.1.3 Consumer Behavior in the Fashion Industry

Consumers do not act and behave in the same matter in all industries, especially not in fashion consumer behavior (Strähle, 2017). Throughout history, many designers tried to dictate fashion, although in the 21st century designers and retailers try to satisfy their needs and wants instead of deciding what people should like and/or dislike (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). As mentioned before, to know what the consumers want, it is important to know what motivates the consumers (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). In the fashion industry, the producers and retailers need to be prepared and pay attention to the consumers needs and wants in order

to be prepared to meet the difficulties in the industry (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). As motivation is highly discussed in consumer behavior, there are different motivations behind behavior in different industries. According to Strähle (2017) fashion consumers often buy clothing due to the emotional need. According to history, many fashion consumers have selected clothing based on the name of the designer, which is emotionally motivated (Diamond & Diamond, 2013). For example, jeans used to be a practical garment used by workers and chosen rationally by consumers, but along came Calvin Klein and changed that fact, and the designer jeans market was born (Diamond & Diamond, 2013).

In the contemporary society, fashion is a way of expressing one's identity (McNeill & Moore, 2015). In fashion consumer behavior identity is evidently important. In many cultures, people want and have a need to belong within a group or society (Hofstede, 1991). Thus, it is important for individuals to feel accepted and therefore they adapt to the values and social norms that society has implemented within that specific culture (Hofstede, 1991). Hogg and Abrams (1988) define identity as "people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others". In fashion, most consumers want to express meanings about oneself and to create an identity (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Because identity is extremely important for fashion consumers, it can often outweigh other factors, such as being ethical, sustainable and functional (McNeill & Moore, 2015). On the other hand, Birtwistle and Moore (2007) emphasize that this depends on the lack of knowledge of the negative effect that the fashion industry has on the environment. McNeill and Moore (2015) emphasize that it is beliefs and behavior that are a result of other factors playing a more important role in determining purchase behavior, which include price, value, trends and brand image, elements which are important in fashion consumption (McNeill & Moore, 2015).

As mentioned before, there are different types of decision making depending on what product the consumer is buying (Furaiji, Latuszynska & Wawrzyniak, 2012). Limited decision-making is a combination of an extensive purchase decision and a routine one, consumers that are in the limited decision making usually know what they want but are deciding on the brand. This is common in fashion consumer behavior, because buying a piece of clothing is a good example on how this process works (Furaiji, Latuszynska & Wawrzyniak, 2012). Also, socializing and relevancy to people is dominant within the decision making process, which can lead to overconsumption, as can be seen in the fashion industry, especially in fast fashion (Strähle, 2017).

2.1.4 Sustainable Consumption in the Fashion Industry

Although, sustainability has become or is on its way of becoming a part of the decision making process, it is still not in the process for the vast majority of people, however, it has become a more influencing factor for fashion consumers (Strähle, 2017). Defining sustainable fashion is evidently complex because there is no standard for the fashion industry (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). And one could think that fashion and sustainability do not go together due to how the fashion industry is built up with fast changes and short product life cycles (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). Although sustainable fashion includes many aspects, such as, organic, slow, eco, fair trade etc. where all the different aspects are trying to include other political issues, e.g. animal rights, environment and workers' right (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). There has been a recent growth in the interest of consumers regarding sustainability and also a growth in producing more sustainable, where many designers and retailers have taken a standpoint (Lundblad & Davies, 2016).

In addition, sustainable consumers face many motivations behind the decision-making (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). What drives them most likely includes self-expression, group conformity, aesthetic satisfaction, and at the same time ethics and avoiding the guilty feelings (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). Also, Sustainable fashion consumers do not value price in the same sense, for them cost is a choice for natural materials, lack of availability, and search time on environmental or social topics (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). This becomes the benefits of longer-lasting, unique designs, higher-quality textiles and psychological benefits, such as, accomplishment, individuality and self-esteem (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). Also, sustainable fashion consumers are also motivated by the fact that they are decreasing the risks for other people in the society by buying products that are fair trade and from companies that have good working conditions (Lundblad & Davies, 2016). Simultaneously, they seek for individuality, comfort, looking good and good designs, which is the same for all fashion consumers in hedonic consumption (emotional) (Lundblad & Davies, 2016).

Also, Gam (2011) states that understanding environmentally friendly clothing purchasing behavior needs more research than in other industries when understanding environmentally friendly purchasing behavior. It is because clothing and the fashion industry has the most change-intense products and fastest change overall (Gam, 2011).

2.1.4.1 Intention vs. Behavior in Ethical and Sustainable Consumption

In order to understand sustainable consumption, the intention and behavior gap needs to be explained. In recent years ethical consumption has become evidently popular (Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014). Although, consumers claim that they are ethical and sustainable, they rarely are when they actually make the purchase (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014), and this results to less sustainable consumption than would be expected based on data. This is the gap between expressed attitudes, intentions, and behavior (Eckhardt, Belk & Devinney, 2010). Sustainable consumers have environmental, social or other motives for choosing one product over another, and they express concern about their consumption choices' impact (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). Although, being ethical raises different concerns and issues for each and every individual (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014).

Further, there are studies that assume that ethical and sustainable buying intentions mirror the actual buying behavior (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). One cannot assume that intentions and behavior are the same and ignore studies that buying intentions do not mirror actual buying behavior. Many recent studies draw the conclusion that ethical intentions are reliable, but as mentioned before, internal and external factors affect actual purchase decisions, which means that the intentions are not always as they seem (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). Moreover, It can be hard to involve ethical issues into the everyday life and it can take time. The internal and external factors, and knowledge of ethical issues need to be aligned in order to make the ethical behavior a habit (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). Also, by making ethical consumption easier and more frequent was planning and making it a habit. Firstly in the process of planning, information needs to be found and understood, and then the plan needs to be formed and repeated into making it a habit (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). When purchases are not ethically planned and made into habits that is when there will be compromises and unethical purchases (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). Also, breaking old habits is not an easy process and becoming ethical with ethical shopping habits is not an effortless process. Behavioral patterns and

dimension needs to be broken and re-made, built-up and made into a habit in order to become ethically consistent in the shopping process (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014).

In sum, what is said will not always be the action. By solely making information available to consumers about ethical consumption and choices will not likely making consumers purchase less unethical products or change their behavior (Eckhardt, Belk & Devinney, 2010). There is so much more to it than making information available, consumers need to feel the need to be responsible as well. Companies can be responsible, have ethical products and being transparent but the consumers have to make the ethical purchasing decisions. As Carrington, Neville & Whitwell (2014) suggests, consumers have to gradually become more ethical and sustainable and plan their purchases and make it a lifestyle in order for the intentions and behaviors be the same. As of now in fashion, emotional motivates are stronger than the rational motives and that is why ethical products need to become more emotionally motivated so consumer can act more ethically (Eckhardt, Belk & Devinney, 2010). Therefore the next chapter will be sustainable labeling as it is a way of showing consumers that a product is ethical and sustainable (Valor, Carrero & Redondo 2014).

2.2 Sustainable Labeling

Although there is a gap between intention and behavior in ethical and sustainable consumption (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014), companies are providing conscious collections, ecological cotton products and maintenance instructions to offer consumers some kind of sustainable efforts to please the demand (Henninger, 2015). With these demands from consumers, sustainable labels are increasing more and more each day, showing that companies take action towards a more sustainable world (Henninger, 2015). Sustainable and eco-labels are a way of showing consumers that a product reaches the ethical expectations that the consumers have (Valor, Carrero & Redondo 2014). Sustainable labels are a result of increasing importance of action towards a more sustainable world. The environmental labeling can be labels, standards or certifications, that are awarded to products, services or companies that actively are doing adjustments towards a more sustainable world (Henninger, 2015). Henninger (2015) states that the overall goal with sustainable labeling is: “Through communication of verification and accurate information, that is not misleading, on environmental aspects of products and services that cause less stress on the environment, thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous environmental improvement” (Henninger, 2015, p. 6012).

By labeling a product with a sustainable label, it makes the product stand out among competitors but does also function as an information tool that spreads knowledge and awareness about sustainability (Bjørner, Hansen, & Russell, 2004; Blackburn, 2009). It also increases transparency, which gives consumer an insight in a product's production and is also shown to affect consumers purchasing behavior. The use of sustainable labels helps consumers save time when looking for sustainable information and increases sales of sustainable products (Thøgersen, Haugaard & Olesen, 2010). Brands that do not label can be calculated as unsustainable or not as environmentally friendly as labeled products, forcing companies to take more action (Bjørner, Hansen, & Russell, 2004).

Henninger (2015) presents three different types of sustainable labels (Henninger, 2015). Type one being a third-party label generated from a private sector, non-profitable organization or governmental institution with the product lifecycle as a criterion (e.g. EU-Flower and the Nordic Swan (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004)). Type two is self-declared environmental efforts from manufacturers (e.g. claims on product packaging). Type three is based on quantified product information with regards to the impact of the product lifecycle (e.g. an environmental performance declaration form) (Henninger, 2015). Even though these three types are helpful guidelines they do not cover enough to be completely inclusive when talking about all the different eco-labels and their standards (Henninger, 2015).

The specific information on sustainable labels differs between labels, brands and industries. The information can be anything regarding environmental efforts, ethical perspectives, fair trade (i.e. supporting developing countries) or even animal welfare (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Looking at the previous mentioned sustainable labels, all the labels represent different kinds of environmental or ethical efforts. Either they have used less water, fewer toxic materials and other less dangerous procedures, or they can have focused on increasing the work environment of their workers or their salaries, to mention a few (Henninger, 2015). Bjørner, Hansen and Russell (2004) also states that a significant difference between different labels depends on the end user, such as warnings labels on cigarette packages which gives the consumer the power to decide on harming oneself or its surrounding. Meanwhile the majority of labels only provide the consumer with information to make some kind of change, which in reality is just too small of an action to actually make a change (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004).

Henninger (2015) present that there are 445 active eco-labels within 25 industries in 197 countries. In the UK, about 15 labels are actively used within the fashion industry. Nine of these are non-industry specific (i.e. used within several industries) meanwhile six are fashion oriented (i.e. used only within the fashion) (Henninger, 2015). Henninger (2015) argues that labels that are used in several industries can be beneficial due to its recognition but can also create confusion amongst consumers and question the real intent with the label. Therefore the next section will go deeper into the subject of sustainable labels in the fashion industry.

2.2.1 Sustainable Labels in the Fashion Industry

As mentioned before, the 21st century has had some rapid changes in regarding fashion with reusing, recycling and redesigning where sustainability has become a trend (Henninger, 2015). In the fashion industry eco-labels and other kinds of information labels are constantly appearing (Blackburn, 2009). There are about 100 different labels that are for sustainability both environmental and social (Henninger, 2015). Although according to Henninger (2015) there has not been one specific eco-label that has instituted itself in the industry. Also, all the 100 different labels have made consumers confused and do not have or understand the information about the different labels and certainly they do not have detailed information about them (Henninger, 2015).

Another factor that can make consumers confused is that none of all the 100 eco-labels that are out there cover all aspects to a 100 percent of being ecological and that companies combine labels (Henninger, 2015). They may not understand the information or they interpret is as green washing (Henninger, 2015). Green washing is a strategy by companies to make it seem like they address environmental issues but without action (Walker & Wan, 2012). Thus, eco-labels have become evidently more important and popular in all industries as it has

become an environmental tool in marketing and in other areas (Henninger, 2015). This is due to the awareness among consumers, which also helps to increase sustainable fashion sales (Henninger, 2015).

However, the industry is pressured from consumers, the government, media and other organizations to change the production, the materials and be more transparent (Henninger, 2015). A great interest in sustainable fibers has become evidently popular in the last decade due to the food market, where "organic" and "ecological" is the norm (Blackburn, 2009). Hence, the transparency of the food industry, and that is what consumers are looking for in the fashion industry as well (Blackburn, 2009). Although there are many labels out there, consumers and what they are willing to pay for are hard to understand (Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008). It is not a simple task to understand why some labels work and why some do not (Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008). According to Henninger (2015) the ethical clothing market is still underdeveloped, only with less than one per cent in the market, thus with the potential to grow.

Additionally, the fast adoption for sustainable efforts in the fashion industry has left consumers wondering if companies truly are socially responsible or if their communication of sustainable efforts is just one of their marketing stunts to gain market share by following the trend - green washing (Blackburn, 2009). Also "the sheer amount of certifications available makes it challenging to establish, which one is the most instructive" (Henninger, 2015 p. 6017). Due to increased demand on sustainable efforts companies are trying to fill the gap, which is the gap of green washing within the fashion industry (Blackburn, 2009). Instead of companies really changing or adjusting their businesses they market themselves as sustainable to please the demand and win some market shares (Blackburn, 2009). Therefore it is important for consumers to question sustainable labels and company efforts instead of believing every good deed they claim they do (Blackburn, 2009).

2.2.1.1 Consumer Responses to Sustainable Labeling

When companies try new strategies, consumer response is the most honest result marketers can rely on when evaluating a new tactic or marketing campaign (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Eco-labeling has evidently become a marketing strategy that more and more companies have reached for due to increase interest in greener products (Carlsson, García, & Löfgren, 2010). As for every marketing plan, marketers have done in depth research about their target group to make sure to deliver a flawless and well defined product as well as pointing out pros and cons to handle the delivery of a product in the most successful way everywhere (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006).

Bjørner, Hansen & Russell (2004) argue that the use of eco-labels would be more efficient on consumer goods that are frequently purchased compared to products being purchased once in awhile. Consumers are said to believe that this would make a more significant impact on the environment as well as them being affected by one another (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Meaning that if society changes and green consumerism with the willingness to prioritize sustainable products independent of price increases, it can affect the society so that it actual influences others to buy it just to melt into the society (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Thus, previous studies have shown that price and quality are significant when consumer make a decision, these priorities can change for some individuals when their surroundings change (Carlsson, García, & Löfgren, 2010).

Therefore, the importance of understanding consumers and listening to what they want and need regarding labels has never been more essential due to the fashion industry's rapid growth and with the reputation of being one of the biggest pollution industries (Henninger, 2015). Organizations and companies want to obtain a good reputation and want to satisfy their consumers; hence they need the responses to see how they can improve sustainably (Henninger, 2015). Although, an issue amongst consumers have been green washing and therefore consumers can be confused and cautious, and the responses can be less trustworthy (Henninger, 2015).

Intentions and behavior are not always the same for consumers even if they indicate so (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Consumers have been asked many times if their purchasing decisions are likely to change or get influenced by the information of environmental, ethical and sustainable product and many consumers would agree with that (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Although, what the consumers actually do is often different from what they say and there is a lack of evidence in this area (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Björner, Hansen and Russell (2004) conclude in their research that showing a label or information about sustainable, environmental and ethical aspects was only evident in three cases in the willingness to pay (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004).

As mentioned before, confusion amongst consumers regarding eco-labels is a constant problem and many consumers do not use labels as they are intended, they do not know what they mean or are not even aware of their existence (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Therefore the following section is communicating sustainable labels.

2.2.2 Communicating Sustainable Labels

Due to consumers responding that they are confused and cautious regarding sustainable labels, communication of sustainable labels needs to be explained. Communication has always been one of the main activities for companies to present products to consumers (Kotler, et al., 2008). Effective communication is important for organizations in order to succeed with their business (Hargie, Tourish & Wilson, 2002). Through marketing communication, companies can inform their customers about their product offering in a persuading, promotional and planned way - either directly or in-direct (Kotler, et al., 2008). Focusing on good marketing that communicates customer value is significant in today's competitive market (Kotler et al., 2008). Marketing communication is not only the promotion of goods and services a company offers, but it's also the promotion of the communicating company itself (Pickton & Broderick, 2001). Communicating sustainability has become a major trend for companies during the last decade. Increased consumer demand for product information and production procedures has forced companies to adapt new marketing efforts by integrating social communication (Blackburn, 2009; Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008). The apparel and textile industry is no exception. Henninger (2015) discusses the importance of communicating sustainability, by sharing knowledge, information and meaning to consumers. By communicating social responsibility or efforts, companies are spreading awareness on the subject as well as educating consumers in an indirect way (Henninger, 2015).

Heinzle & Wüstenhagen (2012) discuss the challenges for consumers to identify environmental efforts of companies and their products when purchasing a products or service on the spot. With eco-labeling consumers can easily find products or services with sustainable efforts (Henninger, 2015). An effort appreciated and promoted by decision makers,

researchers and the industry (Heinzle & Wüstenhagen, 2012). Eco-labeling has become a well-used marketing tool in many industries as a response to the growing consumer demand on sustainable offerings (Blackburn, 2009; Henninger, 2015). By labeling environmentally friendly products, companies can differentiate themselves from non-eco-labeled brands (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004).

Additionally, the use of sustainable labels is not only another communication tool for companies but does actually influences and guide consumers towards a more sustainable purchasing behavior as well as increased sustainable production efforts (Heinzle & Wüstenhagen, 2012; Henninger, 2015). Also, in Blackburn's (2009) study, a fifth of all interviewees in his survey found eco-labels influenced their purchasing decisions.

To round up this chapter, with a demand from consumers, sustainable labels are increasing more and more each day, showing that companies take action towards a more sustainable world (Henninger, 2015). Sustainable and eco-labels are a way of showing consumers that a product reaches the ethical expectations that the consumers have (Valor, Carrero & Redondo 2014). In the fashion industry, sustainable labels are constantly appearing (Blackburn, 2009), and there are about 100 different labels that are for sustainability, both environmental and social (Henninger, 2015). All these 100 different labels have made consumers confused and do not have or understand the information about the different labels (Henninger, 2015). Another issue amongst consumers has been green washing and therefore consumers can also be cautious (Henninger, 2015). Therefore the importance of understanding consumers and listening to their needs and wants regarding labels has never been more essential (Henninger, 2015).

A sustainable measurement used within the fashion industry to help brands calculate their sustainability is the Higg Index. The Higg Index is further explained in the following section to understand its function to understand why the measurement would be of interest to consumers interested in sustainable fashion information.

2.2.3 Fashion Transparency Measurement – The Higg Index

As mentioned before, the fashion industry is pressured from consumers, the government, media and other organizations to change the production, the materials and be more transparent (Henninger, 2015). Therefore there is an organization called; The Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), which is an apparel, home textile and footwear coalition in sustainable production between companies (brands, retailers and manufacturers) in the industry (SAC, 2017). The organization has created a self-assessment tool called the Higg Index that is for textile and fashion companies to measure their sustainability of their products throughout the whole lifecycle (SAC, 2017). The lifecycle of products here includes raw materials, manufacturing, packaging, transportation, consumer use, and end of life (SAC, 2017). The Higg Index measures the companies and organizations performances and gives an overview of the social, environmental and labor impacts in sustainability and see where the companies can improve (SAC, 2017). With doing so, the whole industry can improve and get rid of the damages and become transparent, which is what the consumers of the contemporary society are asking for. Instead of facing challenges alone, SAC allows the companies to do it together and work on a sustainably better future (SAC, 2017). The Higg Index contains three main tools:

Brand Tools:

This tool is for policies and practices that show in every impact are at any company level (SAC, 2017). It is the measurement of the environmental and social and labor factors of their design, sourcing and operations (SAC, 2017). Users will get an overall score when entering their own data; also they will get a score in different categories, such as manufacturing, packaging and transport (SAC, 2017)

Product Tools:
This tool is for every specific product that the users enter data for. It measures the product's environmental performance in every part of the lifecycle, from the raw material to the design (SAC, 2017).

Facility Tools:

This tool is a measurement for different practices and impacts at individual facilities, individual facilities that are involved in the fabrics, putting together the clothes and the material for the packages etc. (SAC, 2017).

Users of the Higg gets points for all the different practices and policies that they follow and get the best and highest number of points when answering questions in the highest level in a positive manner (SAC, 2017). The Facility Tools, the Brand Tools and the Product Tools act as guidelines for all Higg members and user in order to make progress sustainably and to come up with innovations and see where change can be made (SAC, 2017).

3 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology for collecting and analyzing data is explained. The research approach, data collection procedure, target group, focus group execution and data analysis is presented. Ethical considerations taken during the study are also stated as well as the trustworthiness of the research to increase the quality of the study.

3.1 Research Approach

When conducting a study there are two main research approaches to consider. (1) The deductive approach (i.e. using and testing an existing theory). (2) The inductive approach (i.e. creating new theory as a result of the study) (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). For this research an inductive research approach was chosen due to the purpose of the study. Researching sustainability, labeling and consumers responses in the fashion industry, gaps were found within the area, which made the development of new theories more relevant than testing existing ones (Creswell, 2014). A qualitative orientation for the study was decided upon due

to the curiosity in understanding consumers' perspective on the area. Also, exploring the minds and behaviors of individuals and groups was the main reason for choosing a qualitative approach, which includes words, feelings and reactions rather than the quantitative approach where statistical numbers are of interest (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Discussing research design, researchers define it as the structure and the continuous procedure of the study (Creswell, 2014). It is a framework for collecting information to solve the research problem (Malhotra, 2010). Using an exploratory approach, where focus is on discovering ideas was the first step of defining a gap in the literature (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

3.2 Data Collection Method

Collecting data is one of the most significant sequences in research (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Different data collection methods can be used within research and are determined depending on the purpose of the study as well as the time frame and possible financial limitations (Malhotra, 2010; Yin, 2014). To fulfill the purpose of the study and answer the research questions, a focus group approach with semi-structured interview questions was used in order to understand the target group and how they look at sustainability and labeling within the fashion industry.

3.2.1 Target Group

Prior to executing the focus groups session the participants of the groups were determined. The chosen target group for this study was generation Y (1976-1994) or also called Millennials (Lu, Bock & Joseph, 2013). Generation Y is seen as the most consumption-oriented generation of all time, and more socially and environmentally aware than other generations (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2014). Choosing the most conscious generation for this research was specifically chosen to keep the discussions as relevant and informative as possible. Choosing another generation with less knowledge about sustainability would be unnecessary and insufficient. By collecting data from generation Y, generalizations could be drawn that the perception of the remaining generations is less informative. The participants were purposively sampled (i.e. participants selected based on the purpose of the study) (Creswell, 2014). Both men and women between the ages 20-40 were targeted. Additionally, the participants' names were changed due to participant discretion and anonymity where the new fabricated names were randomly selected.

Table 1- Focus group 1

FOCUS GROUP 1					
Name*	**Sex**	**Age**	**Occupation**	**Education level**	**Income approx.**
Marcus	M	24	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	16 000 SEK
Lisa	F	24	Student	Master's degree (ongoing)	10 000 SEK
Stina	F	24	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	10 000 SEK
Hanna	F	24	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	21 000 SEK
Nora	F	24	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	10 000 SEK
Ida	F	23	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	10 000 SEK
Fia	F	23	Nurse	Bachelor's degree	25 000 SEK
Olle	M	32	Sales engineer	Post Secondary Education	42 000 SEK
Carl	M	24	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	9 000 SEK
Ebba	F	25	Preschool teacher	Bachelor's degree	28 500 SEK
***Names have been fabricated due to participant discretion**					

Table 2- Focus group 2

FOCUS GROUP 2					
Name*	**Sex**	**Age**	**Occupation**	**Education level**	**Income approx.**
Laura	F	21	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	7 000 SEK
Madeleine	F	22	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	14 000 SEK
Hilda	F	22	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	15 000 SEK
Wilma	F	23	Sales Advisor	High School	12 000 SEK
Klara	F	25	Student	Bachelor's degree (ongoing)	10 000 SEK
***Names have been fabricated due to participant discretion**					

3.2.1.1 Target Group Procedure

A group of 10 people was conducted for the first focus group session and the second one was a smaller group of 5. The first focus group consisted out of male and female participants meanwhile the second group only consisted of female participants. This sampling method was chosen to get a variety in the sessions and to rule out gender specificities and group sizes as a possible discussion barrier. Wibeck (2012) states that three groups are a minimum to conduct a proper research meanwhile Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) states that two are a minimum. Due to time constraint data was collected thoroughly through two focus groups, following Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) approach. Also, Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) state that a focus group can consist out of 2 to 10-12 people to get a wider sample and more opinions during the discussions. In most cases though, a focus group consists out of 4 to 8 people (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). On the other hand, Wibeck (2012), states that 4-6 participants are preferred to make a more comfortable setting. It is a setting where all members of the group can take part in the discussion and in-depth explain their experiences in a less intimidating setting (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

In this research it was decided that mixing the size of the groups for the two different sessions was to try two different approaches to see if any major differences in the statements or the flow of the discussions could be determined. It was also chosen to do the first focus group with a more general selection of participants through a request on social media (Facebook). The second focus group was a smaller group with a selection of people who all knew each other. The two different approaches were chosen to see if the discussions were different or in similar with the group of a mixed group of participants where all the members did not know each other. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) state that collecting data from a focus group of people who know each other can increase the in depth information that one want to collect due to the safety and belongingness one can feel with people they know. On the other hand, they also state that collecting data from a group where the members know each other can make the conversation and discussion less serious, not as in detail due to unconscious understanding of the other members behavior and expressions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

3.2.2 Interview Guide

Prior to the focus group sessions the participants were informed that the data collection was for research purposes only. Information about the purpose of the research was limited to avoid affecting the focus groups' answers. Sustainability and fashion was not mentioned in the presentation, instead consumer behavior regarding labeling was enhanced as the main purpose to the participants. Restricting the information accordingly was a strategy to decrease the influence that both sustainability and fashion could have had on the general questions in the beginning of the interview session. To keep both focus group sessions to a similar start, a semi-structured interview guide was created prior to the focus groups (see interview guide in appendix B). The interview guide was structured based on the theoretical framework chapter with focus on consumer behavior and sustainable labeling. Extra questions regarding fashion transparency measurements and energy labels were also put in to get some insight in how aware consumers are towards these concepts. The guide was not strictly followed due to the self-going discussions in both focus groups. The moderator did only add in questions from the interview guide if a topic did not naturally occur during the discussions. Both focus groups were allowed to freely answer and venture out as long as needed during the session. The moderators asked follow-up questions when needed, based on the answers of the participants. Even though the follow-up questions were freely based, they were asked according to the purpose of the study and with the interview guide as a reference base.

The primary objective of the focus groups was to get a clear understanding of the participants' point of view of the topics discussed. There were a few topics included in the focus groups that were evidential to discuss in order to get valuable information for the research. The different topics were purchasing behavior in general to get a background on how the participants purchase items in general and then how they purchase when shopping apparel. Sustainability was presented as a new subject and was used to position the general relation the participants had to sustainability before discussing labels and then discussing sustainability and labels in the fashion industry. An order that felt natural where the participants could talk and naturally go into further discussion rather than providing them with the subjects that was pre-determined.

The main thought process of the order of the subjects was to avoid making the participants answer that sustainability was of importance to them only because the word was handed to

them. It was evidently more interesting to see if the participants would mention sustainability themselves as a significant factor when taking purchasing decisions. The same went for the fashion subject. There was no prior information given to the participants about the research being fashion oriented. This was to avoid that all answers would be directly fashion related. By getting a general take on the subject and then a specific perspective, the study got a higher quality and trustworthiness. The last subject was about the Higg Index to understand if the participants and how they would react if a tool like this existed when purchasing garments. Also, discussing energy labels were to understand if the labeling system was understandable and if the participants thought it could be applicable in the fashion industry as well. After that, the moderators asked if a transparency labeling system would be of interest to the participants.

3.2.3 Focus Groups

Focus groups are group interviews with discussions between participants. The discussion is the main difference between regular one-on-one interviews and focus group interviews (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). In focus groups the participants are leading the interview rather than the moderator (Wibeck, 2012). The moderator supports the group with guidelines, topics and support when needed but is mainly there to moderate and observe the discussion (Bryman & Bell, 2015). To manage a focus group two moderators are preferred. One is moderating the discussion of the group and one is observing and taking notes of the discussion (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). By using focus groups, researchers get in-depth information of their research topic (Creswell, 2014). Using discussions between participants instead of single interviews creates in-depth information about how people identify, understand and bring themselves about their own experiences of the topic (Wibeck, 2012). Focus groups provide researchers with verbal and non-verbal communication by observing reactions, body language, facial expression and silences when verbal communication is on-going in the group discussions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

3.2.3.1 The Procedure

Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) state that focus group sessions normally fall within a time frame of two hours. The moderators prepared both groups for a two-hour session but also mentioned that it could take longer or shorter depending on the information collected during the discussions. Both sessions were approximately one hour and thirty minutes long and came to an end very naturally, where neither the moderators nor the participants had any more comments or questions to provide. Instead, the last half an hour was used to fill out a control form by the participants where the moderators asked for information, such as occupation, education, income, age and gender to get an overview of the participants (see appendix C). Additionally, other comments were welcomed as well as asking the participants to rank their priorities when purchasing appliances versus fashion.

The moderators for the focus groups were the researchers of the study. The moderators introduced topics when needed while other subtopics came up naturally in the discussions, with some differences in the two groups. The moderators perceived that both focus groups were free flowing, direct and sincere. The participants in both groups did not seem to influence each other, while almost everyone were opinionated and with some being more active than others. Everyone seemed to be courageous enough to express their thoughts independently from the opinions of others.

On the day of the focus group sessions the set time for afternoon to evening session was significant to avoid participants to decline the discussion due to work schedule. By providing some kind of food or beverage during the session is a way of showing gratitude to participants' willingness to participate for free (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). To consider before starting the focus group sessions is to bear in mind that there are active talkers and there are the less expressive people in a group. Therefore it is important for the moderators to recognize and prepare to delegate the time and the attention that every participant gets during the sessions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Hence, it can be of need to place participants or the moderator in a suitable placement in the group to draw attention from the talkers and more focus on the moderators or the rest of the group (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). During none of the focus group sessions, no adjustments were needed to neutralize the groups. Both groups had an equal understanding and respect for each other. The participants were told in the beginning of the focus group session to only speak one at a time and to raise their hands before sharing their point of view. This was of importance because everyone's point of views are important and for no information to be lost in the recording.

The first focus group was located in Gothenburg with 10 participants and two moderators. Three of the participants were male and seven of them were female, and they were all between the ages of 23-32. The participants did not know each other and were scheduled on a Friday afternoon at 4:30 P.M. with the discussion starting at 5:00 P.M. During the half hour prior to the actual start of the focus group sessions, the participants got the opportunity to get to know each other, feel the setting and get some refreshments and snacks. The focus group discussion lasted for 1 hour and 25 minutes. The setting was casual, located in one of the homes of the moderators. The participants sat around a table where everyone could see each other, and also to see when hands were raised in order for one to speak. Both moderators participated during the first session where one took notes and the other one monitored the group discussion. The discussions were recorded on two phones to make sure no information was lost in the big group.

The second focus group was located in Stockholm with 5 participants and one moderator. All participants were females and between the ages of 22-27. The discussion was scheduled on a Wednesday at 6:00 P.M. with start at 7:00 P.M. One hour prior to the session was strategically decided to let the participants (who already all knew each other) get time to talk to each other to clear the air before letting them discuss the matter of the study. The setting was casual in the home of one of the moderators, around a dinner table where all participants could see and hear each other. Also here, food and beverages were provided as thanks for their participation. The second focus group discussion lasted for 1 hour and 19 minutes. Only one moderator participated in session two after both moderators discussed that it would be more comfortable for the participant with only one moderator present due to the small group constellation. Also, only using one phone for recording was considered enough for the smaller setting.

During both focus group sessions, minimal guidance was needed and the moderator only interacted a few times to go deeper into a mentioned subject or to clarify certain statements and/or comments.

3.3 Data Analysis Method

After the focus group sessions the audio recordings were transcribed. Transcribing refers to the process of researchers writing down an audio recording word by word (Bryman & Bell, 2015). First it was transcribed in Swedish due to the language used during the focus groups sessions, and then it was translated into English to keep the study coherent and understandable to an international level. The use of audio recording during the focus groups was to minimize loss of data and to retain detailed information from the participants. To make sure the transcription went accordingly, one of the authors translated the Swedish transcription into English meanwhile the second author translated back the English transcription to make sure the translation was as precise as possible. By doing this back-translation, the process was crosschecked and therefor also decreased ambiguity and apprehension errors.

After transcribing and reading the empirical data several times, it was decided to analyze the data in a chronological order according to the theoretical framework chapter as well as the order of the interview guide. No analytical theme was created, instead the themes where the subjects used in the interview guide and theoretical framework. Using a chronological order, which is the order of the discussion during the focus group sessions would keep the information presented in the analysis in an understandable order and give an insight in how the discussions went.

The analysis starts with an introduction to each chosen quotation from the focus group discussions. Following the quotation or quotations a relevant theory from the theoretical framework is combined to strengthen the empirical data. With exception from the last part about Higg Index and a transparency labeling scheme where no theories are linked, due to the lack of research in that area. The sole purpose of including these two extra subjects into the analysis was to increase the in-depth understanding of how the participants perceived and responded to new possible labeling solutions based on other industries. One out of the two groups did lead the discussion towards these topics without the moderators needing to interpose.

3.4 Quality Criteria

When discussing the quality of a research and the criteria, reliability and validity are the most common evaluation methods mentioned (Malhotra, 2010). Reliability explains how research using the same measurement can be repeated. Validity on the other hand, explains how the research is founded and how well the intended answers are answered (Creswell, 2014; Malhotra, 2010), which is not always the best way of evaluating qualitative research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2014). Instead, Lincoln and Guba established trustworthiness including dependability, transferability, credibility and conformability as an analog construct to validity and reliability in 1985 (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2014). To fulfill dependability of the research, the process has to be accessible to the reader of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The reader should be able to trace the information presented and find relevant documents that were needed to fulfill the purpose of the research in a logical way (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). By presenting references, a reference list and an appendix, all relevant data is presented to the reader and therefore dependability is achieved. The sample group Generation

Y was chosen because of them being the most consumption-oriented generation with the biggest awareness about sustainability (Ekström, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2014). Using the most aware group regarding sustainability was chosen to set the high general point of awareness. It was decided by the researchers that if the most aware generation was interviewed, it could be assumed that the remaining generations were less informed and aware. Therefore making the research more relevant and time efficient.

The aim of the transferability criteria is to make sure that the study gets reinforcement from previous research. Not that it needs to support the study or be connected to it, but by providing similar research results or other parts of the study to the reader, increases the trustworthiness of the study. It shows that the research is not entirely based on one author's research work and perception but instead can get more strength by showing previous research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). To achieve transferability a wide selection of references have been used as well as strong theories to support empirical data in the end chapter.

Credibility is the criteria that makes sure that the research can be repeated, and result in similar answers or conclusions with the material presented (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The reader should be able to draw the same conclusion as the researcher when connecting observations and categories (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). By using the professional skills of the supervisor of this research to proof read the question of the interview guide the validity was increased. Also, by pilot-testing the questions on a few generation Y classmates of the authors, the guide could be adjusted and reformulated to be more specific and understandable for the receiver of the question, also increasing validity. General information about purchasing decisions were asked during the focus group sessions to collect data in a natural way without giving the participants any pre-thoughts. By asking general question the participants could answer their first thought that came to mind and afterwards questions were asked about sustainability or the fashion industry to make sure that the answers were not affected by the moderators purpose. By preparing the interview session in this order the trustworthiness of the collected data was increased. By having a supervisor with extensive experience in scientific research look over and follow the overall process of the study the researchers have had a close eye on their work and therefore assured an understandable and credible result from a research professional.

The last trustworthiness criterion is confirmability. It is about connecting findings and rendering of to the collected information in a way that is logical and understandable by others (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). It also confirms that results are not self-created. By using the eyes of a supervisor throughout the whole research and including several opposition sessions to receive feedback, and other critical eyes from colleagues, personal objectivity and gaps could be decreased from the research.

3.5 Research Ethics

When doing research, ethics is of great importance (Kent, 2007). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) mention including all moral aspects when doing a study. Not only should respect and delicacy be used towards participants but also be considered throughout the whole process of research and its community (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Kent, 2007). Creswell (2014) states the following when discussing research ethics: “Researchers need to protect their

research participants, develop a trust with them; promote the integrity of research; guard against misconducts and impropriety that might reflect on their organizations or institutions; and cope with new, challenging problems" (Creswell, 2014, p. 92). To keep this study on a morally correct stage several considerations, pre adjustments and agreements have been applied. When creating the theoretical framework referencing and credit have been of great importance to give light on previous studies and researchers efforts. Also by referencing others work and thoughts provides acknowledgments that help to avoid suspicions of plagiarism (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). When discussing ethics during the empirical process, the most significant aspect is the anonymity, privacy and confidentiality towards the research participants (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Also, informed consent is covered in the start of the data collection through a basic explanation of the purpose of the research, why participants were collected and what the information will be used for. Also, confidentiality and anonymity was promised to the participants by not sharing recordings, names or irrelevant information to no other than to the researchers of this study.

4 RESULT & ANALYSIS

This chapter explains the data gathered from the two focus groups. The data presented has been analyzed by its relevance, perspective and importance. This chapter follows a chronological order, which is the same order of the interview guide and the order of the theoretical framework chapter. The chapter starts with consumer behavior purchasing behavior in general and in the fashion industry and continues with sustainable labeling and ends with consumer responses to the Higg Index.

4.1 Consumer Behavior

This chapter analyzes and discusses the results of the study. The first intention was to get some general information about the participants' attitudes towards consumer behavior in order to answer the first research question: *What are the motivations of Generation Y consumers when making a purchasing decision?* The second section of this chapter will go into consumer purchasing behavior in the fashion industry.

4.1.1 Consumer Purchasing Behavior in General

The first part of the focus group discussions involved purchasing behavior in general, following the most important factors in the decision making process. Overall in focus group one, there were differences in the answers of the most important factors where price, quality, durability, sustainability and functionality were mentioned. On the other hand, in focus group

two emotions were mostly discussed as the biggest factors. The discussion lead into wants and needs.

Ida mentioned price due to being a student and Fia agreed. Olle thought that quality was the biggest factor. Although, he also mentioned durability and sustainability. For Ebba it depended on the product, but she mostly thought of quality. Therefore, the participants in focus group one mentioned price and quality as the biggest factors in the decision making when discussing generally:

> "Ida: If it suits my wallet. If I really can afford it. It's a bit like that for a student. I prefer to do some research if I'm gonna buy something a little larger."
> "Fia: Yes, I also go for the price. "
> "Olle: Quality. That it should be something that is really lasting, sustainability and so on."

> "Ebba: I feel that it really depends on a lot of what the product is. If it is for the home, or anything that I want to have for a long time, then I also think of quality, such as electronics or furniture, but with clothes, I'm only thinking of what I feel like in that moment, really just lust-thoughts, what I feel for now. And then I do not care if it lasts more than half a year."

These quotes chimed with the theoretical framework. According to Carlsson, García and Löfgren (2010) it has been shown that price and quality are significant when consumers make a decision, although these priorities can change for some individuals when their surroundings change, i.e. external factors. Surroundings could be referred to culture. Culture often comes very natural, that people are not aware of it, most people act in the same way because it is natural (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

On the other hand, Carl from focus group one answered that function was the biggest factor for him generally. Wilma, a person in focus group two answered practical:

> "Carl: I think of its benefits. The function it fills (….) is it clothing, I think about what is nice, what is appreciated by others and so on."

> "Wilma: I'm more practical and I hate being practical"

Provided in the theoretical framework, Solomon, Bamossy and Askegaard (2006) emphasize that regarding many aspects of consumption, in the contemporary society it is mostly the hedonic motives (e.g. the need for fun, emotional) that play a significant role in purchasing decisions, but utilitarian motives (rational needs, function of products) are still there. Thus, utilitarian motives are still important to consider.

Additionally, in focus group two the discussion lead onto different factors. Hilda, Laura and Wilma in focus group two discussed want and needs, (which is connected to motivation) as the biggest factors. Hilda and Wilma did not distinguish the need from the want while Laura distinguished the want from the need:

> "Hilda: Necessity, how much you need it."
> Laura: Yes, that you want it too. To build up something for yourself, and that you think about it for a long time, that it is on the buying list for a long time."

> “Wilma: Yes and that you may not really need it, and that you tell yourself that you need it.”

These two quotes were in line in what was found in the literature. A great internal factor that influences consumption is motivation (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006), which is in order to understand consumer behavior, needs and wants need to be understood and distinguished (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Motivation occurs when a need is awakened that the consumer wishes to satisfy, and once a need has been activated, a state of tension appears that drives the consumer to attempt to reduce or eliminate the need (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006).

What are linked to motivations are emotions. Laura and Hilda in focus group two discussed emotions and how it makes you feel to consume:

> “Laura: The feeling.”

> “Hilda: How happy you get when you bought it.”

Emotions are what drive most consumers, which was evident in the second focus group. As already mentioned in the theoretical framework, emotions are strong, relatively uncontrolled feelings that affect consumer behavior, hence emotions are therefore linked to needs, motivation and personality (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Needs that are not satisfied create motivation that are emotional (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). As a result, products and brands that generate positive consumption emotions increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). This is what was distinguished in focus group two, when factors were discussed they immediately discussed emotions and how purchasing makes them feel.

4.1.2 Consumer Purchasing Behavior in the Fashion Industry

The intention was to go specifically into fashion and apparel to see if the factors, motivations and answers would differ from consumer behavior in general. It resulted in that differences and similarities could be found between consumer purchasing behavior in general and apparel.

A finding was that impulse buying is a huge factor regarding apparel that is linked to emotions, which is mentioned above. In both focus groups impulse was mentioned. Also, Ebba answered that external factors influences her, which resulted in her becoming more impulsive. In addition, Marcus from focus group one answered impulse in connection to the price, while Klara from focus group two only shops on impulse:

> “Ebba: I feel that I make more impulse purchases if I go shopping with a friend. If we say that we are going to shopping for like shoes, clothes, makeup. That kind of products. Then I do that a lot more of shopping if I go with a friend than if I go by myself. When I go by myself, I usually think: what do I like? What do I need? If I go with a friend, it is more like "but come on, buy it."

> “Marcus: I would also say when it comes to clothes for me, it's just impulsive and the price, cheap and nice in the moment.”

"Klara: Impulse. I only shop on impulse. "

Ebba agreed that external factors influenced her, such as friends and an important external factor is reference group and reference groups that affect consumer behavior can include friends (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). She also said that she makes impulse purchases if she shops with a friend. Although, this quote could also be connected to the self-concept, which is a complex internal influencing factor but when external factors also could influence. Sirgy (1982) came up with self-concepts where there are three different perspectives, which are the actual self, the ideal self and the social self. The actual self is how the person really thinks of herself/himself, the ideal self is how the person would like to be seen, and the social self is how the person thinks others see him/her (Sirgy, 1982). When Ebba shops by herself, she shops how she wants to be seen but when she shops with a friend it is more about how she thinks she is seen by others. In this case, it is about the attitude towards oneself and how it reflects on the consumption behavior.

Equally important was another external factor that influenced Klara in focus group two was status, which was also mentioned in the theoretical framework. Hilda did not say if she agreed or not, she stated that nobody cares, while Laura brought up emotions in regards to apparel:

> "Klara: You really do not have to get anything. You always just want something new. You do not want to wear the same garment again. The status thing
> Hilda: At the same time, one knows that nobody cares
> Laura: There's probably more emotions there"

Diamond and Diamond (2013) mentions that status and prestige are often emotional motives with the brand name as a motive behind the selected purchase. Social status is another major external factor that influences consumption.

As mentioned before, motivations and emotions are connected to consumer behavior. The moderator asked the participants of what motivates them, and for Hilda and Klara in focus group two it was emotional. Carl also said that fashion and clothes are driven by motivations while Marcus then mentioned identity. Madeleine from focus group two said that trends do not motivate her:

> "Hilda: How happy I get and how nice I will be in it and that it feels good
> Moderator: Then emotions motivates you when you shop?
> Hilda: yes "

> "Klara: I think of emotions as we mentioned earlier. One can think of buying lots of things and spending and shopping and being happy but nevertheless still not having anything but having the same sense of joy. It's probably pretty sick to feel like that."

> "Carl: The fashion industry is more about the emotional reactions about how you look, trends, how cool you are and so on.
> Marcus: it is more clearly linked to your identity."

> "Moderator: they are more emotional then?
> Carl: yes exactly! They are then willing to make these decisions as long as they do not have a major impact on one's life."

> "Madeleine: I have become quite picky with what I think is comfortable to wear. Some materials I cannot have because they are uncomfortable. Also buy very basic garments, and can feel comfortable with good quality. Don't get motivated by trends."

These quotes were in line with the literature that were found. According to Strähle (2017) fashion consumers often buy clothing due to the emotional need. As mentioned before emotions are linked to motivation, which occurs when a need is awakened that the consumer wishes to satisfy, and once a need has been activated, a state of tension appears that drives the consumer to attempt to reduce or eliminate the need (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Motivation can be described in different ways, as of its strengths, or as a directive strength pulling the consumer into a certain direction or as a reduction of the motivational tension (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006).

In addition to the previous Laura also mentioned needs regarding apparel:

> "Laura: That I need the garment "

On the other hand, Madeleine from focus group two answered quality and materials, where durability of the product was of essence. Klara from the same group also answered price:

> "Madeleine: quality and materials! I'd rather buy something that I know lasts a little longer.
> Klara: I'm looking at the price"

McNeill and Moore (2015) emphasize that it is beliefs and behavior that are a result of other factors playing a more important role in determining purchase behavior, which include price, value, trends and brand image, elements that are important in fashion consumption. Thus, previous studies have shown that price and quality are significant when consumer make a decision, these priorities can change for some individuals when their surroundings change (Carlsson, García, & Löfgren, 2010).

In summary, there are some differences and similarities in purchasing behavior in general and purchasing behavior in apparel. In general, it was found that emotional needs are prioritized and that it what motivates them. On the other hand, emotions were more linked to apparel than in general due to impulse buying that was mentioned. In contrary, utilitarian motives were important to two people in the focus groups. A difference was that external factors are important when purchasing clothes, such as friends and status, which were not mentioned in purchasing in general. The motivations are therefore different when making a purchasing decision in general than making one regarding apparel.

4.2 Sustainable Labeling

In this section, the purpose was to understand generation Y's attitudes regarding sustainability and sustainable labeling, an additional goal was to understand their purchasing decisions specific to fashion and sustainability. Also it was to answer research question two: *How are Generation Y consumers' attitudes towards sustainable labels within the fashion industry?*

4.2.1 Consumer Perception of Sustainability and Labels in General

In both focus groups sustainability and sustainable labeling in general were discussed. Hanna thought of the environment, while Ebba thought of the production of the products. Fia, Carl and Stina mentioned durability:

> "Hanna: Spontaneously, good products. That they are produced in an environmentally friendly way.
> Fia: I think that they are long lasting.
> Carl: yes, you cannot get away from all of the 10, 000 liters of water a denim pant takes to produce. What is sustainable then they are long lasting as well that you do not need 10,000 liters of water the next week or month.
> Ebba: Investing in fact in anything. Sustainability, I'm not thinking of the quality in clothes, and then I think of fair trade, how it is produced, if it is made of leather and such things. Or what is behind this garment. "

> "Stina: I probably think of quality, and how long it will last.
> Carl: if one excludes the ethical aspect of consuming is that real leather such as, I rather buy leather bags, leather shoes instead of other materials because I know it will last longer, and then I think that if you just look at this from an environmental perspective, it is very water-intensive to produce, I think that you can get back from it that it lasts a long time."

In focus group two regarding sustainability, other thoughts were expressed. Hilda, Klara and Madeleine defined it in their own ways:

> "Hilda: Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Production, and Sustainable Recycling. What's behind everything.
> Klara: working conditions, equal conditions for all who are behind the garment. I think it is equally important. Human rights
> Madeleine: social sustainability, economic sustainability and ecological sustainability are well suited to summarize everything in one. "

> "Madeleine: I had a discussion about eco products, increasing the sustainability of products would be amazing but then there would be an increased demand, then it will also be an increased industry behind it, it would require so much more work. Everything is getting bigger when the demand is getting bigger. Would it be able to apply that kind of sustainability?"

After sustainability and sustainable labels in general were discussed, eco-labels were discussed and explored. In focus group two, Laura could mention quite a few while Madeleine brought up energy labels:

> "Laura: Eco, Fair Trade, KRAV, MSC for Fish, UTZ for Coffee, FSC for Paper, Svanen, Nyckelhålet
> Madeleine: Then there are energy labels on TVs but do not know what they are called but AA, AA + etc.

Klara: but there are lots of those labels that people work under good conditions.
Madeleine: What is meant by AA and so is that as a consumer you will see how much energy is consumed by different devices…Then there is...
Moderator: It is an eco-label"

What the participants expressed are labels that are there to help consumers understand the quality, the production process, how the product is manufactured, and any other factors the label may involve (Valor, Carrero & Redondo, 2014).

Wilma in focus group two expressed that consumers have to be more critical in our way towards eco-labels:

"Wilma: We should be more critical of what we consume because it has such a big global impact."

This quote were in line with what was found in the theoretical framework, which was that due to increased demand on sustainable efforts companies are trying to fill the gap, a gap usually called green washing within the fashion industry (Blackburn, 2009). Instead of companies really changing or adjusting their businesses they market themselves as sustainable to please the demand and win some market shares (Blackburn, 2009). Therefore it is important for consumers to question sustainable labels and company efforts instead of believing every good deed they claim they do (Blackburn, 2009).

4.2.2 Consumer Perceptions of Sustainability and Labels in the Fashion Industry

For this part, the purpose was to get the participants' attitudes and knowledge towards sustainable labeling in apparel. In both focus group discussions, sustainability in the apparel industry was a confusing subject to discuss due to lack of knowledge and because of the participants being critical towards it.

Fia said that she thinks it is hard regarding apparel but buying eco-products in food is not a problem. Carl mentioned laws and a third party named Svanen, but it did not say him anything, it lacked meaning. He pointed out that production is only mentioned, in what country and so on but questions if it can be trusted. Hanna also questioned if it can be trusted. Ida and Ebba agreed, and Ida also said that more information about the garment should be on the washing instructions:

"Fia: I think it is a bit difficult when you shop for clothing, but I may have only looked in the wrong stores, knowing that sustainability and labels, but I am very careful in supermarkets to buy eco-labeled or such stuff, because it feels so easily available and up in your face. Then it becomes much easier to make that choice. But in clothing, it feels as if you have to actively seek for it. Then you have to find stores and I think this requires too much of me as a consumer, because I'm lazy.
Moderator: So it is the companies that should show what's sustainable and how and so on?
Carl: Well that, and by laws and think. I do not know all different labels but I know that there are Svanen jeans of Velour e.g. But on the other hand, that does not

necessarily say anything from where they are. You never know if something is produced in one place, it does not say anything about were each and every separate parts are produced like threads, fabrics and so on. It only says where the pants are sewn together. It can be incorporated many many many thousands of miles of transportation that does not necessarily need to be labeled.
Ida: yeah, it doesn't like say on the washing instructions or anything
Carl: exactly. There are ideas about that they have to say what everything requires
Ida: I think it's great if they would do.
Ebba: Yes how much emissions this pant has
Carl: yes, but not just at how much water is required. That can be quite simple Googling.
Hanna: Yes, it is like the organic labels, as ecological cotton, which is believed to be good, but you've no idea how it is produced, who worked on it, how their conditions were and so on."

Labels are a result of increasing importance of action towards a more sustainable world and the participant expressed knowledge of that. Although, they want more information and accessibility regarding labels in the fashion industry. The environmental labeling can be labels, standards or certifications, that are awarded to products, services or companies that actively are doing adjustments towards a more sustainable world (Henninger, 2015).

Marcus in focus group one stated that the participants did not mention sustainability and fair trade as a big factor in the decision making in the beginning of the focus group discussion but everyone mentioned other factors, such as impulse and price. When discussing sustainability later on, the participants suggested that it is important. Hence, this is where the gap is, the intention and behavior gap. Consumers say one thing and do another. However, Carl had mentioned quality as a factor and durability, which could be linked to sustainability, which he emphasized:

"Marcus: Do you mean .. like when we were talking about before you shop on impulse and talked about the price and no one mentioned that it would be made in a fair way..
Carl: Quality is a little about that, in some parts at least. "

This quote related to the intention and behavior gap in the theoretical framework. Consumers claim that they are ethical and sustainable, they rarely are when they actually make the purchase (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014), and this results to less sustainable consumption than would be expected based on data. This is the gap between expressed attitudes, intentions, and behavior (Eckhardt, Belk & Devinney, 2010).

The intentions and behavior were discussed further in focus group one. The moderator asked if that was the case and Fia agreed:

"Moderator: do you think that there is a difference between intentions and behavior? Like what you say but don't do.
Fia: absolutely
Olle: Many people shop organically because it exists and that it is written on it. But would you do it if it was like that with clothes? But that it costs more. Because in the beginning we said that price is like the most important factor."

These quotes stated that by solely making information available to consumers about ethical consumption and choices will not likely making consumers purchase less unethical products or change their behavior (Eckhardt, Belk & Devinney, 2010). There is so much more to it than making information available, consumers need to feel the need to be responsible as well. Companies can be responsible and come ethical products and being transparent but the consumers have to make the ethical purchasing decisions. As Carrington, Neville & Whitwell (2014) suggests, consumers have to gradually become more ethical and sustainable and plan their purchases and make it a lifestyle in order for the intentions and behaviors be the same.

Labels were discussed more in depth, and it was evident that there were some cautiousness, which could be seen as confusion. Also, Hanna would like a comprehensive regulatory requirement for everyone so it will not be confusing:

> "Hanna: it would have been better with a comprehensive regulatory requirements that have some types of selection so that there will not be that everyone has its own. It feels a bit corrupt.
> Moderator: yes, so. How organic is it really? What percentage, etc.?
> Hanna: Yes, it should be marked in the same way for everyone. "

More in depth about sustainable labels in the fashion industry in focus group two were explored. The moderator asked if they knew any specific labels in the fashion industry. Laura said that she should know about labels but that she cannot name any:

> "Laura: I should.. but. I know that it exists but cannot name any."

It is shown that labels have made consumers confused and do not have or understand the information about the different labels and certainly they do not have detailed information about them (Henninger, 2015). The word corruption could be seen as Hanna being critical and an issue amongst consumers has been green washing and therefore consumers can be confused and cautious, and the responses can be less trustworthy (Henninger, 2015).

Hilda expressed that she cannot afford to care because she thinks environmental clothing is too expensive, while Klara also had the same thoughts and she mentioned the unavailability:

> "Moderator: Do you feel that you are aware when shopping?
> Hilda: I may know that it's not the best material when I shop because I can not be bothered and can not afford to be bothered "
> Klara: I'm trying to be a bit environmentally aware. I'm happy when I find kind of fair trade cotton sweater. Had it been easier to access with environmental clothing, I would have bought it.
> Hilda: There is but it is more expensive
> Klara: Yes, it's more expensive. It's not as close"

These quotes stated that if the society changes and green consumerism with the willingness to prioritize sustainable products independent of price increases, it can affect the society so that it actual influences others to buy it just to melt into the society (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Thus, it is shown that price and quality are significant when consumer make a decision. Also, Björner, Hansen and Russell (2004) conclude in their research that showing a label or information about sustainable, environmental and ethical aspects was only evident in three cases in the willingness to pay (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004).

Hilda did not believe it sustainability in the fashion industry due to how that industry is:

> "Hilda: In fashion, I think it's really hard because there's nothing really like that's sustainable, or it does not feel like it, like how that industry is ... I think sustainability in the textile industry is generally a very unsustainable industry when thinking about the way people shop for clothes. You buy once and then throw it away. You cannot recycle clothes especially well yet. But there are materials that are sustainable and are sustainably produced such as Organic cotton or lyocell. But it is very unavailable. Should it be possible to increase the proportion of it and make it cheaper and more readily available, the industry would become more sustainable, but in today's state it is extremely unsustainable."

What this quote meant is that there is confusion amongst consumers regarding eco-labels. It is a constant problem and many consumers do not use labels as they are intended, they do not know what they mean or are not even aware of their existence (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004). Research beyond what already exists is needed in order to actually see how and why/ why not consumers adapt eco-labels in order to understand why consumers act the way they do (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004).

Further, in focus group one when sustainable labels in the fashion industry were discussed, animal rights, cigarette packages and child labor came up as an intertwined discussion. Fia mentioned the animals while Marcus brought up the awareness on cigarette packages, thereafter Ebba related the two subjects to child labor:

> "Fia: I think that one had become more aware of it if you see it. I don't think actively on how the animals are treated but if you see them next to each other, it becomes a little easier to think that you can put a little more money on organic meat.
> Marcus: People buy cigarettes that have a picture on the packages of what is happening inside our bodies
> Fia: but it is another thing I think. Then it's all about oneself, not like you're buying clothes from a child laborer
> Marcus: yeah but you get the visual. "This is what the product does, it is this that is the indication from buying this".
> "Ebba: if it had been labeled on a piece of clothing: this clothing is not made by child labor, it is organic and great and if it is not on the other ones then it is assumed that the other is bad. And then I had of course bought the organic one."

Bjørner, Hansen and Russell (2004) also stated that a significant difference between different labels depends on the end user, such as warnings labels on cigarette packages which gives the consumer the power to decide on harming oneself or its surrounding. Meanwhile the majority of labels only provide the consumer with information to make some kind of change, which in reality is just too small of an action to actually make a change (Bjørner, Hansen & Russell, 2004).

Additionally, identity was mentioned in the previous section when discussing purchasing behavior in the fashion industry, and it also came up when labels were discussed. Ida expressed that more emotions should be involved in the "identity-industry" in order for consumers to care more. Ebba also expressed her thoughts on identity and that the fashion industry has changed and that the industry wants us to renew ourselves every season:

> “Ida: the fashion industry, or the identity-industry is so emotional, should we not involve more emotion in the fashion industry then? Like labeling stuff with child labor etc. so that people will get a bad conscience. When emotions are involved anyways.“
>
> “Ida: No, but fashion and identity have become a different story today than it was before.
> Ebba: but they also want you to change identity each and every season. “Renew yourself".”

According to previous research, fashion is a way of expressing one's identity (McNeill & Moore, 2015). In fashion consumer behavior identity is evidently important. In many cultures, people want and have a need to belong within a group or society (Hofstede, 1991). Thus, it is important for individuals to feel accepted and therefore they adapt to the values and social norms that society has implemented within that specific culture (Hofstede, 1991). Because identity is extremely important for fashion consumers, it can often outweigh other factors, such as being ethical, sustainable and functional (McNeill & Moore, 2015). On the other hand, Birtwistle and Moore (2007) emphasize that this depends on the lack of knowledge of the negative effect that the fashion industry has on the environment.

In summary, the participants in both focus groups pointed out that they know some labels and can name a few, however they expressed confusion about the labels and that they did not exactly know what each and every label stands for. Also, the participants expressed that they cannot trust all labels and organizations, and they want more from the government and for labels to be legislated. It was evident that there was lack of knowledge of sustainable labels in both focus groups regarding apparel. Also, they are cautious and confused regards to sustainable labels within the fashion industry. It was also expressed that they do not believe in sustainability in the fashion industry.

4.2.2.1 Consumer Responses to the Higg Index

In this part, consumers’ preferences, responses and knowledge of the Higg Index was discussed. By discussing the subject, an insight of their awareness helped in understanding their attitudes and preferences towards the Higg Index. Also, it was to get a natural flow in the discussion leading onto the next subject. Energy labels were first discussed and explained, after that the Higg Index was discussed and explored. Lastly, a transparency-labeling scheme was presented and discussed in order to explore their preferences of one in the fashion industry. This section will therefore answer research question three: *What are consumers’ thoughts on a transparent labeling scheme in the fashion industry?*

In focus group one, energy labels were presented and discussed, although it did not come up naturally. The moderator brought up energy labels. Ebba, Hanna and Olle expressed that they had seen it on light bulbs, washing machines, fridges and freezers:

> “Ebba: I have never understood what those are for, they are on the light bulbs.
> Carl: neither did I actually
> Ebba: I've seen it
> Hanna: if it is on the washing machine, fridge and freezer, then I get it but never thought of it being on the light bulbs.”

> "Olle: an old regular light bulb is labeled with a D because it has such high energy consumption. Low energy is on like a C and then LED on an A because it uses little energy."

Olle stated that an "Energy labeling system" could work in the fashion industry:

> "Olle: When you mentioned this now, it was really an eye-opener. I have seen this. That label had probably worked on many other products, and clothing. Maybe not the energy, yes, but also energy. How much energy does it take to produce."

Energy labels were brought up naturally in focus group two early on before the moderator brought it up. It was mentioned earlier in the discussion about eco-labels. The moderator brought it up again for a more in-depth discussion. Klara knew exactly what it was, and Hilda and Wilma had seen it. Laura mentioned that she would not buy anything that is bad on the energy scale:

> "Klara: you know these lines green, yellow, orange or yes ... Like when purchasing batteries, it's AA, D, AA +, etc.
> Hilda: Like on the refrigerator
> Wilma: Oh yes, yes, it's on everything!!
> Moderator: Do you understand what the levels mean?
> Klara: How much energy per watt or per hour or what you say, what it consumes
> Moderator: so how would you say you interpret one of those? How would you interpret it when you buy a refrigerator?
> Hilda: the one that is most energy efficient
> Laura: Yes for that price. I would not buy anything that is bad on that scale but does not feel like there is much that is
> Moderator: There is a lot that is bad on that scale, for example, all of these light bulbs today that are trendy; they all are on a D level
> Klara: I last bought a D-labeled light bulb because it cost one-third of the one that was A-labeled. It was too expensive but I know that it might have lasted longer."

In focus group one, the discussion continued on from energy labels to the Higg Index where the moderator explained a hypothetical idea behind a transparency-labeling scheme in the fashion industry. Hanna asked for more details and the moderator explained further. Also, in focus group two, Hilda had heard of the Higg Index but no one knew any detailed information about the Higg Index:

> "Hanna: Are ecological sustainability, social sustainability and other aspects included in the Higgs then?
> Moderator: yes, social, environmental, labor, ethical, emissions, water, costs, quality. Everything from that the product is produced to that the customer gets it, the whole life cycle, to what the customer can do with the product afterwards. It calculates a complete sustainability score through an incision. You get a number in percentage."

> "Moderator: In the fashion industry, there is an organization that has come up with a self assessment tool that companies use to calculate how sustainable their clothes are. It's called the Higg Index. Is that something you've heard of?
> Hilda: mm
> Wilma: no"

In addition, after the Higg Index had been more in detailed explained by the moderator, Klara expressed critical thoughts against it:

> "Klara: There is some propaganda they are dealing with here
> Moderator: It's good that you are critical. This is a good organization. They are called SAC, sustainable apparel coalition, and they use this tool. But they just offer this tool to companies today
> Klara: It's not just marketing?"

In previous research it has been shown that many consumers are being critical, cautious and confused towards sustainable labels due to green washing (Henninger, 2015). This was also a result in this research. Klara was critical in her answer but honest, because sustainable labeling has also become a marketing strategy that more and more companies have adapted due to consumers increase interest in greener products (Carlsson, García, & Löfgren, 2010). Therefore, the importance of understanding consumers and listening to what they want and need regarding labels has never been more essential, which was evident in this finding.

Also, in the second focus group it was a clear expressed interest in a hypothetical transparency-labeling scheme. The moderator asked if a system like this was available, if the participants would use it. Klara expressed that she would have used it while Hilda stated that she would not have used it after the product was bought, although she stated that companies should use it. Madeleine expressed an interest but felt no meaning to it:

> "Klara: yes definitely!
> Moderator: every item you bought?
> Hilda: Would not have done it after I bought it
> Madeleine: had made it of pure interest, check for curiosity, but do not know if I had put a meaning behind it when I was consuming
> Hilda: I think I would have done it once, but on the other hand, if companies actually use this more frequently then I might have. It's easier for them to analyze their own products than us as consumers to analyze and then return to them. It is with them the selection process lies.
> Klara: It will be like a light bulb, these green yellow, like a level or…?
> Moderator: It's like a "cake" really.
> Klara: if every item had such a print, you could have made a choice if you are interested in it. Some had still bothered more about the price
> Wilma: Then the company has done it before and you have not done it yourself"

Both focus groups expressed a clear interest in the transparent labeling scheme when asked about it. In focus group one, all participants answered yes to a hypothetical transparent labeling scheme in the fashion industry. Ida and Fia were evidently clear about their perceptions of it:

> "Moderator: If there were then, as we talked about the Higg Index, would you think it would be a good idea to have something like that? A summed score to put on the washing label or something
> Ida: YES
> Fia: I think it would be very clear what is included in it. Because most people are not that into maybe the fashion industry."

> "Moderator: would that be something then? It does not matter if it's a good or a bad product, just that every garment has that information so that you as a consumer know and then you can make the choice.
> Everyone: Yes! Absolutely!"

To summarize, it became evident in both focus groups that the participant knew little about the Higg Index or nothing at all. Firstly, they were confused and critical towards it in the discussion. After the Higg Index was explained, the participants showed an interest in it and an understanding of it. The moderators explained their thoughts on using the Higg Index as a transparent labeling scheme in the fashion industry and the responses were positive.

5 DISCUSSION

This chapter will further discuss what was presented in the result and analysis chapter, including answers to the research questions and relation to the purpose.

5.1 Discussion

In this chapter the purpose is being revisited, which was to explore Generation Y's attitudes towards sustainability and sustainable labels within the fashion industry. In this chapter the three research questions are also being discussed and answered.

RQ1: What are the motivations of Generation Y consumers when making a purchasing decision?

Similar to previous literature, such as Solomon, Bamossy and Askegaard (2006), consumers are more emotional rather than rational. Emotions were mostly brought up when making a purchasing decision. On the other hand, emotions were more linked to apparel than in general due to impulse buying that was mentioned. Also, participants mentioned price, quality, emotions and impulse as more important when shopping in general and shopping for fashion. A difference between in general and in apparel was that external factors are important when purchasing clothes, such as friends and status, which were not mentioned in purchasing in general. The motivations are therefore different when making a purchasing decision in general than making one regarding apparel. Additionally, only one of the participants in both focus groups mentioned sustainability before the moderators brought it up. It is initially because they do not even consider the sustainable factors and/or acknowledge the existence of such products when making a purchasing decision until they are mentioned and/or they are in front of them.

RQ2: How are Generation Y consumers' attitudes towards sustainable labels within the fashion industry?

It was expressed in the focus groups to involve feelings in the fashion industry, to show animal cruelty and to show what products that are made by child laborers to consumers, as they do with the warning signs on cigarette packages. Also, this has shown that consumers do not always make rational decisions and that they do not behave the way they intend. Comparable to previous literature by Carrington, Neville and Whitwell (2014), consumers claim that they are ethical and sustainable; they rarely are when they actually make the purchase. Impulse buying was discussed linked to emotions and it is shown in previous research that making ethical consumption easier and more frequent was planning and making it a habit (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). When purchases are not ethically planned and made into habits that is when there will be compromises and unethical purchases (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2014). This is the gap between expressed attitudes, intentions, and behavior. Only one of the participants in both focus groups mentioned sustainability before the moderators brought it up. The focus group sessions expressed therefore that there is a gap between positive attitudes towards sustainable labeled products in the fashion industry and that consumers purchase these products

In both focus group discussions sustainability in the fashion industry was a confusing subject to discuss due to lack of knowledge and the participants expressing themselves as being critical. Similar to previous studies, such as Henninger (2015) it is shown that labels have made consumers confused and that they do not understand the information about the different labels, also nor that they have detailed information about them. The word corruption came up in the focus groups, which is a statement of being critical. Also comparable to Henninger's (2015) study where an issue amongst consumers have been green washing and therefore consumers can be confused and cautious, and the responses can be less trustworthy.

It was also expressed that sustainability do not exist within the fashion industry because of how the industry is, and that there was a lack of belief in it. It is therefore a problem amongst consumers, that they do not believe in sustainability or labels within the fashion industry. In addition, it was demonstrated that consumers think that the food industry has come further than the fashion industry regards to sustainability and labels. It was expressed that they receive everything about food products but none to little information about fashion products regarding production and conditions. It was then specified that consumers want more information and that they are curious to know more about the fashion products that they purchase. Regarding the labels that do exist, which the participants had knowledge of they had low confidence in due to third-party labels or companies having their own labels. They mentioned third-party labels such as, Svanen, and own labels such as, H&M and conscious. In the same way, this could be based on the lack of available information when the purchasing decision is being made and/or to previous knowledge of green washing and marketing strategies in general. In general, the participants were critical towards sustainability and sustainability actions within the fashion industry.

In addition, it was expressed by participants in the focus groups that sustainable fashion is too expensive and that they cannot afford to care. The motivations of consumers have to change from price to willingness to prioritize sustainable products, comparable to previous studies by Bjørner, Hansen and Russell (2004), which state that prioritizations of consumers could change the society.

In contrary to previous literature, such as McNeill and Moore (2015), identity was not prioritized by the participants. It was expressed and complained about that the fashion industry is too identity-oriented and was called the "identity-industry". In McNeill and Moore's (2015) study identity is extremely important for fashion consumers; it can often outweigh other factors, such as being ethical, sustainable and functional (McNeill & Moore, 2015). On the other hand, any of the participants did not see themselves as fashion consumers, although only two out of fifteen participants saw themselves as functional.

RQ3: What are consumers' thoughts on a transparent labeling scheme in the fashion industry?

In particular when presenting the Higg Index, confusion and questions arose. The participants had difficulties grasping what it meant to include all aspects of sustainability and questioned how consumers would understand the Higg Index without getting the verbal explanation they got. On the other hand, when information was provided, both groups expressed that the Higg Index seemed like a good tool to calculate sustainability but stated that they would not use it themselves except for maybe one time, simply to just try it out. Instead, it was mentioned that if companies would do the calculation on each garment in beforehand, consumers would not have to do it themselves and the information would be directly accessible for consumers. All participants agreed on this being a great tool to inform about sustainability, which they feel like they are missing today. Although, it was stated that the information would be available on garments, it was questioned how the sustainable information would be visually displayed for consumers to actually understand what it meant and how it should be covered.

Furthermore, both focus groups expressed interest in a transparent labeling scheme for the fashion industry. When the energy-labeling scheme was presented to the groups, participants drew conclusions that a similar labeling method should be used in the fashion industry. It was stated that the energy consumption of production of a garment could be displayed, or just the regulatory scheme itself, with a scale of "bad" to "good" (negative to positive) could be a preferred labeling scheme in general. Although the energy-labeling scheme was of interest to both groups after discussions and several explanations of its function, a note needed to be taken that many participants did not understand the scheme. When explained, many participants could agree that they have seen the label but only a few could actually explain what it meant. Drawing conclusions that the sample used of generation Y were too young to have made purchasing decisions regarding appliances so far in their lives. This explains why the scheme at first did not make sense to them. Asking the previous generation could maybe have resulted in more participants knowing how the scheme worked and therefore draw conclusions of the label being an informative tool of sustainability. On the other hand, the participants did agree to a transparency labeling scheme and especially the ones who knew how the energy labels work. It was enhanced that an information scheme is what is missing in the fashion industry now.

6 CONCLUSION

This chapter will present the conclusion of this paper and the major findings of this research and a summary. It will also discuss minor implications and propositions for future research.

6.1 Conclusion

The study's purpose was to explore Generation Y's attitudes towards sustainability and sustainable labels within the fashion industry. The empirical data consisted of two focus groups and the focus group discussions were based on participants' own personal thoughts, attitudes and perceptions of the subjects discussed. When the results and analysis, and discussion were reviewed in relation to the purpose and three research questions it can be concluded that:

In conclusion, there are many factors that play a big role behind the purchasing decision in the fashion industry. Fashion consumers are emotionally motivated and only some consumers can make the leading decision while others follow. Hence, overconsumption is a big problem due to the following of the leaders of style with lack of own decision making. Over consumption and environmentally unfriendly materials has made consumers uncertain of the fashion industry's intentions. It was expressed throughout the focus groups that the participants think that the fashion industry is unsustainable and that when products are sustainable, they are expensive and unavailable. Participants also stated that one must actively seek for sustainable products and indicated that it should not be like that. There is lack of information, too many labels and in conclusion; it is confusing for consumers.

Additionally, it can be concluded from the focus groups that the participants knew about sustainable labels and could name several labels, although only in general and not in regards to apparel. It was also evidential that they were critical to sustainability within the fashion industry and that the food industry is an example that has come a long way regarding sustainability. Also, the participant expressed that the appliance industry with energy labels was a good system that could hypothetically work in the fashion industry. Therefore a mentioned solution by a participant was to implement a comprehensive regulatory requirement in the fashion industry, making consumers take full control of their own sustainable purchasing decisions. Meaning that they either buy a high sustainable product, a low sustainable product or a non-exciting sustainable product. Asking the participants about a transparent labeling scheme using the Higg Index in the fashion industry was also of interest and they expressed that they thought it would be a clear system for a consumer.

6.2 Managerial Implication

To conclude how this research could be helpful for companies is to understand that consumers are not informed. Consumers want to be informed when discussing sustainability but admit that they do not really consider the matter when purchasing clothes. Instead, consumers seem

questionable against sustainability within the fashion industry. The information and awareness of sustainability within the fashion industry according to consumers is too limited and almost non-existent. Notable is that consumers are interested in sustainability and are to some extent conscious but mostly regarding food. The fashion industry does not come to mind when discussing sustainability.

This paper can support fashion brands to understand where generation Y actually stands towards sustainability within the fashion industry, also what their thought process is. For companies and fashion companies to do green marketing through more informative labels regarding sustainability is to understand the consumer. Information that can be helpful can be found in this research.

6.3 Future Research

There is still a lot of research left on the topics discussed due to the fact that sustainable labeling within the fashion industry is still in an early stage of research. Many different thoughts, ideas and problems have come up writing this thesis. The first suggestion for future research could be to do the same research, although as a quantitative research. A larger sample of the population would help to take this research further. Another suggestion for future research could be to do it from a company perspective, or from a governmental perspective, including ideas and thoughts on legislation of sustainable labels within the fashion industry. Additionally, an experimental research could be possible to try different types of sustainable labels on consumers visually to understand exactly how they perceive specific sustainable marks.

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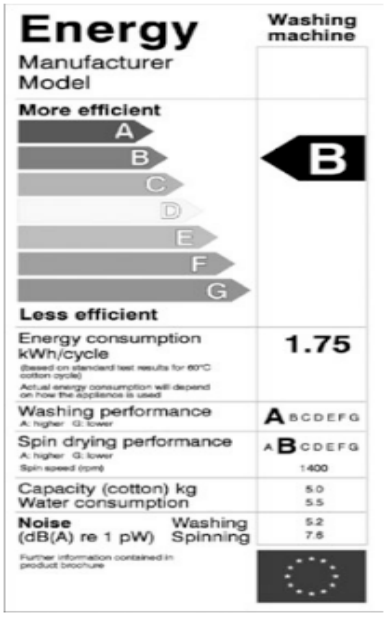
APPENDIX A- Energy Labels

Consumer Response on Energy labels



The results also suggest that consumers respond to economic incentives, as knowledge of energy classes increases with regional energy prices for most appliances. Thus policies that internalize the social costs of energy consumption such as energy taxes can spur energy use awareness and, ultimately, adoption of energy efficient appliances. The finding also suggests that provision of economic information on the likely economic benefits of energy efficient appliances as currently discussed in the context of the revision of the Labeling Directive can further influence purchase decisions. The current label scheme provides no information to the consumer on the relative efficiency of appliances. Therefore, consumers do not know how much more efficient in terms of energy savings a class-A refrigerator is than a class-B refrigerator. Hence, labels may be redesigned to display differences in energy use associated with the various label categories. For example, rather than using ‘‘A++’’ to signal a better energy performance of a refrigerator compared to a class-A refrigerator, a label of say ‘‘A-50%’’ could be given to a refrigerator using only half the energy of a class-A refrigerator. As pointed out by Heinzle and Wustenhagen (2009), however, the type of labeling scheme may affect the willingness to pay for appliances with higher energy efficiency classes. Similarly, label information could also be extended to include data on energy costs. Since people are subject to ‘‘framing’’, the way this information is conveyed may also affect the adoption of energy efficient appliances. For example, using an experimental design, Faure (2009) finds that the willingness to pay for energy efficient refrigerators is significantly higher when the energy cost differences of different energy classes are presented as costs rather than savings. Greater awareness of the potential contributions of energy-efficient appliances to household energy conservation will also increase the efficiency of tax and other policies to align marginal energy consumption decisions with marginal social costs. Similarly, consumers may be offered rebates or other financial incentives to purchase energy efficient appliances, which transfer some of the associated social benefits to them. (Mills & Schleich, 2010).

APPENDIX B- Interview Guide

Introduction of subject

My name is Lina Forsman and my name is Denise Madsen. We are here today because of our master thesis in fashion management at the Swedish school of textiles. The discussion today is going to be recorded and transcribed in research purpose only. It will not be shared with anyone else. It is important that only one person speaks at a time so there won't be any problems hearing everyone's opinions in the recording. Everyone's opinion is of great importance in this study. There are no right or wrong answers, we just want a discussion. This session is important to us to get a reliable/general understanding of the subjects discussed.

1. First we would like to discuss your purchasing behavior in general.

- What are the most important factors for you when making a purchasing decision?
- What motivates you?
- Do you buy on impulse or do you plan your purchases?

2. Now we would like to discuss your purchasing behavior regarding clothes.

- When purchasing clothing, do you make purchasing decision based on the material? Or are there any other factors in mind?
- What motivates you?
- Emotional vs. rational

3. We would like to discuss sustainability and labels with you.

- What is sustainability to you?
- Do you know what eco labels are, and if so, what are they? Do you know any eco labels, what do they represent? In any industry.
- Do you know what energy labels are and in what industry they are used?
- Do you know how the energy efficiency scale works that the appliance industry use?

4. Sustainability and fashion

- Do you know any eco labels in fashion?
- Do you have any experiences with ecologically friendly materials?
- Do you care if the garment is environmentally friendly? Why/Why not?
- How would you like to receive the information about a garment's background?

5. We would like to discuss the Higg Index with you. Have you heard of it?

The Higg Index is the centerpiece of the SAC (Sustainable Apparel Coalition). It's a self-assessment tool that empowers brands, retailers, and manufacturers within the textile industry

to measure their environmental, social and labor impacts at every stage of the lifecycle and value chain. The data is then shown in a standardized and simplified way by using a percentage in circular diagram. To summarize; the Higg Index calculates a complete sustainable average of a specific textile.

- What are your first thought about the Higg Index? Anything missing?
- Is this a good/trustworthy representation of sustainability?

- Do you have any suggestions for a sustainable measurement?

6. Conclusion

- Whose responsibility is it to be sustainable? Is it the consumers demanding? Or the companies offering it? Or anyone else?

- Our idea is that the Higg Index should be used as a labeling scheme for sustainability within the fashion industry. So that, just like in the appliance industry, the customer decides on how sustainable he/she wants to buy a garment.

    - (Show picture of energy labels and explain)
- If there would be a scale rating a product in terms of how environmentally friendly it is, would that be interesting to you?

- What are your thoughts on that?

7. Free thinking

- If you could think freely and without judgment, how would you like to see sustainability labeled within the fashion industry?

- Any other industry that you think is doing progress regarding sustainability work.

- What would, honestly, make you buy a more sustainable garment rather than a non-sustainable/unlabeled/less sustainable garment? All ideas, thoughts or inventions are welcome here!

APPENDIX C- Control Form

Control Form
Fill out the form to the best of your ability. This is anonymous so please do not write your name.

- Age:
- Sex:
- Occupation:
- Education:
- Income (approx.):

- Please rank your priorities when purchasing appliance (e.g. freezer, washing machine or light bulb) 1 being the most important 6 the least important.
    - price
    - design
    - quality
    - color
    - function
    - sustainability

  Feel free to add any criteria

- Please rank your priorities when purchasing fashion (e.g. clothes, textiles, shoes, accessories) 1 being the most important 6 the least important.
    - price
    - design
    - quality
    - color
    - function
    - sustainability

  Feel free to add any criteria

- Comments and thoughts:

APPENDIX D- Transcript Focus Group 1

Moderator 1: First, we want to discuss purchasing behavior in general. You could just raise your hand when you want to talk. So what are the most important factors for you when you make a purchasing decision?
Carl: In general, are you talking about clothes or?
Moderator 1: No, no, everything. Just in general. Answer just what you think of first. What are the most important factors when making a purchasing decision? That is the last step in the buying process
Moderator 2: So, what do you think?
Carl: I think of its benefits. The function it fills. Which of course then reflects in a host of different things that if you think about food, what are you craving? Is it clothing, I think about what is nice, what is appreciated by others and so on.
Ida: If it suits my wallet. If I really can afford it. It's a bit like that for a student. I prefer to do some research if I'm gonna buy something a little larger.
Fia: Yes, I also go for the price. I'm the opposite of Carl. I go into a store and buy a thing, for example, a pair of jeans, I find I don't find any jeans; I might buy four shirts instead. "I found no jeans but bought these shirts because it will be cheaper than if I bought a pair of jeans so then it's still okay".
Hanna: Then you're buying after a budget?
Fia: No, I wish it was like that.
Olle: Quality. That it should be something that is really lasting, sustainability and so on.
Ebba: I feel that it really depends on a lot of what the product is. If it is for the home, or anything that I want to have for a long time, then I also think of quality, such as electronics or furniture, but with clothes, I'm only thinking of what I feel like in that moment, really just lust-thoughts, what I feel for now. And then I do not care if it lasts more than half a year.
Moderator 1: I'm glad you said that because we were about to come to that subject. That if you buy on impulse or if you plan your purchases?
Hanna: Both, I think. It's probably dependent on what it is about. Regarding clothes, it can be a bit impulsive. While with other things it can be planned, such as events. Food can be very impulsive.
Ida: More planned I should say. I always have in mind what it is that I want. But if I can find it or not, then maybe I'll find it at another time. I'm not the one who says, "Wow, that was really nice!" More planned I should say.
Moderator 2: So you are a little more thoughtful of all of your purchases?
Ida: Yes the majority at least
Stina: Yes, it's probably a lot depending on what it is. It is clear that there are some things that you really need, like a jacket, and then it is more planned.
Fia: I think it depends on what day of the month it is also, like as if it's the 25th.
Stina: Well there I agree.
Fia: Then maybe it will be a little more impulsive stuff.
Moderator 2: Is it the price that determines whether it is impulsive or not?
Stina: It becomes easier to do an impulsive purchase if it is cheap, of course. For me, anyways. Then you can simply say: "this was nice, I'll buy it!"
Carl: I think that one can also plan after an impulse, I do that often. I find it difficult to shake off an impulse as soon as I have received it. But then I can change my opinion enough to go home and see where I can get hold of this cheapest although it is still very far outside my price range as a student. Then I make very many irrational purchases based on how much spending money I have.

Hanna: I think the opposite instead, so here if I see something I want, "Oh, do I need this? No, I'll hang it back after 15 minutes in the store that I've spent walking around with it and then I'll hang it back. And then I go home, and get anxiety because I did not buy it. So I buy another one online instead that I absolutely did not need.
Ebba: That's how I am too, not impulse purchase on clothes but on the other things online. Bought a large bookcase online for several thousand kroners, I bid on an antique bookcase. But then the next day I did not even know if I wanted it.
Ida: I cannot impulse shop online. Or shop online at all.
Fia: No me neither
Carl: It depends
Stina: I have not done it before but started two years ago and then it is very difficult to stop cause I'm like: "this is so worth it!" It is smooth and when it arrives at home, I get so happy. You get mail and it feels as if you have not paid for it
Olle: I think it depends on whether it is a hobby or clothing. Everyday clothes, then I impulse buy everything. Then it's like this: I need something; I run down and buy it. But as a hobby, I go snowboarding. Then I can sit for weeks and plan and check, "is this what I want? Is it the price? "Comparing everything. It is a big difference from everyday shopping.
Carl: But it's an expensive hobby too.
Olle: True
Ebba: With what you buy one can see the results. Which is not the case with clothes, I think. With a sweater you'll not see a result. Here you see the difference in results.
Moderator 1: Shall we discuss more about clothes in specific then!
Moderator 2: Yes, I was going to ask some of your reasoning when you said that a sweater not being in the same way that you think that it will produce results, as a hobby does?
Ebba: Yes, I was thinking more like that where it's all about snowboarding stuff where you see the difference right away in, you have done research of the quality and brands and everything, which is the best, and you will see it in the results. I think in a garment, one cannot see a result in that way. It is only for the eyes, I think.
Marcus: But what about the quality then?
Ebba: I do not care so much about the quality of the clothes to be honest
Olle: That's where you come back to if it is a hobby or something that you really need to have something that is adapted to be resistant to wind and weather and so on.
Ida: Yes it is the same whether to buy new soccer cleats or something. There is difference between that and buying a new hoodie.
Hanna: Yes exactly. What is the purpose and what you want for the results as well.
Moderator 2: So it has to do with what one's interested in?
Carl: And for the benefits of it. I can imagine if you work in a clothing store or work with fashion in any way overall, I guess an important element or something that actually it can provide work or success, or I do not know, to dress in a certain way. I mean, I for example as a student who tries to read very much, spend an extreme amount of money on books and excusing it with some kind of argument "I will possibly might also be able to make money on this eventually and it required that I make certain investments and so on. Do not really know what I was trying to get to there, oh well.
Ebba: Yeah, the benefits of it.
Lisa: Well, I have clothes as a hobby. I feel that I spend a lot of time in searching and scanning and plan my purchases a lot and quality is very important to me when it comes to clothes. I do not know, maybe it's that you say it's like a hobby, then it's my hobby.
Moderator 2: So you can say that you get a result when you buy a shirt? So now when we talk about the results. Then we could say that the results for you in a piece of clothing is that it lasts?

Lisa: Yes, and the clothes I spend money on is usually what last a long time and I really care about, and yes. It is not so much “wear and tear”.
Ebba: I work at a preschool. My clothes I have on a daily are really things that I do not care about and I do not spend a lot of money on. Then it's two days that I have a week that I can wear something that I care about, so I feel that I can’t care too much. There, I also feel like work matters. As you say, you work in fashion, then in fashion, or is it something that is very important to how you dress, then perhaps it is important to spend a lot of money on. If you work with any other profession where you have work attire, I think then maybe it is not nearly as important with clothes.
Hanna: I think that it migh be a question of wear too. If you are only using casual clothing two times / week, so maybe it will not be the same “wear and tear” as you would use them seven times a week, and simply replace the clothes as obvious, but to use per time. If one is to count each time you wear a t-shirt, for example has been and worked in the industry as you come home, you wear your sweats. Then you have no wear at all in basically.
I also want to discuss discounts and sales. The times I spontaneous shop online, it's because I had a coupon for example, 30%. Then I feel like I “have” to shop. I don’t have to but.
Ida: Kind of like that you get points when shopping
Ebba: Then you go on impulse
Hanna: Then it's impulse. Yes it is because it is cheap. Or maybe cheaper.
Marcus: I would also say when it comes to clothes for me, it's just impulsive and the price, cheap and nice in the moment.
Carl: I also think that I really have learned from my mistakes that I have made some milestones in my wardrobe where I have put a lot of money on some clothes and I think in the end, however, I have added even more money on clothes which is now somewhere collecting dust, but that has been super cheap as well, crappy stuff an hour later realizes that no, but no, I’m not gonna wear this.
Fia: I have found a strategy for this. That when I buy stuff on impulse I don’t remove the tag for a week, so I have to have them in front of me and really try them on at home with a lot of different items of clothing and ask myself, do I really want this? So usually I return the things that I actually not need.
Ida: That’s so smart! Why have not I done this?!
Ebba: You're too lazy!
Carl: But sales then? You don’t shop sales?
Fia: No, not so much actually. I think there are too many people.
Carl: No, but it is based of course on it somewhere that you can actually return them.
Fia: yeah true
Ida: so smart
Hanna: I also save the tag, just that it hangs in my closet for too long so I cannot return it. "It was probably a dumb decision to buy this, I should return it," but then I never do it. I usually don’t have the energy to go down to the stores in the city but it takes like three minutes.
Moderator 2: Then it is about that somebody marks something of like 30%? Or marks it red? I mean, if we say that a sweater costs 100 kr, and we say that someone has labelled it by 30%, and then there's a sweater for 30 kr, you rather go for the red marked one? Cause you know that you’ll like profit from it?
Hanna: No
Olle: It also depends on what sort of garments it is actually. I was about to do such a thing, I bought a ski attire and looked at one another and I found at Stadium for half the price and it was then 4000 kr and then I thought, "Well, it's still a good price." So I asked if they could keep it for me, but by then I had already bought one that I've used, so in the end I didn’t buy

it. But that price tag that said 50% and I know it’s good quality, and which brings me back a little to the quality, and that made me think 'this I’ll be able to have for 20 years. "
Carl: yes, but it's a huge win
Olle: I have already bought a garment that will last as long. But yes, I do not really know. In the end, it was true that there had been a stupid impulse purchase.
Ebba: A lot of money then. I feel that I make more impulse purchases if I go shopping with a friend. If we say that we are going to shopping for like shoes, clothes, makeup. That kind of products. Then I do that a lot more of shopping if I go with a friend than if I go by myself. When I go by myself, I usually think: what do I like? What do I need? If I go with a friend, it is more like "but come on, buy it."
Moderator 1: Then it is external factors that influences you?
Ebba: Yes
Moderator 2: Is that how everyone feels?
Ida: No no no, I'm quite the opposite. I hate to go and shop with someone else.
Ebba: Agreed! It costs a lot of money.
Ida: No, but I feel stressed. But if I go by myself and have my music and not the store's. But I do not know what it is wrong with me but I think it is so nice to go by myself and then I shop a lot because it's a feeling I've created for myself.
Fia: Yes it is still something you do for yourself. Don’t need to wait for someone or so.
Olle: yes it's very much the mood and so when you are out shopping, which mood you are in.
Ebba: the mood is much better when you have a lot of money.
Olle: yes the beginning of the month is always better.

Moderator 1: Yes, then we can go into any new subject. We would also like to discuss sustainability and labels with you guys. First of all, what is sustainability to you?
Hanna: Spontaneously, good products. That they are produced in an environmentally friendly way.
Fia: I think that they are long lasting.
Carl: yes, you cannot get away from all of the 10, 000 liters of water a denim pant takes to produce. What is sustainable then they are long lasting as well that you do not need 10,000 liters of water the next week or month.
Ebba: Investing in fact in anything. Sustainability, I'm not thinking of the quality in clothes, then I think of fair trade, how it is produced, if it is made of leather and such things. Or what is behind this garment.
Marcus: I must ask. Are we talking only exclusively about clothes?
Moderator 2: Just sustainability. Just what think of it.
Ebba: are we talking about furniture then I think (mumble…) we're talking clothes, I think what is behind and how long it will last.
Stina: I probably think of quality, and how long it will last.
Carl: if one excludes the ethical aspect of consuming is that real leather such as, I rather buy leather bags, leather shoes instead of other materials because I know it will last longer, and then I think that if you just look at this from an environmental perspective, it is very water-intensive to produce, I think that you can get back from it that it lasts a long time.
Fia: I think it is a bit difficult when you shop for clothing, but I may have only looked in the wrong stores, knowing that sustainability and labels, but I am very careful in supermarkets to buy eco-labeled or such stuff, because it feels so easily available and up in your face. Then it becomes much easier to make that choice. But in clothing, it feels as if you have to actively seek for it. Then you have to find stores and I think this requires too much of me as a consumer, because I'm lazy.
Moderator 1: So it is the companies that should show what’s sustainable and how and so on?

Carl: Well that, and by laws and think. I do not know all different labels but I know that there are Svanen jeans of Velour e.g. But on the other hand, that does not necessarily say anything from where they are. You never know if something is produced in one place, it does not say anything about were each and every separate parts are produced like threads, fabrics and so on. It only says where the pants are sewn together. It can be incorporated many many many thousands of miles of transportation that does not necessarily need to be labelled.
Ida: yeah, it doesn't like say on the washing instructions or anything
Carl: exactly. There are ideas about that they have to say what everything requires
Ida: I think it's great if they would do
Ebba: Yes how much emissions this pant has
Carl: yes, but not just at how much water is required. That can be quite simple Googling. It's like the shrimp that is fished in Norway and scaled in china to then be sent back and it says that it is from Norway. Laws are required for something to happen
Hanna: Yes, it is like the organic labels, as ecological cotton, which is believed to be good, but you've no idea how it is produced, who worked on it, how their conditions were and so on.
Ida: So, you do not know where to shop anymore! However, people are lazy. It would have been great to create a chain with only fair trade products. Now it is a choice. You can look up where to buy sustainable clothing. You need something bigger for it to be neutral, it is not neutral now to act sustainably if you look at clothes. It is different with food! Fair trade is visible. But when it comes to clothing or furniture, it is not so visible. Furniture you can make active choices by example shopping a bookcase that can be traded on Tradera because then it does not contribute to anything. But throwaway products as dish brushes, toilet products one will go to like IKEA. It needs a more neutral way to look at it because we humans are like that.
Fia: Everyone has the opportunity to actually make more informed choices, but are too lazy. That's our nature. One must also consider that most companies want to make money. They do not want it to be more difficult than it is. Also believe that much needs to be legislated. Then it will be up to everyone to relate to it and then you do not make an active choice as a business or consumer,
Ebba: Yes, tax the things that are bad for the environment. As meat, like a meat tax. Like all other taxes! That's what it takes. People will not stop.
Carl: Our economic model is based on the companies to get (mumble…). It's a simple way to free itself as a market that everyone has the choice as a consumer to do the right thing. There are so many more factors.
Ida: E.g. soya mince and minced meat, which soya mince emit far less carbon dioxide, less costly, and no animals die and yet people buy ground beef. It is embedded in their heads.
Stina: it's egoistic
Moderator 1: Who is it that will change people's minds?
Ebba: The government
Olle: The government and the companies.
Ebba: but it does not force them because they are profit-driven
Stina: It is absolutely the consumers too. That is your responsibility to check up.
Carl: It can be said in a moral state, but I do not think you can say that if you expect results if you think that you should live in a greener world and so it is completely unrealistic to think that the change will come from both individuals and perhaps above all from the companies. Their only legitimate existence is that they are good at making money. One would imagine that there are some changes in ecological agriculture. That there is now a different profitability.
Ebba: what we have mentioned quite a lot is that it is laziness that is often in our decisions, and money. If one were to tax meat, one would probably also opt it out many times.

Moderator 1: do you think that there is a difference between intentions and behavior? Like what you say but don't do.
Fia: absolutely
Olle: Many people shop organically because it exists and that it is written on it. But would you do it if it was like that with clothes? But that it costs more. Because in the beginning we said that price is like the most important factor.
Stina; second hand is good
Marcus: we buy products made by child workers all the time. Obviously, we live our lives great without going around and fret about that
Fia: I think that one had become more aware of it if you see it. I don't think actively on how the animals are treated but if you see them next to each other, it becomes a little easier to think that you can put a little more money on organic meat.
Marcus: People buy cigarettes that have a picture on the packages of what is happening inside our bodies
Fia: but it is another thing I think. Then it's all about oneself, not like you're buying clothes from a child laborer
Marcus: yeah but you get the visual. "This is what the product does, it is this that is the indication from buying this".
Ebba: if it had been labelled on a piece of clothing: this clothing is not made by child labor, it is organic and great and if it is not on the other ones then it is assumed that the other is bad. And then I had of course bought the organic one.
Fia: if one had to label and under what conditions this garment has been made (mumble…)
Ebba: Yes, but companies would never do that
Fia: No, but if we had done that and legislated it. That you have to show where the clothes come from, under what conditions they are made and so on. Then I think it would be hard to shop for clothes, if you got it in black and white.
Ida: but yes, since these pictures came on cigarette packets I have started using snus more and more instead.
Marcus: but if you think of sustainability and if you think about precisely what you actually do and what to think about the issues, everything we have said suggests (mumble…), as we sit here talking morally but then we go out and do a bit of anything really. Some decisions you make one thinks of course on what to do but in most cases we don't.
Fia: The consumer feels that the reality is so far away. That they cannot even imagine it.
Marcus: then we are back to that, that's how we should think.
Fia: It is built that way, that you should get some distance from these child workers to be able to purchase this garment without thinking.
Ida: It is the very psychology of it, that we as humans oppress the things that are hard. The body purely defensively oppress such things. We are constantly influenced by what is bad, you should not drink milk, do not eat meat, do not buy this, these clothes. I think there will be too much but it's not bad. It is in defense of oneself for one is accustomed to a way of living and thinking about, it needs to be a transition, I think. Through this transition, it can of course be a law that says that you have to label every product of where it is made, have cost this much water or carbon dioxide and so on. I do not think you quite simply can stop something and legislate it, but it needs to be a turn-around. It will take a while.

Marcus: Do you mean .. like when we were talking about before you shop on impulse and talked about the price and no one mentioned that it would be made in a fair way..
Carl: Quality is a little about that, in some parts at least.
Marcus: Yes, but then it's durability after you bought it. But if you think, as well as the sustainability of how it is produced, I think we overestimate ourselves if we think that we are

going into a store and now oppresses me all this information I have about how any of this product has been produced, but then you want something and just buy it. Then you sit at your computer and think "that's right, these things perhaps I should not buy, maybe you should think about this. I'll think about next time! "But maybe you do not. Or…?
Fia: You have to visualize it more for consumers.
Ebba: If you don't, you'll oppress it.
Marcus: That's how it works.
Carl: Our entire civilization is built on that we can get exactly what we want, at all times. And just 50-60 years ago, it was radically different in Sweden. It is this instinctive bodily feeling that you feel deprived of anything if you do not get the opportunity to buy it and then I think that many are quite willing to let go of all moral compasses. So I think the only thing you can actually work with to get results are tangible changes. It had probably been able to measure the big difference how many people bought organic milk from before and now. Think that a large part of it is that it has become much cheaper. Organic farming is after all government money.
Moderator 2: You were talking about before that you think it is the responsibility of the consumers, but also who is going to start this? Is it the consumer? Because there is a lot of talking about that the consumer is demanding it today and then it has to start with the companies. But at the same time, you say of course that we talk more than we actually do. Then you realize maybe the companies must do more. Whose responsibility? And how can we get this to work?
Ebba: There are so many consumers who do not care about anything. So many that will not change. So I think the fact that it should be legislated on many things when it comes to sustainability. For example. I think it should be legislated that you must sort your trash.
Moderator 2: Do you think then that the government should come and make decisions?
Fia: It's not possible either. The problem is e.g. that child labor is prohibited in Sweden, but it is not forbidden to buy clothes from a country where it is legal with child labor and that of course is not illegal. It gets so hard when it is so globalized. There is so many gray areas.
Marcus: E.g. H & M. They can behave and buy the right products from the right places but that does not make them do it and why would they? There've been great without doing so. I'm wearing H & M pants so I do apparently not care enough even though I sit and say that I do. It is a political issue. Whether you need a political solution to that too. I definitely think you control it with an iron fist.
Olle: in my field of machine manufacturing where it is legal requirements, the EU requirements that you actually control the development of the entire industry, e.g. engine, emission requirements. "In 2000, you must have this engine, this little emissions", and that is what all manufacturers are working for. It is what makes us produce new machines, we would not have it so we had not done on machines to the same extent and as often as we do now, but that's what sets the legal requirements. It is the most effective way to proceed.
Marcus: in many cases it will well surely become more profitable in the long run to just make a switch.
Olle: in my industry, it is the customers who say they want green and environmentally friendly products. So now it comes from both sides. So manufacturers feel that they need to meet and listen to the customer.
Hanna: engines emit as much is a determining factor but also production before as the Prius, for example that has great hybrid cars. It is produced in Japan and is then shipped to the United States. Hummer also e.g. which is a big jeep, its entire life has the same effect on transport time from Asia to the United States is so extremely sensitive to the environment so that it's not easy. Clearly it must be labelled but it's probably hard to put those labels so they should be certain standards on them. What things should you look for? Should I look at the

from beginning to end? Should I look at small segments? There are so very many factors to take into account precisely when to put a label. We're also lazy, so you do not want too many labels either.
Moderator 2: Then we are talking about labeling here and how many labels there are. Do you choose one that is the most labelled? Or one that is organic? Do you become confused sometimes when you see that there is too much? Do you know what all the labels that are organic, fair trade or demands stand for? What is the difference? Do you know which industries they belong to? Do you know that some are just made for food, some clothes? Do you think it's too much? H & M e.g. makes its own label, conscious. All companies make its own or brings in a third part, e.g. Svanen.
Hanna: it would have been better with a comprehensive regulatory requirements that have some types of selection so that there will not be that everyone has its own. It feels a bit corrupt.
Moderator 1: yes, so. How organic is it really? What percentage, etc.?
Hanna: Yes, it should be marked in the same way for everyone. In the beauty industry, there are special requirements for it to be an organic product. The contrast of the food industry, where we have control of what is required for organic labeled.
Carl: yeah, but all they really are for designed to soothe our conscience. Like climate compensate for our flight tickets.
Ida: what is it?
Carl: they plant trees for every flight ticket
Fia: But it's better that they do it than not doing it.
Carl: yeah, but I'm not sure that it is better that people can walk away from buying a ticket and think that they have equaled it out because that's not the case.
Ebba: It's really too cheap to fly
Carl: and that everything we're talking about would actually lead to one single thing, it is that we actually would like to meet everything that we talked about, our ethical standards, and that is that we are completely changing the way that everything is produced, we start to produce our clothes in Sweden for those who live here and not have to transport them. That's really what would be required to achieve what we require.
Moderator 2: You mentioned before that it would have been nice to have comprehensive information, that it doesn't have to be a specific thing. Or that you can have the choice. For example. if we look at the appliance industry. Does everyone know that they have a labeling system? An energy labeling system? Showing that the use of this product will require this much energy in your home etc. The consumer can choose if he/she wants to buy an A product or if he/she wants to buy a D product. A D product is red and an A product is green. The consumer gets to choose.
Moderator 1: A is good sustainably because you use less energy and you pay less, the consumer pays for the amount of energy you use.
Ebba: I have never understood what those are for, they are on the light bulbs.
Carl: neither did I actually
Ebba: I've seen it
Hanna: if it is on the washing machine, fridge and freezer, then I get it but never thought of it being on the light bulbs.
Moderator 2: it is the law that all energy using products have to be labelled
Moderator 1: from A to D
Stina: What is the price difference of a light bulb, for example?
Moderator 2: all light bulbs have labels then it's just how they label. A producer can produce both A and D labeled. You still cover all your consumers. The company doesn't make the choice, they only offer to take the decision.

Olle: an old regular light bulb, is labelled with a D because it has such high energy consumption. Low energy is on like a C and then LED on an A because it uses little energy.
Moderator 2: yes, you can still buy an a product that can be a bit more expensive but will cost you basically nothing during the year
Ebba: the environment-saving bulbs is usually cheaper too, in the long run then. I must come clean and say that I have only carbon filament light bulbs at home, they give very little light, attracts a lot of energy and they do not last very long. I have them because it is nice
Moderator 2: What we want to say is that in all cases, people buy more consciously.
Olle: When you mentioned this now. it was really an eye-opener. I have seen this. That label had probably worked on many other products, and clothing. Maybe not the energy, yes, but also energy. How much energy does it take to produce.
Hanna: Yes, but the energy and carbon emissions. That (mumble…) where the production before going to the store.
Moderator 2: As we talked about before about what your hobbies are, how it lasts and what the results are. That it is different for all different things. But for example, the appliance industry has focused on energy consumption. That is when we are talking about this bridge between consumers and companies. There, companies have been forced by the EU to put labels and then you have to stay within these certain carbon emissions. They are not about the company itself when they produce, but it is the consumer. The consumers buy a more expensive product that costs them less at home. It went from A to F, then to only A-D. What then has shown results that they have been able to raise this. And the companies do not need to produce environmentally bad products. They can produce A-D products and the consumers have the choice. Suddenly, they have created a bridge.
Olle: yes, it is then by law that you cannot produce anything under D.
Moderator 2: yes, but on the other hand, you might not get something 100% sustainable. Sustainability includes the different aspects that you mentioned before. It can be everything from the environment to the working conditions and so on. But what we are thinking about, is a labeling system, which shows A-D, and still shows you the consumer how much this would be good or bad? Would this be something that would be interesting for the fashion industry?
Moderator 1: Like a comprehensive grade, how good a product is from beginning to end.
Moderator 2: You were talking about to make carbon emissions for a piece of clothing, but if we say that there is a modern way to figure out an average of how sustainable a garment is. All aspects.
Moderator 1: In the entire value chain. From the supplier to the customer and so on.
Moderator 2: There is a system where companies in the fashion industry can calculate how sustainable all their products. It takes time and they put it in themselves. They can calculate a 100% chart. All the information they put into it becomes smaller and smaller, if it becomes sustainable. But people choose not to label their products.
This system is called the Higg Index and calculates in the fashion industry only. Apparel, shoes and textiles.
There is no specific system right now for the fashion industry, where it is only a third party, such as Svanen. What we are after is to find a solution that would be for the fashion industry. Something has to change for the fashion industry, which is one of the most destructive today.
Hanna: Are ecological sustainability, social sustainability and other aspects included in the Higg then?
Moderator 1: yes, social, environmental, labor, ethical, emissions, water, costs, quality. Everything from that the product is produced to that the customer gets it, the whole life cycle, to what the customer can do with the product afterwards.
Moderator 2: The packages too. Transportation, suppliers.

Moderator 1: Yes, and all this can be calculated by the Higg Index. It calculates a complete sustainability score through an incision. You get a number in percentage.
Moderator 2: The scale goes downwards, so 67% would be bad.
Olle: then how much impact it has? So if it is 100 %, it's bad?
Moderator 2: yes, disaster.
Ida: Now say that companies get a choice, to put a label or not. Then the government would be able to say that they have to do it. What exactly is the reason why they don't? Is it because the company generates money to the state?
Moderator 1: It could be that companies just are not that environmentally friendly.
Ebba: I think it's about economic sustainability, then. We are meant to consume for our society to go around and the state wants us to spend money.
Marcus: Your question, then, whether the government decides because companies generate a lot of tax?
Ida: we live in a society that will not exist in X number of years, where disasters happen due to us. What is it that makes us not entering into a pact with other countries that we should only be environmentally friendly? What is really the reason why we and why they don't?
Carl: capitalism
Marcus: those who have made the clothes we wear, they are the ones who are behind it.
Moderator 2: how is it then that there is an industry that has done this? That has succeeded?
Moderator 1: the appliance industry
Ida: obvious reason, because you pay less
Moderator 1: then it is on the consumers?
Olle: So, you get like a confirmation each month.
Hanna: Yes, I spend less money and are more environmentally friendly.
Carl: I think there are also two very different industries. The fashion industry is more about the emotional reactions about how you look, trends, how cool you are and so on.
Marcus: it is more clearly linked to your identity.
Moderator 1: they are more emotional then?
Carl: yes exactly! They are then willing to make these decisions as long as they do not have a major impact on one's life.
Fia: It really is like that, with the emotional, such as if you buy a dishwasher it's not emotional, it's rational. You might also have it for maybe 15 years, and then where you'd have a good product that will not cost a lot of money in the long run. You have to think more than if you buy a t-shirt.
Moderator 2: but what if it becomes your favorite T-shirt? Then it breaks after you worn it once
Fia: It feels sadder that a dishwasher breaks after one time use than a t-shirt, larger one-off cost. One can buy three new ones as well
Moderator 1: But then again it's expensive in the long run?
Fia: But you don't see it that way
Ebba: the costs are spread out so you do not see them
Ida: the fashion industry, or the identity-industry is so emotional, should we not involve more emotion in the fashion industry then? Like labeling stuff with child labor etc. so that people will get a bad conscience. When emotions are involved anyways.
Marcus: but then of course someone from outside the company has to go in and show that they use child labor
Ida: if we want a radical change, should we not involve some emotions? Because it is so personal
Hanna: It would probably also motivate more in clothing stores if they would have labels, ...

Moderator 2: so today there are the labels that label sustainability in different ways or there are no labels at all, and it says, itself, is not sustainable at all. What we talked about with the Higg Index and if you use a scale as the appliance industry does today, everything is of course on the consumer. The consumer can choose the product they want to buy. Would that be something?
Marcus, yes, or to ban bad products.
Moderator 2: exactly, it's this that becomes difficult. We must somewhere try to find a solution.
Olle: you can now calculate as you say, you get the system to which the appliance industry has and that F are gone now and D is the worst. If there is a change in the law that they should go in and put it everywhere they can of course say that from 2020 to be (mumble…)
Moderator 1: It doesn't take one day to build something like this, but gradually
Moderator 2: yes if there was indeed a system that shows what we buy, then it is the companies to give us the choice to purchase good
Moderator 1: yes a comprehensive all around grade
Moderator 2: yes the consumer may choose but hopefully soon one can see that the consumers are beginning to act sustainably better
Carl: yes labeling that often goes under green washing is that you can buy a new consumer group that might be a conscious middle class. But one never really question the way you relate to a purchased product. It is something that I personally feel would affect me very much to question the whole relationship to a product's finitude or not. It got me to the test ten pants at Nudie. I have never before tested ten pants in a row before in my life and it was just because.
Marcus: Because why?
Carl: because they question how to relate to the products
Moderator 1: yes, Nudie have a completely transparent supply chain
Moderator 2: yes transparency refers to all information about their products are there, you can follow it all, where all the garments have been made and so on.
Carl: And yes, that is the difference from e.g. Velour that chooses Svanen labelled jeans, which is one of the most difficult marks to get and so on but I would still prefer Nudie. Now, however, none of the pants fit me
Hanna: You should have acted on impulse just to support them
Moderator 2: but it's interesting because then you are talking about labeling to notice something Svanen for example and it is a very difficult label to have- but it is still not transparent and transparency is perhaps the most important thing that consumers might actually want to know. Can you really just rely on a third party? Is it credible with Svanen? Then you fully trust Svanen 100 %
Carl: they still do not question the wear-and-tear logic. They only make you tear a bit slower.
Moderator 2: But how do you feel for those brands that where you buy a product, you get a bag with the product so you can send back a used garment? Like an exchange
Ida: never experienced it
Ebba: Yes, H & M has the type also where you can leave clothes
Moderator 1: yes conscious. You get a gift voucher of 50 SEK if you shop for over 300 SEK. it is of course that you actually consume more. You get like 50 SEK
Ebba: but you do not need to consume more because there are recycling sites exhibited everywhere
Moderator 2: But Carl was into this with green washing before. Does everyone know what it is? That's what you call when you say that something is green, and then maybe it really is not. As many may feel and question the nature of H & M and its Conscious Collection.
Moderator 1: There are very many conscious things out now

Moderator 2: but how many people visit a website and look up sustainability etc.?
Ida: That's what I did. I Googled fair trade online. There was very little, I found like two sites with very little products that was not so appealing. Then I really had to sit and look. Do not really know if I used the Google wrong but
Stina: but do you buy second hand?
Ida: Yes, very much so. And I have a fun input, those are the things that have lasted the best. That's what's so sick.
Moderator 2: but then you could say that products were better before? And today they produce "crap".
Ida: No, but fashion and identity have become a different story today than it was before.
Ebba: but they also want you to change identity each and every season. "Renew yourself".
Moderator 2: do you think we will be able to continue like this then? Because that is what makes people still shop like they do
Ebba: Yes as long as it is legal
Carl: it is sustainable to recycle old trends, as 90's clothes now
Moderator 1: If there were then, as we talked about the Higg Index, would you think it would be a good idea to have something like that? A summed score to put on the washing label or something
Ida: YES
Fia: I think it would be very clear about what is included in it. Because most people are not that into maybe the fashion industry. But if I buy a t-shirt that says like 12% on it, it wouldn't tell me anything
Moderator 2: but 12% sustainable?
Fia: Yes, but I do not know what it is
Ebba: But if you go out and say this: "Now this is the law, all clothes should be with a particular percentage, and (mumble…) Then I would pay a bit more for a lower percentage than higher.
Fia: But that's probably not everyone that would think that way
Ebba: No, but we want to be aware but we still buy bad clothes because we do not have better information. Do we get better information, we may make a little better choices.
Carl:but you have undoubtedly the information
Fia: but not all have it!
Carl: but whether it says 12% or not, the information is there, but the thing is that the only way you can also avoid this is to think about is that 12% is better than 92%? Spontaneously, I had thought the other way around
Moderator 1: yeah, but it may be as well, it was just an example.
Carl: but whatever, I think that to set a minimum limit as in the automotive industry for example, that the actors may operate in the market. I think it is to start with creating an immune systems
Ebba: the limit will be there
Olle: that's where the consumers come in, if they want more (mumble…). But more awareness among consumers get that to move up eventually. But in the beginning it is there on the border all the time
Moderator 2: But do you not think it would be too much commotion if someone went in and just said that this should be done like this in the fashion industry? Do you not think then that the thing with the fashion industry disappears, then? That people think it is too expensive, etc.
Carl: yeah, but it's exactly that.
Moderator 2: You have to be realistic. That's why we're talking about what you can have for a realistic solution?
Ida: The fashion industry's difficult because it's so damn global, it is very difficult.

Fia: It is difficult for the state also just decide to legislate something. For example. "You can only buy expensive clothes," so all who earn little money cannot buy any clothes.
Moderator 2: yeah it gets too drastically, it becomes an instant change. All businesses will not know how to adapt. Moving production etc.
Moderator 1: this is what will happen gradually, it takes time.
Carl: There's two different solutions, either deduct tax, etc., to stop producing in China, that's exactly what I think should happen. Depending on what value, if the hamster wheel still will be spinning, there are difficulties.
Moderator 2: and that's obviously a goal but we try of course to think realistically. With labeling, just so try to find this bridge, companies can keep themselves out a bit but it is still the consumers' choice. Then the consumers can really prove if they actually make more sustainable purchases as they say.
Olle: Then the companies will actually get like a receipt.
Moderator 2: exactly! Either we prove that companies are becoming stronger by these, they can continue to produce, because consumers are still buying, or it will show that all of a sudden these tops for 79 SEK won't sell because they have raised the price to 99 SEK, so it would be great for companies
Moderator 1: Yes because people are willing to pay a little more.
Moderator 2: yeah so that you get the whole of whose responsibility it really is? Maybe it's ours
Olle: I think it is a part of everyone's responsibility
Moderator 1: yes but where does it start? And with whom? The information must of course be available, but there must be pressure on it too.
Olle: It is the consumers because they are buying
Carl: yeah like you said, pressure to the government I think is exactly what is needed. But I am moderately optimistic.
Ebba: no, I do not think we should be able to act in this way. I do not think that we as individuals should be able to act this way. I do not think it should be the sole responsibility of the individual either. It is for higher powers to decide.
Carl: where one can try to distinguish these issues, like environmental issues, where it is obvious that we need to change radically. I am in favor like Svanen labels or to repair the jeans, it can buy time and good changes, it results in that it emits less gases
Fia: Yes, but I do not think we should prohibit people from doing something, because banning works less times. I think you should do something more attractive. Find something more attractive than the alternatives available now. That you still have the desire to do what you want, but for example, buy an A garment, that it might get a little peer pressure to all of your friends to do it and so on.
Hanna: Yes, what you wear often is your own sales pitch
Fia: Yes people want the feeling that they are doing something positive. But you have to make it more attractive so that people will be inspired to do something.
Carl: the carrot instead of the stick
Moderator 2: but it is only you who knows if it is A labelled or not. It can like be labelled on the washing instructions or a patch or something. But yes, suddenly becomes an element that you take in. Because before it was the price and if it is neat. The two who decides.
But if it would hang a label that is behind the price tag that says "this is 75%, or 12%." Then there is suddenly another aspect to keep in mind.
Moderator 1: We have to stop there, thank you for taking your time!

APPENDIX E- Transcript Focus Group 2

Moderator: The first thing we want to start with is to talk about buying behavior in general. What are the most important factors for you when making a purchasing decision?
Laura: That I need the garment
Madeleine: Do we talk about clothes or ..?
Moderator: No, just generally. Anything.
Hilda: Necessity, how much you need it.
Laura: Yes, that you want it too. To build up something for yourself, and that you think about it for a long time, that it is on the buying list for a long time.
Wilma: Yes and that you may not really need it, and that you tell yourself that you need it.
Hilda: How happy you get when you bought it.
Laura: The feeling.
Klara: Impulse. I only shop on impulse
Moderator: Impulse?
Klara: yes. It's like an impulse and then I use this psychology to turn around my anxiety that I shopped for such a big amount. "This is what I need, this will be nice." I always get outfits in my head.
Laura: It is still quite good of you to do it if you only shop spontaneously. I think that when I spontaneously buy things, I often do not think it through. You are a good spontaneous shopper!
Moderator: Is there anybody that plans their purchase? Anything.
Laura & Hilda: yes
Klara: no
Moderator: so you always shop spontaneously?
Klara: not always but for most part
Moderator: But the rest of you always plan everything?
Laura, Hilda & Madeleine: Yes, almost everything
Madeleine: Not always, like if I'm going to buy a jacket at for example H & M, I will not go out of there without anything but maybe not a jacket, maybe two other things that are not a jacket.
Klara: I've been shopping a lot and have probably had a shopping addiction but I have been good the last three months and just got things I need except last week when I got to buy a lot of things
Moderator: what was it then that motivated you?
Klara: My friend
Moderator: But if we are talking about motivation. What motivates you to buy something?
Hilda: How happy I get and how nice I will be in it and that it feels good
Moderator: Then emotions motivates you when you shop?
Hilda: yes
Wilma: I was last stressed today actually over trends that spring is coming now. Spring is a bit anxious with colors and pastels and I have just got black. I paint a scenario in my head. I do not have those clothes for the right occasion. That’s how I feel every year. You want to follow trends a bit anyway.
Klara: I think of emotions as we mentioned earlier. One can think of buying lots of things and spending and shopping and being happy but nevertheless still not having anything but having the same sense of joy. It's probably pretty sick to feel like that

Laura: I love to Google clothes, often on lots of different websites. Adding lots of things to the different lists and then deleting, and the things that actually remain on the list are what I really want to buy.
Madeleine: Then you buy things that you really might need.
Moderator: then is that really what's needed? You don't shop in abundance then?
Laura: Yes, but many times there are jackets or shoes, something you need for an occasion.
Wilma: I was gonna buy a long dress for a party and came home with 5 but did not really need to buy any dress but it was for a special occasion. Planning spontaneously maybe
Klara: You really do not have to get anything. You always just want something new. You do not want to wear the same garment again. The status thing
Hilda: At the same time, one knows that nobody cares
Laura: There's probably more emotions there
Moderator: You were talking about that you shop after what's trendy. But what do you base your decisions on when shopping for clothes? If we not only base it on emotions. Is it material? Price? Design? Trend? Quality? How practical it is?
Wilma: No, not me
Madeleine: quality and materials ! I'd rather buy something that I know lasts a little longer.
Klara: I'm looking at the price
Madeleine: I have become quite picky with what I think is comfortable to wear. Some materials I cannot have because they are uncomfortable. Also buy very basic garments, and can feel comfortable with good quality. Don't get motivated by trends.
Moderator: Do you feel that you are aware when shopping?
Hilda: I may know that it's not the best material when I shop because I cannot be bothered and cannot afford to be bothered.
Moderator: would you say that price is what drives you?
Hilda: yes
Klara: I'm trying to be a bit environmentally aware. I'm happy when I find kind of fair trade cotton sweater. Had it been easier to access with environmental clothing, I would have bought it.
Hilda: There is but it is more expensive
Klara: Yes, it's more expensive. It's not as close
Madeleine: yes it is limited. I'll probably buy 50/50 on price and material. I can have such double standards. But I still try to think about it, but I'm not going to put myself on a pedestal. But if I find a cheap shirt then I'll take it, then I have no idea if it's done by a child, unfortunately. Then the price plays a big part. When it comes to sweaters, it will always be cotton, cashmere or wool, but refuse it if it gets too expensive.
Hilda: yes I like wool mixer, cashmere and such but then you cannot go on trend because then it will be too expensive. Should you buy this year's trend colors in cashmere each year, you can't. That's why I wear a lot of gray, black, beige.
Wilma: I have so much black but you have so much color, I love your closet because it's so lovely, but I also think it's about the price, I'd rather buy white or black, even though I would rather have bought in coral but then I can use it fewer times.
Klara: Yes, you have to have a matching cardigan or scarf
(mumble)
Wilma: I'm more practical and I hate being practical
Moderator: You were into the subject of sustainability a bit, what is sustainability to you?
Hilda: In fashion, I think it's really hard because there's nothing really like that's sustainable, or it does not feel like it, like how that industry is ...
Moderator: If you want to define it, what is sustainability to you?
Klara: Sustainability…?

Moderator: what does it mean? What does it mean to you?
Klara: Do you think about the environment?
Hilda: I think sustainability in the textile industry is generally a very unsustainable industry when thinking about the way people shop for clothes. You buy once and then throw it away. You cannot recycle clothes especially well yet. But there are materials that are sustainable and are sustainably produced such as Organic cotton or lyocell. But it is very unavailable. Should it be possible to increase the proportion of it and make it cheaper and more readily available, the industry would become more sustainable, but in todays state it is extremely unsustainable.
Madeleine: I had a discussion about Eco products, increasing the sustainability of products would be amazing but then there would be an increased demand, then it will also be an increased industry behind it, it would require so much more work. Everything is getting bigger when the demand is getting bigger. Would it be able to apply that kind of sustainability?
Klara: I have a friend who studies environment now and he says that everyone, for example, could not eat organic food, it would never work. Because we do not have much space (mumble ...) we eat too much, we eat 10x more than we need. Maybe it is the same with clothes.
Laura: Yes, it might be the behavior that would have to change.
Hilda: Sustainability overall, production, consumption, how to take care of it, both food and clothing. You may not be able to change all parts. Our behavior is a huge problem but production is also a big problem and recycling is an even bigger problem. In the clothing industry, all these parts need quite a bit of work.
Wilma: Yes and you can find alternatives. Now I do not think organic cotton or other options can replace everything but some that could make it more sustainable. But it is the consumption behavior that ....
Hilda: It should be a taboo to shop a lot, one should kind of be ashamed.
Klara: good idea
Wilma: in terms of social media, and all "influencers", that there is such pressure, it is encouragement, rather than taboo.
Moderator: If you would choose three words to explain sustainability, what would you say then? What aspects?
Hilda: Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Production, and Sustainable Recycling. What's behind everything.
Klara: working conditions, equal conditions for all who are behind the garment. I think it is equally important. Human rights
Madeleine: social sustainability, economic sustainability and ecological sustainability are well suited to summarize everything in one.
Moderator: Okay, if we stay on sustainability. What do you know about ecolabelling?
Laura: Eco, Fair Trade, KRAV, MSC for Fish, UTZ for Coffee, FSC for Paper, Svanen, Nyckelhålet
Madeleine: Then there are energy labels on TVs but do not know what they are called but AA, AA + etc.
Klara: but there are lots of those labels that people work under good conditions.
(mumble…)
Madeleine: What is meant by AA and so is that as a consumer you will see how much energy different devices consume. (mumble ...) Then there is ...
Moderator: It is an eco-label
Klara: Is there anything for locally produced?
Moderator: There are a lot for different things, but do you know what the different ones are? You have said a lot, but do you know exactly when you see them?

Hilda: Fair trade, you know this blue and green label, it stands for just fair trade, but uzt stands for fair production
Laura: That's what you really want to access when reading fair trade
Hilda: Exactly!
Madeleine: It is consumer behavior and what we are used to consuming. Fair trade, people are familiar with. It really is just about it. (mumble….)
Hilda: I think it's a question of generations. My parents buy more organic than they did before, but I think there are people who never have. Because when organic came, it was much more expensive. Although organic is more expensive than regular, I still buy it and I think it's something that's in our generation.
Moderator: It may have become one thing in our decision-making. Do you think that now, then, it is still more about the price rather than a habit? Because the other generation may shop on habit, maybe the price difference may be bigger then, but it's not that big for us. We do not have to fight for the habits as our parents have.
Klara: probably. Took my dad five years to learn how to recycle
Moderator: then it feels like it's our generation who is more aware?
Klara: Yes, I think so. As we talked about before, about all these labels that we had no idea existed. In each and every store there should be a sign or a paper that can be taken as showing all the labels that are there. Instead, you get to Google, and you may not even find them. One could have made it so much easier.
Laura: A review of each label should be required to get an honest answer to it.
Madeleine: But I think all labels should be better than no labels.
(mumble…)
Klara: I do not think all labels are better than just regular. But, as a customer, I want to believe that and I am naive. But in reality, I think it's corrupt
Madeleine: It will be better for us as consumers to buy organic, it's still says organic
Moderator: Are we as consumers a bit stupid? Who only buy into this concept from the companies?
Wilma: We should be more critical of what we consume because it has such a big global impact.
Hilda: It feels popular to eco-label something now. That it has become trendy.
(mumble…)
Moderator: what you say now, is that you are shopping anyways?
Klara: true. But I still want to trust the government, I want to trust all organizations, I rely entirely on those who allow these labels, to have done the right thing.
Hilda: Yes, you have to trust that someone still reviews them
Moderator: Who do you think are reviewing? The government?
Madeleine: Consumption ... (mumble..)
Hilda: Just in terms of food, I think they are quite hard, with nutrition declarations and such.
Madeleine: because Sweden has EU laws etc. Sweden also has extra hard criterias. That's why I'm probably a little naive. But we probably think it's better than it really is, though we may be the best in the world
Moderator: Then we're back to labels and we just think it's organic although it’s not? Even though we do not know who approves of it
Klara: It would take time to check everything
Moderator: There are different types of labels. And that all companies can label their own. For example. H & M with conscious. Are you critical of that?
(mumble..).
Moderator: Because you talked about a little green label or that it says organic? And that makes you feel great. But who has reviewed it? How do you look it up?

Klara: I do not know. I do not look it up. I blindly think this is right.
Hilda: You are so naive that you do not think anyone would put such a label and don't live up to it. I do not think H & M, such a big company, would put such a label if it's not true because they risk too much.
Madeleine: It will be reviewed. But then you also have to think about which ruckus they have been in, they have the worst working conditions.
Klara: There are so many big companies that I don't get how they can behave the way that they do
Laura: I think when it comes to the known labels that one actually (mumble..) it is clear there are many specific labels that you have never seen but KRAV feels like it has to be reviewed.
Moderator: That's what I mean. Do you know which ones are own labels? Government ones? Or organizations? Svanen e.g. is an organization that is approved to judge because they themselves work for a greener world. If you get it, it's a very good product. But do you know any specific labels in the fashion industry?
Laura: I should but
(mumble…)
Laura: know that it exists but cannot name any
Moderator: You mentioned energy labeling before. Does everyone know what it is?
?: No.
Hilda: That is .. (mumble)
Moderator: Do you agree that it was environmentally friendly or not?
Wilma: no idea
Wilma: How do they look? (Starts Googleing)
Hilda: If a consumer knows how to interpret it, then it is environmentally friendly
Klara: you know these lines green, yellow, orange or yes ...
Like when purchasing batteries, it's AA, D, AA +, etc.
Hilda: Like on the refrigerator
Wilma: Oh yes, yes, it's on everything!!
Moderator: Do you understand what the levels mean?
Klara: How much energy per watt or per hour or what you say, what it consumes
Moderator: so how would you say you interpret one of those? How would you interpret it when you buy a refrigerator?
Hilda: the one that is most energy efficient
Laura: Yes for that price. I should not buy something that is bad at that scale but does not feel like there is much that are
Moderator: There is a lot that is bad on that scale, for example, all of these light bulbs today that are trendy, they all are on a D level
Klara: I last bought a D-labeled light bulb because it cost one-third of the one that was A-labeled. It was too expensive but I know that it might have lasted longer
Moderator: But do you know that it will cost you more?
Klara: Yes, but I was in urgent need and it was far too expensive
Moderator: At least you know the difference?
Klara: Absolutely
Madeleine: But there is also a difference in light bulbs and refrigerators when investing in something. (mumble…)
Moderator: when we talk about light bulbs and purchasing them. You may not do it so often though. Is it the price, the light, the energy, or the cost in the long run? Or the environment?
Madeleine: Definitely the light because I'm often looking for a certain light
(mumble…)
Moderator: Wilma, you didn't know about this?

Wilma: no, my parents have never shown me anything about this! Shame on them!
Moderator: okay, but when you saw it, what did you think of it?
Wilma: It's on everything, all electrical products. I have not bothered, had no interest in knowing what it meant.
Moderator: Do you think that green is better than red?
Wilma: clearly! Had I invested myself into it, then I certainly had. Of concern
Moderator: if we continue with environmental labeling in the fashion industry. Do you think of material and such? In an environmental perspective
Hilda: Normally no, I'm probably doing like "wool feels good". Do not think about if it requires more energy than any other material.
Moderator: Do you think that if it's better quality that it lasts longer?
Hilda: of course.
Madeleine: Absolutely
Laura: I think if it's more expensive, it's better material, then it will last longer.
Hilda: if you are into it and know something about it, you can easily choose. Most often, it is quite good quality and material when it is environmentally friendly.
Moderator: When you shop, do you feel that you get information about how to take care of your clothes and so on?
Madeleine: when you buy shoes and stuff and bags
(mumble…)
Moderator: How would you like to get information? Do you want information?
Klara: yes! Easily accessible, educational, not complicated. Everybody should be able to understand it.
Moderator: Do you want it to be in every store that explains what their own labeling is? Or should it be a general label? Or should it be a specific thing in sustainability? What do you want to know?
Klara: A general ... child labor. Or no, nobody would like to know that when buying a garment. But when we sit here so. But how it is manufactured, which country, environmental aspects
Laura: If you had put up signs and stuff, you will not notice it as a consumer, but they are there. An opportunity to find out. Place information behind the checkout, maybe everyone will see it. A big sign as well
Hilda: It is already apparent what country the garment is produced in, what materials, how to wash it. You would also like to know that if it is 100% cotton you would also like to know how environmentally friendly it is and if it says Bangladesh you would like to know "what does it mean?". "95% polyester" it does not tell me so much about the production. If you put a comparison maybe…
Klara: but not too much text as soon as it gets too much ...
Hilda: no but comparison, like "cotton can be similar to this…"
(mumble…)
Klara: As with Panta Mera's advertisements! They compare with how many cans you recycle, like "10 cans, you can blow dry your hair for an hour". Should be the same with clothes! "If you buy these jeans, this many African children have been able to drink water!"
Moderator: Then we also only speak about a product, but the fashion industry is one of the worst. The fashion industry has to make a change, what could you do? How will you change your buying behavior? Or, what could the fashion industry do to make a change? Whose responsibility is that?
Klara: It's ours! We are governed by them. They are in power. If they change everything ...
Hilda: But if we change our behavior then we will force them to change everything as well.

Madeleine: they should emphasize that "this much energy is required when making this much cotton", then you have to interpret it yourself as a consumer without having to worsen your own. They want to sell
Wilma: but why cannot the EU impose a law on clothes that they must be sustainable? If they are not, they must have like a "smoking kills" symbol. Because there is one for tobacco, and then consumers can choose if they want to buy it or not
Hilda: Yes, but if you have no interest in it, you must Google it. And try to reach out to people who do not care
Klara: Yes, you should get an option that is simple as in the food stores. With clothes, one must actively find it
Laura: Yes, I do not even know what's offered with environmentally friendly clothes
Laura: I do not even know where to look
Madeleine: You need to know more about what materials are sustainable and find out for yourself. Much about where it is produced, in what part of the world and so on. It is difficult for consumers to know
Moderator: You talked a little about if the information was available and that the choice is with the customer. If there was a system to label all clothes. As you do in the appliance industry. Then the choice is with the customer. Is that a way to find the bridge between consumers and companies? Companies do not want to worsen their images and we do not feel we can make a big difference. But someone must take the first step. It is proven in studies that we consumers talk more than what we actually do. We say we would choose green but then in the store, we don't. But if the information was available like with energy labels, with A & D products. Do you think you will choose a little more consciously?
Everyone: Yes!!
Moderator: It may not need to be sustainable. But would you have it more in mind if there were?
Everyone: Yeeees.
Wilma: Now I have no idea what's going on so yes that's better
Klara: Yes, if it would be as easy with clothes as it is with food, I would have chosen better (mumble…)
Moderator: In the fashion industry, there is an organization that has come up with a self assessment tool that companies use to calculate how sustainable their clothes are. It's called the Higg Index. Is that something you've heard of?
Hilda: mm
Wilma: no
Moderator: It is the companies themselves involved in this organization that is then started by companies in the fashion industry to make better choices.
Klara: There is some propaganda they are dealing with here
Moderator: It's good that you are critical. This is a good organization. They are called SAC, sustainable apparel coalition, and they use this tool. But they just offer this tool
Klara: It's not just marketing?
Moderator: It's companies, experts and researchers who have developed this tool to businesses. They do not label, they do not approve and say it's sustainable. They have just developed a tool that calculates the sustainability of a garment so companies can go in and check how, on their own garments. Because they want to work for some greener options. The problem is that only the companies themselves are using it and most customers do not know about this. It counts an average of sustainability. Think there are 9 different sustainability perspectives it calculates. The entire value chain for a garment. Then you can get a grade.
Hilda: There are very many companies involved with this score that get a very low score in this index.

Moderator: Yes, exactly. That's what's the problem. They do not label because they have no good products. But as said, everything is because we could see how good a product is, but it's only for companies. What do you think of this?
Laura: Why is it such a difficulty for individuals as we consumers to see this system?
Moderator: higg index is only via SAC, only the organization that has it.
Madeleine: These are the processes that make you unable to care as a customer
Moderator: Do you mean that if it was available, would you use it yourself? Would you check your clothes?
Klara: yes definitely!
Moderator: every item you bought?
Hilda: Would not have done it after I bought it
Madeleine: had made it of pure interest, check for curiosity, but do not know if I had put a meaning behind it when I was consuming
Hilda: I think I would have done it once, but on the other hand, if companies actually use this more frequently then I might have. It's easier for them to analyze their own products than us as consumers to analyze and then return to them. It is with them the selection process lies.
Klara: It will be like a light bulb, these green yellow, like a level or…?
Moderator: It's like a "cake" really.
Klara: if every item had such a print, you could have made a choice if you are interested in it. Some had still bothered more about the price
Wilma: Then the company has done it before and you have not done it yourself
Moderator: would that be something then? It does not matter if it's a good or a bad product, just that every garment has that information so that you as a consumer know and then you can make the choice.
Everyone: Yes! Absolutely!
Madeleine: For companies that if they have a bad product., will they want to put it on their product?
Hilda: You can then state government requirements as with the nutrition declaration. Where you have to have a table of contents, what is this product really. Then you can decide as a consumer yourself. And if you have done it clear and easily enough, you do not need to be particularly knowledgeable.
Klara: Media also has important impact. (mumble…) As with the nutrition declaration, some things are dangerous and so on. Had it been the same with clothes that we talked a lot about it, I think more people had been aware.
Moderator: Do you all feel this way? That the food industry has become like that because the media has talked about it and then organic food also came from that?
Madeleine: yes definitely, what if all bloggers started to blog about to see where the shirt is made.
Laura: I read a lot of blogs, and I can count up five different bloggers who write about organic products that they use, i.e. food. Food trend. To buy organic. Many do not even argue behind it.
Hilda: We Swedes too, we are so homogeneous in that way too. "I have neighbors who do so". "If the neighbor gets a Volvo, I'll get one too." That's the behavior we have, that we want to do like everyone else. We have that population. And in that way, it may be quite grateful. On the other hand, I can also be cynical that we in Sweden of 10 million. Then we have the United States, and China. You get depressed, if you just think about it.
Laura: I think it's as we say, it's about trends. As with the food trend, we are aware. But then we have to implement it on fashion.
Klara: As with Zara Larsson in the melody festival when she went on stage and said that her fur is faux fur, only such a thing can make many people reflect.

Moderator: Does it matter in the end if it's bad or good, or if it's only good to talk about it? Creating awareness. It seems like lack of information about the fashion industry. You can be incredibly aware there too. It is one of the world's biggest pollution causes
Madeleine: Does not food have more impact than clothes have?
Moderator: no, think they are in the same
Madeleine: It's been a lot of trouble to change the food industry but not the fashion industry…
Moderator: Maybe we need people to adapt? That we cannot do too much change at one and the same time?
Hilda: Absolutely
Klara: The food trend went fast
Hilda: But as you say, labels are a good first step, since we will come to the day when we realize that it does not last longer, as in the automotive industry. Either one goes from zero to one hundred or trying to make people conscious in the meantime. We will need the whole process and it will take quite some time.
Moderator: You cannot recycle any clothes either because you cannot do it efficiently. But what you said about labeling that energy labeling, that they started with A-F and then became a law to have A-D. There they entered a law. Customers have shown that they choose more consciously. Perhaps for their own gain. What is the difference in the appliance industry and your clothes? If we were to implement the same system with a scale.
Madeleine: It's about money. It will cost more.
Hilda: It's just a label
Madeleine: yes, just put a label. Then I misunderstood. But it must be more expensive somewhere, there must be a difference. As with organic food it becomes a bit more expensive. I think it would be great but hard because of the price.
Moderator: But they are not saying that D would be cheaper than A. The fashion industry is unbelievably based on what's trendy. It's not the material. Production costs nothing but if something becomes trendy, the mark up becomes higher.
We have to end here today but thank you so much for participating!

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