



**UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW**

Master Degree Project in Marketing and Consumption

**Exploring the Roles of Sustainable Branding Strategies: Factors  
Influencing the Consumption Experience of Sustainable Clothing Brands**

Charlotte Isackson

Supervisor: Cecilia Solér

# **Exploring the Roles of Sustainable Branding Strategies: Factors Influencing the Consumption Experience of Sustainable Clothing Brands**

Charlotte Isackson

*School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg*

2017

**Abstract:** This study highlights the dialectics between the emotional- and functional attributes of sustainable branding strategies and how these influence the consumption experience of sustainable clothing brands. The qualitative study found that emotional attributes have the most substantial influence on consumers' consumption experience. Although, the findings suggest that it is necessary to consider consumers' prior sustainable knowledge when planning a sustainable branding strategy, as prior environmental knowledge might be related to the need of having functional attributes as complement to the emotional ones. According to the findings, it is further suggested that sustainable brands need to incorporate hedonic and aesthetic aspects in order for the consumption experience to be as worthwhile as possible. Finally, this study indicates that emotional attributes are of vital importance for making a long-lasting and memorable impression among consumers, which in turn strengthens the bond between consumers and brands.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The ever-increasing consumption rate is severely challenging the expectations of a more sustainable future. Contradictory, research suggests that an overall increased consumption barely bring about a sense of improved quality of life in already rich societies (Jackson, 2005), which illustrates the fact that the sacrifices involved in order to hamper the overall consumption growth are close to inconsequential. Nevertheless, the required alterations are more precarious and complicated than that, as consumers tend to embrace and put great emphasis on achieving individual or collective benefit by consuming (Moisander, 1991). This phenomenon is specifically explicated in the consumption of clothes, given that clothing interconnects strongly to a person's self-image and identity (Niinimäki, 2010). The norm in our society is further encouraging consumers to demonstrate their identity through a continuous flow of new clothing, which clearly impedes a change of structure in the fashion industry (Solér et al., 2015). This is a difficult situation that raises serious

environmental concerns, as the fashion industry accounts for major environmental degradation as well as generating waste. Further, the need for stressing these issues is vital as "fast fashion" is becoming a progressively usual element in our lifestyle, meaning that garments are made fast and sold cheap before being replaced by the next new thing, resulting in disposal after a season regardless of the quality. (Niinimäki, 2010) However, the recognition of sustainability issues has increasingly entered the domain of the fashion industry (Niinimäki, 2010) and businesses are increasingly incorporating these issues as an important component of practice (Cummins et al., 2014). Yet, the procedure is repeatedly lacking a coherent and coordinated plan for implementation as companies fail to develop principles that favour sustainability initiatives in a long-term perspective (Sheth et al., 2011; Polonsky, 2011). Further, corporations frequently fall through in stressing all aspects of sustainability when eventually recognizing the importance of it. More

commonly, corporations tend to emphasise the environmental component of sustainability, rather than aspects related to social and economic elements (Sheth et al., 2011), which is an occurring fact within the clothing industry as well (Niinimäki, 2010). Thus, it seems vital to examine how sustainability is being portrayed and employed in the marketing of clothing brands, as such exploration would yield important insights regarding whether the absence of long-term incorporations regarding sustainability efforts at corporate level is being interpreted as vague or inadequate by consumers.

The traditional definition of sustainable branding typically refers to the process of integrating and maintaining an identity of the social, environmental and financial dimensions of a business that reflects added value with regard to environmental and social benefits for the consumer. (Peattie, 2009) Furthermore, as Hartmann et al. (2006) point out, environmentally sound and sustainable products will not be commercially successful if the sustainability efforts are not successfully communicated to the consumer. Therefore, sustainable branding strategies have become an increasingly important element for companies to consider in order to obtain an effective and compelling perception of the brand. Sustainable branding indicates that the brand incorporates an active communication and differentiation of the brand from its competitors through its sustainable attributes. (Hartmann et al., 2006) Preceding literature arrives at the understanding that sustainable branding strategies could either emphasise functional- or emotional benefits - the former is pertinent to a strategy stressing the environmentally sound attributes whereas the latter touch upon attributes that somehow echoes with consumers' inner personal desires and motivations (Hartmann et al., 2006; Bhat and Reddy, 1998). Thus, the way in which clothing

brands convey their sustainable production and branding is crucial for how the brand will be experienced by consumers.

Today, consumers in developed countries are well aware and informed about the environmental impact and consequences that the present consumption behaviour causes. Yet, consumer choices are irrational and not attached to values at all times. (Jackson, 2008) This constitute a challenge for sustainable branding as it requires a brand to provide benefits to the consumers on two levels, namely both in terms of improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction. (Ottman et al., 2010) As consumers fulfils its deep inner motivations and unconscious needs by consuming (Niinimäki, 2010), stressing the environmental qualities too hard would plausibly weaken the effect of the affective stimuli, which is a challenge for sustainable brands and they consequently have to provide a very specific balancing act between these to benefits. Specifically, this phenomenon becomes evident in the consumption of clothing, as clothing constitutes one of the categories that consumers purchase in order to express who you are for external appraisal. (Niinimäki, 2010) Thus, the desire to renew and display one's outward form according to changing fashion trends is in conflict with what sustainable consumption involves and makes the process of acting sustainable much more difficult.

For these reasons, the purpose of this study is to investigate how different sustainable branding strategies are reflected on the consumption experience of sustainable clothing brands. In order to unravel the given purpose, this study addresses the following research question: Which attribute of sustainable branding strategies (i.e. functional- or emotional attributes) has the strongest influence on consumers' brand experience?

In order to answer the research question, two concepts will be theoretically outlined: sustainable branding strategies as well as the concept of sustainable consumption experience. It is important to investigate this topic in order to gain insight into how the progress of unsustainable fashion brands can be impeded. By discerning how consumers experience sustainable branding strategies one can add knowledge to the discussion of sustainable branding and how it eventually can become a mainstream alternative. At present, there is little doubt about the strategic importance a well-defined brand identity provides. However, the relation between sustainable branding strategies and the consumption experience has hitherto received scarce attention within the field of sustainable

clothing. Thus, an understanding of such issues would further be very useful to marketing managers in future planning strategies for their brands. For this study, phenomenological in-depth interviews will be employed in order to complement the theory and to evaluate the pre-set research question.

This paper opens with a review of literature concerning sustainable branding strategies as well as the concept of sustainable consumption experience. Next, I describe the research methodology. Then, the findings from in-depth interviews with consumers are presented. Finally, a description of the theoretical and practical applications of the findings is stated, and conclusions are drawn.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this part, important and relevant theories that pertain to the relationship between sustainable branding strategies and the consumption experience will be cited. The section will start off by defining sustainable branding and will further delve deeper into the two dimensions of sustainable branding strategies. Lastly, a thorough description of the sustainable consumption experience within the field of clothing will be unravelled.

### **Sustainable branding**

The general definition of sustainable branding commonly refers to the process of integrating and maintaining an identity of the social, environmental and financial dimensions of a business that reflects added value with regard to environmental and social benefits for the consumer. (Belz and Peattie, 2009) However, branding of sustainable products is complicated given that businesses must deliver benefits on three levels that include utilitarian benefits such as quality, value and convenience,

environmental and societal benefits as well as benefits that permit consumers to feel that they collectively are contributing to a community that shares their beliefs and values. (Martin and Schouten, 2012) In a similar vein, Ottman et al. (2010) emphasise that sustainable branding must satisfy two needs: improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction. By exaggerating either at the expense of the other can unequivocally result in an undesirable state that is a consequence of businesses' tunnel vision. Thus, a common pitfall for companies is to stress a product's features and functions too hard instead of adapting to consumers' needs and expectations of the product. This phenomenon is typically termed "green marketing myopia", meaning that a "myopic" focus is doomed to failure since consumers select products that offer benefits they desire rather than emphasising the sustainable attributes of the product. Instead, research indicates that successful sustainable branding incorporate proposed actions that are able to offer mainstream appeal by competing on the

same consumer value as any other non-sustainable products. (ibid.) In addition, scholars have determined that sustainable branding must maintain an authentic brand story as unconfirmed social and environmental claims are plausible to be exposed and could consequently harm the established brand image. (Martin and Schouten, 2012; Ottman et al., 2010)

### **Sustainable branding strategies**

In the matter of sustainable branding strategies, the emphasis is placed on an active communication and differentiation of the brand through its environmentally sound attributes (Hartmann et al., 2006), as sustainable products will not be distinguished or commercially successful if the green attributes fail to be effectively communicated (Coddington, 1993). However, in order to tap into the domain of sustainable branding strategies one cannot overlook some traditional principles regarding branding that today's sustainable branding strategies stems from.

A wide variety of scholars have long acknowledged that the way in which consumers respond to a branding strategy should be regarded from two perspectives, as it seems that consumers' needs and motives are triggered by different factors (e.g. Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Park et al., 1986). These factors derive from the traditional assumption that consumers respond to either rational- or emotional motives when considering a purchase or a brand (Katz, 1960; Mittal, 1983) According to Bhat and Reddy (1998) the rational approach presupposes that consumers act in a rational manner, indicating that they do a thorough scanning and evaluation of each attribute in a product category and competing brands in order to finally arrive at a judgment to decide on the optimal brand - the rational approach does consequently not capture the more hedonic or emotional elements that could be attached to some products.

Thus, in contrast to the rational approach, the emotional approach captures that consumers' motives are emotional in nature. In this regard, consumers are likely to be persuaded to consider a brand if it resonates with their personal desire for expressing themselves (Bhat and Reddy, 1998). Similarly, Park et al., (1986) stress that these two differences in consumer motivations can be categorized as being either functional or symbolic in nature and they start out from the assumption that functional motivations pertains to specific and practical consumption whereas symbolic motivations are related to self-image and social identification. Consequently, brands could be positioned to satisfy consumers' motivations for being either functional or symbolic in nature.

Drawing from the dialogue above, the given assumption about functional- and symbolic attributes has further gained increased attention in the concept of sustainable branding strategies (e.g. Hartmann et al., 2006; Cummins et al., 2014). Similar to Park et al. (1986), Hartmann et al. (2006) stress how a sustainable branding strategy can serve from emphasising functional and/or emotional benefits. Sustainable brand strategies are thus classified as either functional or emotional where the functional strategy aims to build brand associations by delivering information on environmentally sound attributes. More specifically, a sustainable branding strategy that put an emphasis on functional attributes are characterised by providing relevant environmental advantages of the product compared to competing conventional products and may refer to production processes, product use and product elimination. (Hartmann et al., 2006) A sustainable branding strategy that stresses emotional branding benefits might, on the other hand, effect consumers' more affective stimuli and facilitate the process of associating the brand with emotional contents. Following the structure outlined

by Hartmann et al. (2006), they further capture different dimensions of emotional benefits by stressing three different types of emotional brand attributes that a sustainable branding strategy can be based on. The first type include a feeling of well-being or “warm glow”, which implies that the consumers perceive a feeling of contentment when acting in an altruistic manner, which further has been stressed by Ritov and Kahnemann (1997). Specifically, the feeling is stimulated when environmentally conscious consumers experience personal satisfaction by contributing to a better environment by participating in the collective effort. The second type pertains more to an external satisfaction as expressive benefits will materialize through the socially visible consumption of sustainable brands, i.e., environmentally conscious consumers experience personal satisfaction by displaying their environmental consciousness to their peers. (Hartmann et al., 2006; Belz and Dyllik, 1996) Finally, the third type of emotional benefits is by both Hartmann et al. (2006) and Kals et al. (1999) argued to be of importance concerning feelings of harmonization and to feel in touch with nature. These nature-related benefits are normally evoked through a portrayal of the brand as “nature-loving” and emphasises the feeling of being one with nature. Notably, brands aiming to capture consumers through this manner, benefits from embedding the brand in green imaginary, aiming to evoke vicarious nature experiences as emotional brand benefits. According to Hartmann et al. (2006), the nature-related emotional benefits serves the purpose of convincing consumers of sustainable attributes in an efficient manner, as consumers in general experience feelings of wellbeing and joy when they are in contact with natural environments.

Furthermore, research within the marketing field has recently stressed the alternative of incorporating more elements into the

mission of unravelling sustainable branding strategies, as it appears that the traditional emotional- and functional branding strategies could be inadequate in delivering sufficient value and benefit for the consumer. Instead, Martin and Väistö (2016) have in their research studied whether two other factors could be of importance and determinant for consumers when considering sustainable brands and products, namely hedonic and aesthetic factors. Similar to the emotional branding strategies considered earlier, both hedonic and aesthetics factors aim to embrace the more affective aspects of the consumers’ mind. Although, as Martin and Väistö (2016) point out, the common view of emotional branding strategies typically fail to incorporate the importance of catering consumers’ need for the pleasurable aspects of consumption as well. By providing a pleasurable consumption experience along with sustainable benefits, Martin and Väistö (2016) indicate that it will ultimately bring about the joy of purchasing and owning into focus, which could be pivotal in providing an understanding for why consumers do not walk their talk when consuming sustainably. Although, the aspects of hedonic and aesthetic elements are nonetheless well connected to the definition of an emotional branding strategy provided by Hartmann et al. (2006). Thus, it can be suggested that the recently added aspects of aesthetics and hedonics function as a subcategory of the traditional definition of an emotional branding strategy and consequently provide a more nuanced apprehension of what the emotional aspect of it might entail.

However, the difference between hedonic and aesthetic factors is nuanced. Yet, the hedonic factors assume that the experience of consuming a product is pleasurable and it could either derive from the product and its qualities or the consumer’s personal understanding of the product. The aesthetic

factors pertain to the external attributes to which the consumer regard as compelling and beautiful. Although, both hedonic and aesthetic factors are substantially connected and one could argue that an aesthetic experience eventually leads to a hedonic response. Common for both appeals is that they embrace the importance of fun, excitement and pleasure in the consumption experience. (Martin and Väistö, 2016)

The issue about whether functional- or emotional (or symbolic) brand attributes should be stressed has been an important topic of discussion but has hitherto not reached a general agreement. A large body research emphasise the use of rational persuasion strategies in sustainable marketing, assuming that the consumer's high involvement regarding environmental issues is a consequence of a growing environmental consciousness and consumers would ultimately respond to functional branding strategies that provide detailed information on environmental product benefits, capable of satisfying the consumer's informational need. (Peattie, 1995; Cope and Winward, 1991; Kinnear et al., 1974) However, there is no general agreement in this question. Several studies show only a limited influence of rational factors, such as environmental knowledge, while demonstrating a significant influence of affective factors when it comes to consumers' ability to engage in a brand (e.g. Smith et al., 1995; Davis, 1993; Martin and Väistö, 2016). Consequently, these authors recommend sustainable branding strategies that include affective components. As Coddington (1993) points out, sustainable branding also implies satisfying emotional need and building an affective relationship with the customer. However, the proposition that brand can either be functional or emotional in their appeal to consumers has also been questioned, as these notions do not have to be approached as two distinct concepts. Rather, functionality and emotionality

could complement one another, as pointed out by Hartmann et al. (2006). It is further stressed by Hartmann et al. (2006) that an exclusively functional sustainable branding strategy would be inadequate in providing individual benefits to customers, and limit the brand's possibilities for brand differentiation. Similarly, a purely emotional sustainable branding strategy could possibly lead to vague interpretations of the sustainable efforts a business undertakes. For these reasons, Hartmann et al. (2006) suggest that a sustainable branding strategy benefits from incorporating both functional and emotional strategies.

### **The sustainable consumption experience – a new focus**

A wide variety of scholars have approached the difficulties that sustainable consumption comprises by stressing the way in which sustainable beliefs do not necessarily correspond or transfer into acting sustainably at all time. For instance, Holt (2012) argues that political regulations on macro-level are required in order to construct a change in the current consumption behaviour. In a similar vein, Sanne (2002) stresses that consumers are willing to engage in sustainable consumption but are rather locked-in by external circumstances. These external factors are materialized in a society that favours a work-and-spend lifestyle, which impedes the likelihood of considering sustainable alternatives. The level of knowledge has also been set to be of relevance in predicting sustainable consumption, as Coddington et al. (2010) stress that sustainable decisions are affected by which degree of knowledge and access to information the consumer possesses. Naturally, all of these findings are of importance and contribute to understanding consumers and assist companies in the formation of sustainable branding strategies. Although, prior

research is still lacking a valid rationale for describing why consumers do not walk their talk and recent research suggests that it necessitates a change of focus. Instead, the focus should lie in providing fun, beauty and a positive consumption experience alongside with providing sustainable benefits, which in turn could facilitate the process of bringing out the pleasure of purchasing sustainable products. (Martin and Väistö, 2016)

By shedding light on the pleasurable aspects of consuming, Soper (2007) further means that consumers will latently contemplate sustainable commitments as well. More specifically, Soper (2007) claims that when consuming in an affluent manner, consumer would subsequently aim for an improved quality of life, which further includes reduction of unpleasant by-products of unsustainable consumption (e.g. pollution, health risks, excessive waste and aesthetic impact on the environment). This apprehension consequently implies that the main focus should lie on the consumer experience itself when reflecting on sustainable consumption. Consumption as experience does traditionally emphasise the characteristics of consumer behaviour that refer to the affective, multisensory and fantasy-triggering aspects of one's experiences with brands or products (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). Similarly, Carù and Cova (2005) stress that one cannot overlook the importance of the emotional experience of buying and owning as consumers certainly are feelers as well as thinkers. The importance of capturing consumers' emotional appeals has also proved efficient in terms of creating long-lasting bonds between consumers and brands, resulting in increased commitment and repurchase

intention. (Thomson et al., 2005; Grisgraffe and Nguyen, 2016)

As part of the theoretically outlined concept of consumption experience the notion of pleasure is embedded. In a wide definition, pleasurable consumption refers to whether the consumption of a product or experience is pleasurable. As might be expected, the criteria upon which the level of pleasure can be set is based on the qualities inherent from the product or event itself as well as the consumer's personal interpretation and experience of it. (Alba and Williams, 2013) In addition, aesthetic and hedonic aspects are according to Martin and Väistö (2016) of significant relevance in understanding the consumption experience and the concept of pleasure, where the aesthetic aspects refer to how consumers find brands or products appealing in an artistic manner and hedonic aspects simply refer to how enjoyable the interaction with a brand or product is. The aesthetic appeals become particularly evident in the consumption of clothes, given that clothing constitute 'high involvement' goods that consumer purchase to serve the purpose of expressing whom you are. (McCracken, 1988) From a sustainable perspective, Beard (2008) maintains that clothes do not only have to be produced ethically but they also have to fit the consumer's aesthetic needs. Thus, clothing brands face a difficult task in satisfying consumer's aesthetics, expressive and psychological needs as well as simultaneously provide sustainable benefits for the consumer. Given that consumers mainly understand brands from an aesthetic and symbolic point of view (Alba and Williams, 2013; Moisander and Personen, 2002), brands would benefit from incorporating sustainability in similar manner, which will be aimed to be unravelled more in detail in this study.



## **METHOD**

Given consumers' ambivalent and indecisive behaviour when consuming sustainably, a qualitative approach was adopted based on phenomenological interviews in order to thoroughly capture how sustainable branding strategies affect consumers' brand experience. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) are among those who argue that phenomenology is most appropriate when research is involved in examining the meaning of a phenomenon. Seeing that phenomenological interviews would provide valuable insights into the experiences and feelings of consumers with regard to sustainable branding strategies, the method was consequently chosen as relevant and appropriate for investigating the matter more in detail.

A series of interviews were conducted with eight volunteer self-declared sustainable consumers - the participants were selected based on the requisite that they qualify themselves as sustainable minded consumers in order to facilitate the dialogue regarding the given purpose of this research. However, the participants were identified based on the snowballing technique and the procedure followed the directions stated by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), who indicate that the researcher will interview one person who in turn will suggest others that seem suitable to be included in the study. Consequently, the first person participating in this study was asked to name others that could be included in the study and so it continued. Prior to the interviews, the participants were asked to consider a couple of sustainable clothing brands that they particularly cherish and care for. This process facilitated the dialogue during the interview due to the fact that the participants benefited from being directed by their own agenda rather than my own. The fact that the participants already had

contemplated some brands made it possible to achieve a flowing conversation and in an open-ended approach I encouraged the participants to describe actual experiences related to their general experiences of their favoured brands. The questions treated the subject of sustainable clothing consumption. Specifically, the participants were asked to describe how a brand should act and communicate in order to capture them as consumers. As the interviews were characterised by conversational quality rather than by a predetermined standard procedure, questions were raised from the course of the conversation. Although, a loose set of questions were determined on beforehand in order to achieve equal conditions for all participants (McCracken, 1988). However, as Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) stress, it is worth remembering that the narratives and the experiences the participants are sharing during the phenomenological interviews are often not simply made up impulsively but may have been told, retold and refined on a number of occasions, in a number of different contexts and with a number of different audiences. Therefore, instead of interpreting the participants' answers word for word, questions were asked to encourage their elaboration that could facilitate the process of interpreting the answers in a more creditable manner. In accordance with the recommendations of Thompson et al. (1989), the conducted interviews were held in settings where the participants felt at ease and comfortable in discussing their experiences. Thus, the interviews were conducted in the homes of the participants or in a calm and undisturbed environment familiar to the participants. The interviews lasted for approximately 40 minutes with the longest being 80 minutes. The participants consisted of five women and three men and varied in age by a factor of approximately 20 years. All interviews were audio-

recorded and transcribed and all participants were further assured of anonymity. Table 1 provides a summary of the participants.

This study is intended to examine how sustainable-minded consumers experience sustainable branding strategies. In exploring the application of existing theoretical constructs concerning sustainable branding strategies and consumers' brand experience, there is a deductive aspect to the analysis of the data. However, the adopted phenomenological approach allows participants to describe stories, examples and scenarios that illustrate the nature of their understandings (Thompson et al., 1989), which fully informed the process of the analysis. Through this approach, the collected data was analysed through framing of codes, reflecting the theoretical constructs of sustainable branding strategies outlined earlier. More specifically, the analysis process followed the recommendations provided by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008). Thus, the transcribed data was coded and categorized into themes in order to develop an analysis. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) further suggest that in order to acquire a better understanding of the concepts and validity, the coded data is matched with relevant theory, which was followed accordingly. Although, throughout the analysis process, some aspects settled by Thompson et al. (1989)

were also taken into consideration. For instance, particular attention was paid to stress an emic approach, meaning that the interpretations of the data rely on the participants' own terms rather than the researcher's. Thus, throughout the analysis, one tried to eliminate as many own interpretations as possible and keeping to the participant's own description. However, this procedure further implicates some difficulties, as the participants' version or understanding of a given phenomenon does not have to be true (Thompson et al., 1989), which in turn can affect the credibility of this study. Furthermore, due to the time and extent of this study, the conducted research was limited to investigate consumers in the Swedish market. Therefore, one must keep in mind that the data obtained in this study only give an indication of how a larger study in a different market would turn out.

<i>Alias</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Maria	23	Student
Sara	26	Student
Ida	27	Entrepreneur
Peter	28	Marketer
Anna	31	Journalist
Carl	35	Engineer
Ellen	40	Project leader
David	42	Physician

**Table 1: The participants**

## FINDINGS

In order to explore and approach the given purpose on how sustainable branding strategies influences consumers' brand experience, three themes were outlined from the phenomenological interviews that draw an analogy between the theoretical framework.

### **The dialectics between the emotional and functional attributes of sustainable branding strategies**

Among the answers from the respondents, one could distinguish a certain inconsistency in the way they respond to the different dimensions of sustainable branding strategies, which confirms the divergent notions emerged from previous

researchers (e.g. Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Hartmann et al., 2006). Although, the answers could determine a modest preference for the more emotional benefits of a sustainable branding strategy, which will be illustrated below:

“The sensation of vicinity and closeness is for me really important. You always get positive vibes and associations to nature and that makes me feel good and even smart in a way. So I think that Nudie Jeans for instance really benefits from having their photo shoots shot here in the proximity of Gothenburg as they want to convey that they have the nature in the immediate area and that it is here that is has been established, which is a consequent theme for those brands who are sustainable and that I experience as authentic and ‘here and now’.” - Peter, 28

“I think that the image that Filippa K conveys is very appealing. It feels Scandinavian and they have clean lines. They also have like these subtle elements of clear water, which compels to me. It feels very crispy and I get the impression of that it is overall very thought-through.” - Ellen, 40

“For me it is more about a feeling I get, I mean I would like a brand to be kind of modest and humble in their image, as I feel that that goes hand in hand with what sustainability means to me. If a brand would have had a very like garish and hortatory approach when it comes to promoting sustainability I would not feel as harmonious with the brand and I would most likely not feel satisfied carrying it.” - Anna, 31

Above, Peter, Ellen and Anna all touched upon the more emotional aspects of a sustainable branding strategy, suggesting that they are more concerned with the image of a brand embedded in pleasant imaginary of natural environments, in accordance with the description provided by Hartmann et al. (2006). Peter meant that the sense of proximity and the feeling of being in touch with nature is an important element for his likeliness to engage with a brand. It could further be assumed that it brings about a feeling of satisfaction, as he stated that a sustainable brand that portrays

itself with a concept that pertain to nature environments provides him with positive associations, which is in line with how both Hartmann et al. (2006) and Kals et al. (1996) define one of the dimensions of an emotional branding strategy. Specifically, Hartmann et al. (2006) stress how emotional benefits come about by emphasising feelings of harmonization and to feel one with nature, which further coheres with Peter’s experience.

Ellen also points to the notion that she embraces brands’ that emphasises the more natural aspects of their sustainable branding strategy, or at least that she approves of the idea of brands’ stressing natural attributes such as water in order to convey their sustainable approach. Telling from the excerpt above, however, it further seems like she obtains the impression of the brand to be more thought-through when emphasising attributes such as water elements, which is similar to how Peter preferably desires a brand to have a consequent theme. As mentioned previously, Park et al. (1986) maintains how a brand benefits from being consistent over time, i.e., brands should hold on to one approach in a long-time perspective in order to strengthen and reinforce the brand concept over time. They further stress how this in turn can facilitate the process of getting consumers to understand what the brand can do for them. Most likely, both Ellen and Peter experience that a brand becomes easier to grasp when portraying a clear and consistent image, which surely could come out in terms such as “consequent theme” and “thought-through”, as found in the excerpts above

Anna also approached the feelings of Ellen and Peter in terms of being attracted to a more subtle and modest portrayal of sustainability. Although, the statement of Anna is more of a disclaim, meaning that she asserts what she does not wish from a brand, namely an approach that shows off their sustainable approach in an explicit

manner. To clarify, this implies that Anna does not adopt the functional attributes of a sustainable branding strategy that typically would circle around stressing information about production processes or product elimination (Hartmann et al., 2006; Cummins et al., 2014). However, Anna further conveys an impression of feeling disharmonic or at unease when dealing with brands whom she does not take pleasure in or who's sustainable approach she does not approve of. This implies that the importance of consuming right clothes might be of big importance for Anna, as the contrary would entail feelings of unease. Thus, Anna's approach to sustainable branding strategies is by no doubt triggered by emotional attributes, but more specifically, she is triggered by dimensions of the emotional attributes that pertains to a kind of external satisfaction. This external satisfaction is stressed by both Hartmann et al. (2006) and Belz and Dyllik (1996) who claim that expressive benefits will materialize through the socially visible consumption of sustainable brands, i.e., sustainable consumers experience personal satisfaction by displaying their environmental consciousness to their peers. Similarly, Anna would not feel comfortable carrying a garment from a brand from who she does not stand behind. Moreover, the feelings that Anna experiences can presumably be related to what Ottman et al. (2010) stress regarding the "green marketing myopia" – i.e., by stressing the environmental focus too hard companies often fail in delivering sufficient value for the consumer in terms of other desirable benefits. According to Martin and Väistö (2016), sustainable consumption further ought to be pleasurable in order for consumers to assimilate the sustainable benefits the brand where the aesthetic experience is set to be vital. It is further the consumer's personal understanding of consuming a product that determines the pleasurable experience. Thus, Anna's clear disclaim of brands who state the sustainable efforts a

bit too obvious, displays that she is not approving of this branding strategy in order for her to enjoy consuming the brand's products.

Among the majority of the respondents, a preference for emotional branding strategies when portraying sustainability prevailed. Although, some respondents initially indicated a favourable attitude towards emotional attributes but later concluded that they are inclined to be positive towards more concrete directions as well.

“ I guess that you somewhere buy much of the image – I think that you do that so much more than you are even aware about. And that does not necessarily have to be about images but also about how texts are formulated. At the same time, in these days when one tries to be very critical of sources, it is so much easier to assimilate a number on something that says like ‘we use 50 per cent less water in our production’ or ‘we offer this hourly wage’ and so on.” - Maria, 23

“In a way, I think that brands benefits from not being too obvious about stating it [sustainability] because you think that it is just something they say. But on the other hand, if they do not tell you about it, it is only the persons who scopes for it that will find it” - Sara, 26

The two excerpts above illustrate how some of the respondents assimilate a combination of emotional and functional attributes of a sustainable branding strategy. As Hartmann et al. (2006) point out, a combined strategy using emotional and functional attributes is the most efficient one for conveying sustainability. Interestingly, the two excerpts above derive from the respondents Maria and Sara who represent the most devoted sustainable consumer and the least devoted respectively. The prerequisite for all respondents to participate in the study was that they were engaged in sustainable clothing consumption. Although, to which extent the level of knowledge or

engagement arrive at can naturally differ widely and Maria does represent the ethical hardliner of this study, whereas Sara represents the least conscious one. Thus, it is possible to postulate that functional attributes are welcomed both for conscious consumers who wishes to see statements black on white and also for less conscious consumers who are in need of some guidance in order to facilitate the process of buying sustainable clothing.

Among all of the respondents, none showed any signs of assimilating solely functional attributes. Rather, solely functional attributes seemed to awake questions about trustworthiness and authenticity. According to some respondents, they even declared that a brand would lose their sense of style if stressing the sustainability claims too hard, implying that the stylish and aesthetic elements to a brand are important. In a similar vein, Hartmann et al. (2006) stress that an exclusively functional sustainable branding strategy would be inadequate in providing individual benefits to the consumer, and limit the brand's possibilities for brand differentiation.

### **Sensations and desires discerning from experiences with sustainable clothing brand**

The findings recognized in this section are initially illustrated with responses from two of the participants:

“I want the design to be simple and attractive and not too complicated. And I mean, it got to say ‘click’. But well yeah, simple, clean. Not too much doodles and stuff.” - Sara, 26

“But I also think it is important the way the clothes look. I would never buy any ugly clothes just because it would be sustainable, but maybe one should do that too. But you don't feel at ease when wearing ugly clothes in a way and I do not actually believe that sustainable clothing has to be ugly at all. “ - Ellen, 40

In line with how Moisander and Personen (2002) express that there is more to the purchase than simply the need, both Ellen and Sara indicate that they would not carry garments that they do not find appealing, which further implies that they do not consume solely for the functional need. Similarly, Beard (2008) suggests that sustainable clothing also have to suit consumers' aesthetic needs, which clearly seem to be a decisive factor among the respondents. As Ellen points out, it is not a question of one or the other, which further is stressed by Solomon and Rabolt (2004). Discerning from the quote of Sara, the phrase that ‘it got to say click’ illustrate that she in some way feel that the brands she consumes need to respond to her own image in order to feel comfortable. Moisander and Personen (2002) mean that when consuming sustainable clothing it entails deeper reasons such as constructing identity and by consuming sustainably one does vicariously exude a certain mode of expression, which explain why the respondent in this study conveyed a concern for carrying brands that felt right to them. Furthermore, as clothing constitute a ‘high involvement’ good, the consumer purchase in order to take possession of the style of life they aspire (McCracken, 1998), which further explains why the respondents state that clothing constitute a vital factor for expressing who you are. According to Martin and Väistö (2016), aesthetic attributes constitute an important element for consumer to fully enjoy the experience of a brand or products. This claim resonates well with the apprehensions of both Sara and Ellen, as their consumption experience would not be as satisfactory if they were to engage in products they do not find attractive or compelling.

### **Enactment of sustainable branding strategies and consumption experiences**

The foregoing sections highlighted a focus on how sustainable clothing brand can act

as a mediator of expressing identity and external recognition. The following excerpts illustrate how sustainable branding strategies can bring about and facilitate the consumption experience of a brand.

“When considering a new brand I would naturally check what kind of sustainable compliances they have.. But then it is perhaps more that I store that information, and then the next time, I have that information in my mind when I am going to buy something. I already know then what’s good and what’s not good about the brand.” - David, 42

“It is Nudie Jeans’ idea that I like. I really like that they incorporate a circular thinking into their whole business and that they provide the opportunity of mending your jeans once they break. They have really succeeded in that and I think it makes me even more inclined to buy from Nudie Jeans.” - Carl, 35

“Fjällräven feels like a brand that is very focused on that it should be practical and sustainable from a time perspective. I’m wearing this jacket that belonged to my mum during the seventies. And it looks completely new, it’s unbelievable! So I think it is much about the services, I guess it is not about Fjällräven itself, but you can turn the jackets in and get them rewaxed and that do a lot for the garments to make them last a long time. But actually, I do not actually know that much about how their essential production looks like but my experience from the brand is that they have a very long time perspective incorporated to their products” - Maria, 23

David and Maria clearly articulate a lack in scrutinizing a brand once the brand has acquired their trust and confidence. Consequently, it means that they refrain from consistently challenge and question a brand and that they at some point instead consign to the brand. Throughout all the interviews, emotional aspects were embraced and preferred by all participants. As in the excerpt from Maria above, she clearly state that she is not really aware about how the production processes look like, but she’s still willing to engage in the

brand given the previous experiences of her mum, implying that the emotional aspects play a large part in an eventual purchase consideration, as she is undeniably confident in the brand even though she is lacking more tangible evidence of the sustainable claims. Further, she gets the impression of that Fjällräven emphasises long-sightedness as a core attribute, which most likely is not something that the brand states specifically but something that Maria has formulated herself from subtle notes discharged from the brand. Similarly, throughout the interview with David, one could unravel that he assimilated the emotional aspects much more than the functional, which implies that the feelings and information gathered when considering a purchase are centred around emotional attributes. Thus, it become interesting to draw the interference that emotional attributes are more likely to make a lasting impression on consumers and eventually make them more engages in the consumption experience, as positive feelings and experiences associated to a brand are stored intellectually in the consumer (Thomson et al., 2005; Grisgraffe and Nguyen, 2016).

Given the excerpts of both Carl and Maria, they mention how they appreciate the services of both Fjällräven and Nudie Jeans, namely the possibility for having the garments treated and mended also after purchase, which Carl explains as satisfactory as it closes the loop. As Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) point out, the consumption experience is about affective, multisensory and fantasy-triggering aspects of one’s experience with brands. Similarly, Martin and Väistö (2016) point to the notion that one cannot overlook the importance of including some elements of fun in order for consumers to fully benefit from a sustainable consumption experience. Thus, the services that Nudie Jeans provides can presumably constitute an element that goes

beyond the ordinary offerings of a sustainable brand and consequently leaves Carl with a more fulfilling consumption experience. One can further argue that Carl benefits from assimilating hedonic attributes when engaging with Nudie Jeans, as he asserts that he really approves

of the fact that the brand has gone that extra mile in order to provide the service for its customers. Further, by stressing hedonic attributes of a product, it is according to Martin and Väistö (2016) set to make consumers more inclined to enjoy sustainable products.

## **DISCUSSION**

As noted earlier, despite sustainability having achieved recognition from business as a topic worthy of consideration, this acceptance has not necessarily been manifested in business planning or in business strategies (Shet et al., 2011). Consequently, one of the objectives of this study is to investigate brands' portrayal from a sustainable perspective. Specifically, the purpose was to investigate how different sustainable branding strategies influence the consumption experience within the field of sustainable clothing. To that end, I ascertained both consumer judges' ability to assimilate different sustainable branding strategies as well as whether and how such strategies would affect the consumption experience, utilizing the answers accumulated from phenomenological interviews.

The first important notion the findings revealed was the respondents' clear favour towards the emotional attributes of sustainable branding strategies. The preference for emotional attributes was conveyed in terms of emphasising attributes that rhyme with associations of nature. Further, these attributes could be very subtly performed too, as unravelled in the findings. A brand could for instance portray itself by using images of water elements that according to my findings immediately got associated with sustainability. Therefore, this finding becomes interesting as consumers' seem to be willing to give credit to brands who appear to be trying incorporate elements of sustainability into their messages even

though the message per se might not have appeared to be main subject for them. Nonetheless, this approach is consistent with what previous research states about how consumers do not respond to sustainability claims in the first place but the offered product must predominately capture elements of style and aesthetics (Solomon and Rabolt, 2004; Beard, 2008). Previous research has further recommended that brands should treat emotional- and functional attributes at a continuum, i.e., they should be treated separately as they may accordingly be interfering and eliminate the benefits of each other (Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Park et al., 1986). As distinguished by the findings in this study, the conclusion can be drawn that consumers' favour the emotional attributes more than functional in a sustainable branding strategy. However, that these two attributes would be treated separately is not coherent with the findings in this study. Instead, I propose that brands should emphasise emotional attributes to the largest extent but further complement this approach with incorporating some functional attributes. Correspondingly, Hartmann et al. (2006) stress that emotional and functional attributes can complement each other. They further point out that an emotional branding strategy in sustainable branding had a stronger influence but at the same time they conclude that an exclusively emotional branding strategy will not be the most efficient branding strategy, as both dimensions had positive effect on consumer's overall judgement about the

brand (although the emotional strategy was stronger). Instead, they proposed that a combined functional and emotional strategy lead to the strongest responses on consumers' ability to formulate an opinion about sustainability. (ibid) The findings in this study indicate similar outcomes. However, I would like to add to the discussion that one would have to consider that one cannot capture all conscious consumers similarly. This idea is supported by one interesting outcome of this study's result, namely that it was among the most conscious consumer - the ethical hardliner, and the least conscious consumer that the need for combining emotional attributes with functional attributes appeared. Among the other respondents (i.e. the intermediate layer), no need for a combined emotional and functional strategy emerged, but solely for an emotional strategy. Thus, could this result be an indication of that a combined emotional and functional sustainable strategy is most appropriate when addressing consumers who either are extremely environmentally conscious and demand from brands that they state what they do and that consumers who are less conscious and could need some guidance in their purchase decisions? These speculations are beyond the scope of this study but are still an important factor to consider. Nonetheless, drawing from this study, one can conclude that it is important for brands to consider that they cannot generalise consumers on the assumption that everyone will respond likely but would have to consider the role that prior environmental knowledge might play in determining whether consumers are willing to give brands the benefit of a doubt of sustainability claims. From a marketing perspective, this would signify that when forming a sustainable branding strategy one would have to consider that by employing a sustainable branding strategy, whether it is a functional-, emotional-, or combined strategy one cannot expect to capture all consumers as it is likely that the

ability to assimilate different attributes partly depends on personal judgements and partly on prior environmental knowledge.

As established by Martin and Väistö (2016), the hedonic and aesthetic attributes of a sustainable branding strategy is set to be of vital importance in order for consumers to engage in sustainable brands. The hedonic and aesthetic attributes are further set to be elements included in the traditional emotional branding strategies and the results of this study indicate that consumers approves more of the emotional attributes of a sustainable branding strategy. Although, the results further indicated that by incorporating hedonic elements to the overall brand concept, the consumer is more inclined to benefit from a pleasant consumption experience of the brand. As determined from the findings of this study, consumers are more likely to engage in a brand that provides that additional service. For instance, the participants explicated a clear appraisal for Fjällräven and Nudie jeans due to the fact that they are able to offer services that take care of the consumer's clothing after use. Thus, one can conclude that this offering constitute an unexpected and fun element to the brand that makes the experience of the brand more worthwhile. According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), the consumption experience is enhanced by the affective, multisensory and fantasy-triggering aspects of a brand. In a similar vein, Martin and Väistö (2016) suggest that the focus of sustainable branding strategies should lie in providing fun, beauty and a positive consumption experience alongside with providing sustainable benefits. The findings in this study align with the reasoning of both Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) and Martin and Väistö (2016). It is clear that in order for a brand to successfully reach out with their sustainable efforts one would have to do that in a manner that comprises elements of fun and innovative thinking in order for the consumer to appreciate the



consumption of the brand. Simply, the main focus should consequently lie on a positive consumption experience itself when addressing sustainable claims, which in turn could facilitate the process of bringing out the pleasure of purchasing sustainable products.

Furthermore, one key finding drawn from and based upon from what was learnt from the compilation of the interviews, was that emotional attributes in a sustainable branding strategy seems to be of vital importance for providing consumers with a long-lasting impression of the brand, which in turn will have a positive influence on the consumption experience. The respondents clearly describe how the emotional attributes facilitate the process of engaging with a brand, which further can be applied to how Carù and Cova (2005) stress that one cannot overlook the importance of the emotional experience of buying and owning as consumers certainly are feelers as well as thinkers. Thus, this suggest that compared to functional attributes, emotional attributes will be stored longer in the consumer's mind and

## CONCLUSION

This study highlights the dialectics between emotional and functional branding strategies and their influence on the consumption experience of sustainable clothing brands. In summary, the qualitative study found that emotional attributes are superior when employing a sustainable branding strategy, as emotional attributes have the most significant impact on the overall consumption experience. Although, this study indicates that one would have to acknowledge the consumers prior knowledge to sustainability claims when targeting consumers as this study provides signs of that both high and relatively low knowledge about sustainability necessitate functional attributes as complement to the emotional

will aid the consumer in becoming more apt to engage with the brand again. According to Thomson et al. (2005) and Grisgraffe and Nguyen (2016), emotional attributes bring about more positive associations when reminded about the brand than what functional attributes would do, which could be one explanation to the superior effect that emotional attributes bring about when it comes to long-lasting impressions. Consequently, it is important for sustainable brands to take the emotional attributes into account when aiming for a long-lasting bond between them and their customers.

Lastly, the findings of this study suggest that brands benefit from incorporating a consistent and clear portrayal over time, i.e., they should hold on to one approach. Whether this might be an emotional-functional or combined strategy is of less importance. More important is that a brand portrays a consistent and stable approach over time as this helps consumer to understand what the brand can do for them, which is in line with what Park et al., (1986) further suggest.

attributes in order to make these consumers assimilate the brand.

The importance of incorporating hedonic and aesthetic attributes to a sustainable branding strategy that focuses on emotional attributes was further stressed in this study and the findings prove that the hedonic and aesthetic aspects are vital in providing an enjoyable consumption experience. Importantly, the findings underline the belief that consumers assimilates sustainability better when the focus lies in providing a fun and innovative consumption experience alongside with sustainable benefits, which in turn brings out a pleasurable consumption experience of sustainable

products. Furthermore, this study yielded the important insight that emotional attributes are superior when it comes to providing the consumer with a long-lasting impression of the brand as emotional attributes can be assimilated easier and provides a sense of familiarity to a larger extent than functional ones. Thus, the fact that emotional attributes are stored longer in the consumers mind, it further facilitates and strengthens the bond between brands and customers, as consumers already possess a clear and strong image of what the brand means to them and are therefore not required to contemplate the same process over again.

Given the definition of sustainable branding provided by Ottman et al. (2006), who emphasise that sustainable branding must satisfy the need of improved environmental quality as well as customer satisfaction, this study contributes to an alternative or extended way of defining sustainable branding. The findings of this study suggest that the definition of a sustainable brand should incorporate the importance of satisfying the need for the more pleasurable aspects of consumption. To incorporate elements of fun has according to this study shown that it facilitates the process of assimilating sustainable information and efforts.

## REFERENCES

- Alba, J., and Williams, E.F. (2013). Pleasure principles: A review of research on hedonic consumption. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 23(1), 2-18.
- Beard N. 2008. The branding of ethical fashion and the consumer: a luxury niche or mass-market reality? *Fashion Theory* 12(4): 447–468.
- Belz F., Peattie K.(2009): Sustainability Marketing: A Global Perspective. John Wiley & Sons.
- Belz, F. And Dyllik, T. (1996). "Ökologische positionierungsstrategien", in Tomczak, T.R. and Roosdorp, A. Positionierung – Kernentscheidung de Marketing, Thexis Verlag, St Gallen, pp. 170-9.
- Bhat, S. & Reddy, S.K., 1998. Symbolic and functional positioning of brands. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 15(1), pp.32–43.
- Carú, A., and Cova, B. (2005). The impact of service elements on the artistic experience: The case of classical music concerts. *International Journal of Arts Management*, January (1), 39-54.
- Coddington, W. (1993), *Environmental Marketing*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.
- Cope, D. and Winward, J. (1991), "Information failures in green consumerism", *Consumer Policy Review*, Vol. 1 No. 2, pp. 83-6.
- Cummins, S. et al., 2014. Investigating the Portrayal and Influence of Sustainability Claims in an Environmental Advertising Context. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 34(3), pp.332–348.
- Davis, J.J. (1993), "Strategies for environmental advertising", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 19-36.
- Eriksson, P., Kovalainen, A. (2008). *Qualitative Methods in Business Research*. Los Angeles: SAGE
- Grisgraffe, D. B., Nguyen, H.P. (2009). Antecedents of emotional attachment to brands. *Journal of Business Research* 64. 1052–1059
- Hartmann, P., Apaolaza-Ibañez, V. & Sainz, F.J.F., 2005. Green Branding Effects on Attitude: Functional versus Emotional Positioning Strategies. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 23(1), pp.9–29.
- Holbrook, M., and Hirschman, E. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9 (2), 132-140.
- Holt, D. (2012). Constructing sustainable consumption: From ethical values tot the cultural transformation of unsustainable markets. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political Science*, 644(1), 236-255.
- Jackson T. 2008. The challenge of sustainable lifestyles. In *State of the World, Innovations for the Sustainable Economy*, Worldwatch Institute. Norton: New York; 45–60.
- Kals, E., Schumacher, D. and Montada, L. (1999). Emotional affinity toward nature as a motivational basis to prtect nature. *Environment and Behaviour*, Vol 31 No. 2, 178-202.
- Katz, D. (1960), "The functional approach to the study of attitudes", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 24, pp. 163-204.
- Kinncar, T.C., Taylor, J.R. and Ahmed, S.A. (1974), "Ecologically concerned consumers: who are they?", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 38, April, pp. 20-4.
- McCracken , G. (1988). *Culture and Consumption. A New Approach to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities*. Indiana University Press: Bloomington; USA.
- Martin, Diane M., and Terhi Väistö. "Reducing the Attitude-Behavior Gap in Sustainable Consumption: A Theoretical Proposition and the American Electric Vehicle Market." *Marketing in and for a Sustainable Society*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2016. 193-213.
- Moisander J, Pesonen S. 2002. Narratives of sustainable ways of living: constructing the self and others as a green consumer. *Management Decision* 40(4): 329–342.
- Moisander, J. "Motivational complexity of green consumerism." *International journal of consumer studies* 31.4 (2007): 404-409.
- Mittal, B. (1983), "Understanding the bases and effects of involvement in the consumer choice process", doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1982.

Niinimäki, K., 2010. Eco-Clothing, consumer identity and ideology. *Sustainable Development*, 18(3), pp.150–162.

Ottman, J.A., Stafford, E.R., and Hartman, C.L. (2006). Avoiding Green Marketing Myopia: Ways to Improve Consumer Appeal for Environmentally Preferable Products, *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 48:5, 22-36.

Peattie, K. (1995), *Environmental Marketing Management*, Pitman Publishing,

Park, C.W., Jaworski, B.J. and MacInnis, D.J. (1986), “Strategic brand concept image management”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 50, October, pp. 135-45.

Polonsky, M.J., 2011. Transformative green marketing: Impediments and opportunities. *Journal of Business Research*, 64(12), pp.1311–1319.

Ritov, I. and Kahnemann, D. (1997), “How people value the environment: attitudes versus economic values”, in Bazerman, M.H., Messick, D.M., Tenbrunsel, A.E. and Wade-Benzoni, K.A. (Eds), *Environment, Ethics, and Behavior*, The New Lexington Press, San Francisco, CA, pp. 33-51.

Sanne, C. (2002). Willing consumers – or locked-in? Policies for a sustainable consumption. *Ecological Economics*, 42 (1), 273-287.

Sheth, J.N., Sethia, N.K. & Srinivas, S., 2011. Mindful consumption: A customer-centric approach

to sustainability. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(1), pp.21–39.

Smith, S.M., Haugtvedt, C.P. and Petty, R.E. (1994), “Attitudes and recycling: does the measurement of affect enhance behavioral prediction?”, *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 11 No. 4, pp. 359-74.

Solér, C. et al., 2015. Construction of silence on issues of sustainability through branding in the fashion market. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 31(1–2), pp.219–246.

Solomon M, Rabolt N. (2004). *Consumer Behaviour in Fashion*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Soper, K. (2007). Re-thinking the good life. The citizenship dimension of consumer disaffection with consumerism. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 7(2), 205-229.

Thomson, M., MacInnis, D.J., and Park C.W. (2005). The ties that bind: measuring the strength of consumers’ emotional attachments to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(1), 77-91.

Thompson, C. J., Locander, W. B., & Pollio, H. R. (1989). Putting Consumer Experience Back into Consumer Research: The Philosophy and Method of Existential-Phenomenology. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16 (2), 133-146.