

Brand transparency

A valuable tool for attracting consumers or a vulnerable
business strategy?

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Abstract

Brand Transparency is a relatively new concept that emerged in the 1980s (Kelley & Michela, 1980). It has become increasingly influential in determining a brand's key business operations and is perceived as a significant driver in business today. The purpose of the study was to determine "How can brand transparency be utilised to affect consumer purchase intention?" while investigating the perceived motives of brands.

The study generated insight into consumer behaviour and purchasing intention by investigating the role of brand transparency and the perceived motive for incorporating it into a brand's communication.

The study furthermore sought to investigate the perceived motives of a brand for implementing brand transparency by utilising the four motives of CSR implementation by Leonidou and Skarmeas (2017) derived from Attribution Theory (Kelley & Michela, 1980).

For methodology, the study applied the constructivist perspective to regard the nature of truth as subjective, as it depended on the opinions of the individual consumer. The study was conducted using a qualitative mono-method approach. Three focus-group interviews were conducted utilising a sociodemographic segment of Millennial, Scandinavian consumers.

Key findings:

The study's results suggest that several key factors must be present for brand transparency to affect consumer purchase intention. These key factors include reciprocal trust, accountability, and holistic brand transparency. If these factors are present, the level of trust will suggest a decrease in perceived scepticism and subsequently have the potential to affect purchase intention positively.

The study furthermore suggested that consumers tend to perceive the motives of brands to be mainly value-driven and altruistic, but also egoistic- and strategic-driven. The data collection of this thesis supports the suggestion of elongated scepticism if brands are perceived as having extrinsic motives, such as profit-driven, egoistic motives, rather than altruistic, value-driven motives. If consumers perceive brands to be value-driven, brand transparency will affect them positively.

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1. Introduction

In the past few years, brands have experienced a paradigm shift in the standard consumer-brand relationship. The change has caused the negotiating power to shift to the consumer. The concept of transparency is the uprising, a trending buzzword in both media and business releases (Yang & Battacchio, 2021). Consumers' increasing focus on the societal and economic environment causes companies to re-value their approach (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016).

Therefore, by 2022, many brands will invest their resources in more contemporary methods, such as producing transparency reports. Furthermore, the need has increased to include consumers through customer relations and touchpoints. These touchpoints and listening to consumer demand in terms of transparency aid in creating loyalty and trust in a brand. It is further stated that transparency is vital for a brand if you want loyal consumers nowadays. This is due to the fact that consumers want to know everything about a product and often involve themselves in their decision process (Kline, 2016).

Furthermore, consumers have developed more significant and specific expectations regarding the perceived quality and subsequent value their actions yield. If these expectations are not met, the consequences will become vocal and outspoken dissatisfaction, which creates unfavourable conditions for brands to operate in any given market. This aspect regards both globally present brands and brands representing small businesses. However, demand has arisen with the larger product-focused companies taking more accountability in their business efforts, which increases the need to spend more considerable resources that smaller brands can potentially not afford. Brand transparency is relevant for both small businesses and large businesses, as brand transparency as a trend has come to stay. The global conglomerate Google has cited brand transparency as "a corporate differentiator" and a critical factor in brand strategic positioning (De Ruiter, 2020). They predict brand transparency is becoming essential, from the supply chain to brands' marketing efforts, as consumers demand to be more included in the decision-making process.

Brands need to be held accountable for their actions, especially if they have direct implications for their consumers. Disclosing information - such as business operations, goals, values and sensitive data (like pricing, sourcing, and sales) - is a sign of a brand's accountability and transparency (Lee J. , 2020).

Consumers increasingly involve themselves with the values and communications of brands, thereby often constructing a belief of how brands should act. Attributions play a significant role in navigating personal beliefs and matching them with what brands offer. Usually, this is regarded as consumer behaviour on a more cognitive scale, with consumers perceiving a more significant loss if brands fail to meet their expectations (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Being fully transparent requires a willingness from brands to be vulnerable to their consumers. The need to establish more two-sided relationships between brands and consumers is also in demand, as consumers usually have little to say about what a brand does. Establishing a positive relationship between two parties, Rawlins (2008) further strengthens the consumer-brand relationship and consumers have an increasing desire to increase their role in brand communication (Rawlins, 2008). Companies must be transparent and authentic for consumers to trust the specific brand (Donlan, 2021). Furthermore, an essential aspect of today's society is the value of honesty, loyalty and trust. Brand transparency is emphasised greatly to create trust, which further creates loyalty (Lee J. , 2020).

It is believed that brand transparency can create lifelong consumers, as long as they are willing to project their true intentions and defer from lying to the consumers (Kline, 2016). In the modern, highly volatile and competitive markets, consumers can choose between various suppliers throughout the different industries. The brands cannot afford to risk losing loyal customers since a new brand will be more than willing to receive their business and promise consumers what they failed to provide. Furthermore, with the entrance of social media through the 2000s, a brand will face difficulty navigating negative reviews, as they will be significantly shared online. The brands, in turn, are expected to provide a social media presence to further interact with their consumers (Donlan, 2021). This is evident in brands being exposed online through inquisitive consumers or third parties with a social agenda to address real issues. This is especially apparent in the fast fashion industry. The need for transparency has never been higher due to pollution and human-rights violation while failing

to commit to change (The Guardian, 2021). Therefore, relationships between consumers and brands are now reliant on heavier investments and conditions focusing on transparency and complete honesty. Several sources, such as Rawlins (2008), discuss how brands must become vulnerable through transparency to reach that level of trust and loyalty from consumers in a sceptical daily setting (Rawlins, 2008).

Social media has also caused a surge in reviewing products while subsequently sharing their experience when having positive or negative experiences. This aspect displays how Word of Mouth marketing has combined with social media marketing, as many businesses have established a social media-based business strategy to meet modern trends. These reviews greatly influence a brand's perceived success and whether its product or the brand has gone viral. These experiences affect consumers' likelihood to share the products with others, as WOM can create or amplify scepticism or create a positive association (Keller, 2012).

Scepticism is also evident today, especially regarding brands being honest towards their consumers. This scepticism directly relates to brand transparency or the general lack thereof (Leonidou & Skarmas, 2013). The degree of scepticism further refers to consumers' willingness-to-punish a brand in the same way as if the brand is reviewed to be transparent would relate to consumers' willingness-to-reward (Sweetin, Knowles, Summey, & McQueen, 2013). In a physical setting, a consumer relies on available information or is affected by physical stimuli, such as the looks or price of a given product. Demand from consumers is to enhance transparency on the products and information on the brand to increase the general perception of brand transparency (Egels-Zandén & Hansson, 2015). This enables a consumer to make informed decisions based on important information.

Having provided the reader with the circumstances of the thesis research and adjacent topic, the structure of the thesis will be provided in the following section.

In Chapter 1. Introduction: the thesis provides the reader with relevant circumstances and general knowledge about Brand Transparency. This will aid the reader in gathering knowledge towards forming initial thoughts about the research topic without giving away too much. The Research Question and Research Statement are then presented, followed closely by topic delimitation and acknowledgement of any potential bias from the researchers. Finally, the gap

in current knowledge of brand transparency is addressed, while the purpose of the research is provided to conclude the chapter.

In Chapter 2. Literature Review: An extensive review of the existing literature on brand transparency has been conducted. This was done to aid the researchers in determining what would be interesting to investigate. It further assisted the researchers in narrowing their research statement. As it is a relatively new topic, articles and general publications were generally scarce, but they each provided valuable insight into brand transparency.

In Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework, the thesis outlines the theories and concepts deemed relevant to apply to this research in the Analysis (Chapter 5) and the Discussion (Chapter 6) chapters. The theories and concepts were carefully selected based on the literature review and provided a relevant framework to apply to the research.

In Chapter 4. Methodology, the appropriate research design was determined through the desired output of information. As the topic concerns consumers' subjective attitudes and beliefs, the proper method was a constructivist approach, utilising a qualitative research design including interviews to generate output. To best achieve relevant data from the analysis, the most suited method was deemed to be qualitative focus-group interviews.

In Chapter 5. Analysis, the developed interview playbook was utilised, along with two tasks which functioned as an activation of the participants, further including them in the interviews. The semi-structured interview provided the participants with a loose guideline and the potential to go beyond the posed questions. The interview answers are presented through quotations and a summary of opinions. The data generated was further analysed and coded into keywords (5.3.1) and observed patterns (5.3.2), which were then discussed and interpreted in Discussion (6.).

In Chapter 6., In discussion, the previously mentioned data was interpreted, along with the reasoning and outlining of relevance. Firstly, the questions of the interviews and subsequent responses were analysed concerning the topic. Then the responses were discussed utilising attribution theory. Secondly, the emerged keywords and patterns were discussed and put in context with regard to the research statement. Thirdly, the key findings of the analysis and

discussion were presented, providing an answer to the research question and -statement. Finally, the expected and actual results were compared to the existing literature.

In the final chapter, Chapter 7. In conclusion, the findings of the thesis are reiterated and stated explicitly to prevent any doubt from the reader. Firstly, the entire process and relevant data are summarised, along with the interpreted data generated in the discussion. After the formal conclusion section of the chapter, the reader is provided with the contribution to the field, the perceived limitations of the study and finally, provided with recommendations for potential implementation and future research.

Having introduced the structure of the thesis, the following paragraphs will go in-depth with the proposed research statement and Research Question.

1.1 Research Question & Research Statement

Transparency has been on the rise for the past few decades. Earlier academia suggests a relationship between consumer perception towards a brand that prioritises being transparent and their subsequent purchase intention. However, brand transparency is a vague concept with widely differently regarded meanings and implications of exact implementations. By conducting this research, the thesis considers the potential scepticism toward brands in the fashion industry. It will simultaneously investigate the issues associated with brand transparency and determine what the consumers view as yielding value.

The thesis, therefore, seeks to investigate if and how brand transparency can be utilised as a competitive factor to attract consumers. It further seeks to discover whether the correlation between brand transparency and consumer purchase intention is positive by using two different aspects of attribution theory. By conducting interviews with consumers, the thesis investigates which motives align with consumers' purchase intentions, consciously or subconsciously. To adequately address this problem, the research question stated presents itself as:

How can brand transparency be utilised to affect a consumer's purchase intention?

In order to aid in answering this research question, different aspects have to be addressed as well. These aspects regard the consumer's understanding of brand transparency while addressing the consumer perception of a brand's motive to implement brand transparency. Another aspect is the perceived role of scepticism, as it dramatically influences purchasing decisions. By investigating these secondary aspects, the researchers are better equipped to provide a credible answer to the research question.

The Research Question will be discussed and answered in the Discussion Chapter (6. 6)

1.2 Topic Delimitation

To specify the thesis topic, a rigorous selection process has been conducted to funnel potential research objectives and topics further. To narrow the topic more specifically from transparency, the researchers determined the aspect of Brand Transparency to be relevant, as little research has been conducted on brand transparency as a specific concept.

The scope of the research is limited to the predetermined segment of millennials. To narrow the study further, the segment will be specified as millennials from Scandinavia, meaning the target group of people born in Scandinavia between 1980 and 2000. As all people in this segment have reached 18, the legal age of adulthood in Sweden and Denmark, this segment is preferable to Generation Z, as not all of them have become adults and could compromise the ethics of the thesis.

Therefore, the research goals consist of producing valuable insight into what brand transparency is to a consumer and how it affects their purchasing preferences and habits. These goals also consist of determining the brands' subjective opinions and perceived motives for them to decide better if brand transparency is essential to them. To enforce the accessibility of the study, the interview participants will be found among familiar relationships of with researchers. The interviews conducted were performed both physically and online through a third-party platform. This was done to accommodate the participants and discussions best.

Moreover, to limit the topic to brand transparency as perceived by consumers, the researchers have disregarded a quantitative research design, as the primary focus is not to

emphasise or substantiate existing beliefs or hypotheses. The scope of the study is to generate new and exciting inputs to brand transparency and investigate whether consumers regard brands as transparent to explore emerging patterns and variables.

1.3 Bias and expected findings

No bias was detected when conducting the research or subsequent thesis formulation. It is essential to acknowledge that the two researchers fit the target group, millennial Scandinavians and therefore have some cultural and behavioural expectations of the interview Participant, so negate this and avoid influencing the interview responses. The interview playbook was extensively adapted to prevent the display of opinions or perceived expectations.

1.4 Gap in current knowledge

Brand Transparency is a relatively new term within business conduct. Specifically, brand transparency in an application is virtually non-existent in literature and currently covers mainly intangible and vague statements of proposed actions. To attempt to bridge this current gap in knowledge, the relevant activities of the study will be to determine a more tangible aspect of brand transparency. However, to bridge this gap, further outlining of consumer purchasing behaviour is needed, as the perception of brands is individual to the consumer, as are the motives of the brands.

Another knowledge gap is the demands from consumers, specifically if they demand brand transparency and whether it affects their purchasing habits. Furthermore, brands are struggling with the actual implementation and how to navigate between actions causing trust and actions causing scepticism if employed incorrectly.

Many studies on brand transparency have been conducted in several parts of Asia and the United States of America, while only a few have been conducted in Europe. There are currently no available studies or literature on research explicitly conducted in Scandinavia regarding brand transparency. This will create an ideal opportunity to contribute to and potentially expand the existing academia by conducting research within this new segment.

Another new segment is an age-defined sociodemographic approach to narrow the criteria. Since sources theorise that the younger segments are more concerned with transparency and sustainability within business conduct and product transparency, it would provide an optimal research approach utilising a specific segment. Millennials are defined as people born between 1980 and approximately 2000 by Howe & Strauss (2000) and provide a relevant and exciting target group (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

1.5 Purpose of the research

The purpose of the research in this thesis is to investigate whether claims of brand transparency can affect consumers' purchasing intention. Several studies have implied the benefits of including transparency as a critical factor in attracting consumers to transparent brands. However, previous studies are lacking when developing these assumptions into tangible actions or methods for the brands to implement into their business strategy. Therefore, it is difficult to determine whether brand transparency can positively or negatively affect a consumer's perception of a brand. Furthermore, as brand transparency is broad, consumers might have difficulty establishing its true meaning and whether it can affect their purchasing habits or beliefs. By addressing the need to develop consumer perception of what constitutes brand transparency, the study will further interpret the attributions and beliefs of the consumers. This will simultaneously provide the researchers with the ability to describe further the effect of brand transparency on consumers and their subjective associations with the concept.

To address this aspect, the study's purpose is to detail the motivation behind a brand desiring to implement brand transparency. From this aspect, the focus will also be on the perceived motives of the brands, directly from a predetermined consumer segment and the attributions they each display. This insight into consumer habits and preferences will aid in determining whether the core is impacted by brand transparency and what they perceive the brands' motives to be. A secondary purpose of the study is to address the scepticism associated with brand transparency and how a brand might be able to mitigate the risk of compromising consumer trust (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). It is relevant to investigate this aspect, as scepticism is often regarded to affect the relationship between brand transparency and

purchase intention negatively and is also the cause of scepticism directly towards brands if not appropriately communicated (Bhaduri & Copeland, 2021).

By researching how brand transparency can affect a consumer's purchase intention, the study can potentially provide insight for marketing managers or aspects of perceived general business conduct.

2. Literature Review

This thesis section will conduct a literature review to meet a narrow focus. After a general literature review on Brand Transparency, a presentation of the utilised Concepts and Theory will be outlined under the section Theoretical Framework (Chapter 3). To substantiate the utilisation, a discussion of relevance will be provided in a sub-conclusion.

2.1 Brand Transparency in academia

Donlan (2021) defines Transparency as “being honest, open and willing to disclose information and decisions within several fields of business operations” (Donlan, 2021). Transparency (as a term) has been present in academia since the 1980s (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Studies have been conducted on transparency as a factor in many regards. Transparency is an ambiguous concept utilised widely, with several different applications. In academia, Transparency is widely regarded as an essential success factor in business conduct, with scarce information on its actual application (De Ruiter, 2020).

However, according to Yang & Battocchio (2021), the concept of transparency is a trending buzzword in media and business areas today due to the increased focus on the societal environment and economic environment (Yang & Battocchio, 2021); (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016).

Transparency has often been utilised throughout different sectors, with a frequent focus on industries conducting business, including the production and sales of physical goods. Often mentioned in the literature are high-impact sectors such as the fashion industry (EIU, 2019;

(Bhaduri & Copeland, 2021), the cosmetic industry (Lee & Chen, 2019), the pharmaceutical industry (Fierlbeck, Graham, & Herder, 2021), and the electronics industry (Elia, 2009). A few of the discovered Brand transparency formats are 1) Organisational transparency (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016), 2) Sustainability transparency (EIU, 2020), 3) Financial transparency (Sinha, 2000), and 4) Supply chain transparency (New, 2010). Mutually for these applications is the desire to provide high ethical standards towards consumers and stakeholders while increasing corporate accountability (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016). Brand Transparency, however, does not often recur in academia, as it is a relatively new topic to explore.

An early description from Kelley & Michela (1980) provides insight into how attributions function as mediators between behaviour and what affects consumers (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Folkes (1988) provides among the first assumptions on how attribution theory can be contributed to consumer behaviour and can be utilised to review research (Folkes, 1988).

Steele (2021) regards critical components within structure and business efforts to include transparency now more than ever. He quotes: "Transparency breeds accountability, which is a big part of what drives change and improved results". Companies should take accountability and tangible actions, such as sustainability reports and similar transparent reporting. "It's been found that 94% of consumers are more likely to be loyal to a brand that's completely transparent. Transparency also builds trust, which is foundational to your relationships with your employees and customers" (Steele, 2021).

Rawlins (2008) emphasises how "being transparent requires a willingness to be vulnerable because you can't ensure how people will use the information you share" (Rawlins, 2008). He also states the importance of reciprocal trust, as it requires two parties to establish a positive relationship (Rawlins, 2008). Brand Transparency is therefore argued to be determined through observable actions, and general brand conduct in terms of sourcing, as a brand can be transparent throughout the value chain (Rawlins, 2008). If this reciprocal trust is not adhered to, consumers might retaliate or create a demand for changes in the supply chain. Rawlins (2008) further argues that for a brand to gain consumer trust and loyalty, it must accept to become vulnerable by being honest and transparent in its business strategy and values (Rawlins, 2008). This aspect is supported by Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013), who argue

that by increasing brand transparency, a brand will decrease green scepticism and increase brand trust (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

Ellen, Webb & Mohr (2006) researched consumers' perception of perceived motives. The consumers responded most positively to CSR efforts they judged as values-driven and strategic while responding negatively to actions perceived as stakeholders-driven or egoistic. Attributions are shown to affect purchase intent and mediate the structure of an offer. Two studies established that consumers' attributions were more complex than traditionally viewed (Ellen, Webb, & Mohr, 2006).

Hustvedt & Kang (2013) conducted a multistep analysis measuring consumer attitudes toward transparency of social responsibility efforts of brands. This was done to understand further the impact of openness on consumers' relationships with brands. It demonstrated how a measure of transparency could be quantified through a focus on the social responsibility efforts of brands. The study yielded results suggesting that transparency is reliable and valid (Hustvedt & Kang, 2013).

Research into strategic branding conducted by Keller (2012) suggested how *brand recognition*, *brand presence* and *WOM*, along with *brand responses*, provide valuable insight into consumer behaviour and subsequent purchase intention. The research supports the initial assumption that a consumer's likelihood to give recommendations for a brand is reliant on perceptions and personal experience (Keller, 2012).

The purpose of the study conducted by Kim, Kim & Rothenberg (2020) suggests a need to examine the role of information transparency. They questioned whether the extent of information disclosure and perceived fairness of information also play a role in purchase intention. Findings suggested that price and production transparency positively affect brand equity and consumers' purchase intention. However, they also find that it depends highly on the perceived fairness of the available information, regardless of the extent of information available (Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020).

Another study by Yang & Battocchio (2021) on the role of information transparency examined consumers' responses to a brand's cost and production transparency. The results of the study conducted in this article point to the importance of brand transparency in marketing

communication. The study revealed that transparency in the focal brand's communication of production and cost would increase consumers' perceptions of the brand's openness and authenticity. This is due to perceived information sensitivity, such as positive effects, which similarly impact consumers' attitudes, trust and behavioural intentions toward the brand (Yang & Battacchio, 2021).

Due to the need for developing more quantifiable methods for implementing brand transparency, Rawlins (2008) sought to create a reliable and valid instrument that measures stakeholder evaluation of organisational transparency. The statistical analysis produced three measurable reputation traits of transparency: *Integrity, respect for others* and *openness*. Furthermore, it found four factors when measuring transparency efforts: *participation, substantial information, accountability, and secrecy* (Rawlins, 2008).

Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) further investigated the need for proper models to test transparency efforts. They conducted a study which drew from attribution theory and subsequently proposed and tested a model. It explained how consumer scepticism toward the CSR of grocery retailers develops and its influence on critical consumer-related outcomes. The findings reveal that attribution of egoistic- and stakeholder-driven motives elicit consumer scepticism toward CSR, while value-driven attributions inhibit scepticism (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

Sweetin, Knowles, Sumney & McQueen (2013) conducted a study examining consumers' willingness to reward and their willingness to punish a corporate brand. The experiment investigated three treatment conditions: socially responsible, socially irresponsible, and environmentally friendly. Results indicated systematic differences in the levels of outcomes among the four groups. Consumers dealing with socially irresponsible corporate brands were more likely to punish and less likely to reward than consumers in the other three treatment conditions. The study illustrates the latent negative impact of CSI activities on four essential dimensions of consumer response. The findings indicate a pragmatic need for corporate brand strategists to recognise consumers' willingness to punish the corporate brand and the subsequent necessity to avoid activities that consumers may perceive to be socially irresponsible (Sweetin, Knowles, Summey, & McQueen, 2013).

Another study supporting the assumption that perceived motives of CSR are a vital factor in transparency is the study conducted by Vlachos, Tsamakos, Vrechopoulos & Avramidis (2008). This study investigates whether consumers' perceptions of motives influence their evaluation of communicated CSR efforts. The study reveals consumer trust as the key mediating role between CSR and perceived motives of transparency (Vlachos, Tsamakos, Vrechopoulos, & Avramidis, 2008).

Hyunjoo Oh et al. (2019) explored the potential impact of brand authenticity on consumers' behavioural intentions. They specifically focused on self-enforcing qualities, such as enticing, enriching and enabling the self, and its influence on the relationship between the brand and the consumer. Brand authenticity was suggested to influence these qualities directly, as the sense of self will create a positive association with the authentic brand, building closeness and trust. These qualities will, in return, increase a consumer's purchase intention, as they will be more inclined to buy, visit and recommend the brand. Thereby further characterising consumer behavioural intentions with perceived brand authenticity (Oh, Prado, Korelo, & Frizzo, 2019).

Schultz (2014) researched price transparency, e.g., how it might affect consumers' willingness to switch brands or their ability to be poached from other brands. The paper addresses price transparency, from a consumer aspect, in a market with behavioural price discrimination, which features welfare-reducing brand switching. The findings conclude that the results are similar with or without long-term contracts. The only difference is that an increase in transparency with long-term agreements leads to more brand-switching and a welfare loss. In contrast, when long-term contracts are unavailable, an increase in transparency intensifies competition, lowers prices and profit, reduces brand switching and benefits consumers' welfare (Schultz, 2014).

Rawlins (2008) found that the relationship between employees and the organisation was increased through Organisational Transparency. This resulted in an increase in trust in the organisation (Rawlins, 2008). According to Schnackenberg & Tomlinson (2016), Transparency can be implemented throughout the business model by utilising Organisational Transparency. In the article, however, organisational transparency was deemed inconclusive in effectively

managing corporate and stakeholder relationships, as the consequences of sharing too much information might cause issues in the organisation (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016).

This is also the case with consumer perception towards accessible organisational information, as this perception factors heavily on the success of the relationship between the brand and consumers, which in turn affects the purchase intention (Yang & Battacchio, 2021).

A study by Dodds, Monroe & Grewal (1991) aimed to investigate the effect on consumers based on perception. The study was conducted on extrinsic cues' impact on purchase intention and perception. Results suggested that price had a positive effect on perceived quality but a negative effect on perceived value and willingness to buy. A concluding factor displays how prior knowledge of a given brand and available information positively influenced quality perception, value and desire to buy (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991).

Bhaduri & Copeland (2021) conducted online experiments to investigate brand transparency and its relation to purchasing intention. They found a lack of brand transparency and actual purchase intentions due to scepticism. The more information available from a brand to a consumer, the more likely it is for the consumer to be influenced positively. It also found that some consumers are sceptical of climate change actions regarding unfamiliar brands (Bhaduri & Copeland, 2021).

Another study suggesting the increase of scepticism and the need for transparency was conducted in 2011 by Delmas & Burbano. They emphasise that this is due to several factors. Namely, distrust towards brands and their respective business efforts has never increased. Their study suggested that increased focus on the credibility of brands and greenwashing plays a part in increasing scepticism towards brands. They told how brands could negate the risk of greenwashing by properly implementing transparency into their value chain and communications (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). This is similar to the findings of Leonidou & Skarmeas (2017), whose study found that consumers associate brands with certain motives behind becoming transparent (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017).

Nguyen et al. (2019) proposed how companies utilise greenwashing efforts to get ahead of their competition but lack transparency in the process. This is especially true in marketing and advertising. The article investigates a potential link between green scepticism, greenwashing,

and green purchasing intention. The report finds that knowledge and information transparency can mediate when decreasing green scepticism (Nguyen, Yang, Nguyen, Johnson, & Cao, 2019). Goh & Balaji (2016) substantiated this approach. They conducted a study to investigate the role of scepticism in green purchasing behaviour based on an attitude-behaviour-context theory. The study found that environmental concerns and prior environmental knowledge mediate between green scepticism and green purchasing intention (Goh & Balaji, 2016). This emphasises the need for information transparency.

Another study by Nyilasy, Gangadharbatla & Paladino (2014) investigates the effects of green advertising and the environmental performance of a corporation regarding brand attitudes and purchase intentions. The study found that brands only enhanced negative attitudes towards the brand when utilising green advertising, regardless of performance. The results are due to attribution theory, whereas the main issue is green scepticism and negative WOM (Nyilasy, Gangadharbatla, & Paladino, 2014). According to Cambiera & Poncin (2020), transparency will be a positive signal toward consumers and a repairing mechanism for poor-reputation brands. The paper concludes that brand owners should also incorporate transparency into their business efforts, as the actions they communicate to their consumers will significantly impact brand integrity (Cambiera & Poncin, 2020).

Through consumer interviews, Bhaduri & Ha-Brookshire (2011) sought to investigate the potential link between consumer attitudes and brands in the fashion industry. The study found that Transparency within apparel brands and supply chains is directly linked to positive consumer attitudes. Intentions and attitudes are affected by distrust of the industry, prior knowledge of the brand's value, business efforts and transparency. Positivity is also connected to the transparency of products, price and quality following the consumption of transparent products from a transparent brand (Bhaduri & Ha-Brookshire, 2011). (Bhaduri & Ha-Brookshire, 2011).

A case study by Dubbink, Graafland, and Liedekerke (2008) investigated the roles of Transparency and CSR in business administration. It found that the currently known strategies are defective and lack proper regulation. They propose a third self-regulating strategy by utilising strong informational intermediate organisations (Dubbink, Graafland, & van Liedekerke, 2008).

Another study into CSR and transparency communication and implementation were conducted by (Kim & Lee, 2018). The study considered the best ways for a brand to communicate its CSR efforts and transparency by experimenting with trust, scepticism, organisational advocacy, and level of transparency as variables. The study finds that transparency should be implemented in every strategic aspect, meaning advertising, marketing and especially CSR communication to the consumers, to enhance trust. This is especially essential in low-trust business aspects (Kim & Lee, 2018)

The lack of regulation and governance has caused many brands to conduct questionable business practices. A study by Egels-Zandén & Hansson on the Swedish brand Nudie Jeans Co. found that outsourcing to suspicious business partners has caused a surge in demand for transparency practices in the supply chain. The study also found that the need for transparency improves consumers' willingness to buy. They suggested that transparency is not a consumer- tool but a corporate tool to increase revenue (Egels-Zandén & Hansson, 2015). This aspect is shared by Lin, Lobo & Leckie (2017), who found that transparency increases brand loyalty through relationships between perceived green values and green transparency. Furthermore, their study found how brand loyalty is increased the d by perceived values and transparency of a consumer toward a given brand (Lin, Lobo, & Leckie, 2017).

Kaner (2021) conducted a case study on H&M and its growing impact on the fashion industry. The purpose was to investigate the apparent gap between brand supply and consumer demand, which often results in greenwashing. The study emphasises the value of proper communication between brands and consumers, especially concerning green activities and transparency (Kaner, 2021).

Kang & Hustvedt (2014) substantiated this aspect. The study investigated the transparency in production and labour conditions and being socially responsible by giving back to the local community. The results indicated that consumers' perceptions of a corporation's efforts to be transparent directly affected these consumers' trust and attitudes toward the corporation. It indirectly affects their intentions to purchase from and spread positive WOM about the corporation (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014) (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014).

Lee, Seifert & Cherrier (2017) conducted a case study which concluded that consumers make more informed decisions concerning purchasing in the fashion industry due to reliable certification. Another key finding is how business owners concerned with slow fashion often integrate values of anti-consumption into their business strategy, while fast fashion BO disregards it entirely (Lee, Seifert, & Cherrier, 2017).

According to multiple sources, green scepticism is a critical aspect to address concerning brand transparency, as it has been steadily increasing. As such, it is determined that brand transparency is integral to negating poor communication between brands and consumers. The demand for accountability has been growing due to this surge in green scepticism towards non-transparent business conduct and adjacent products (UNECE, 2022). To address such issues, studies must be conducted on how to mitigate these risks.

In addition to green scepticism, consumer scepticism is rising toward corporate activities and their adjacent perceived motives. This is related to sustainability and will increase green scepticism (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). The study Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) conducted found that corporate identity, CSR, actions and transparency significantly impacted consumer perception and the motives they assign to the brand. Moreover, the study also showed that extrinsic values had no measurable effect on consumers, while intrinsic values were strongly negatively associated with the consumer (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). The focus to investigate further is, therefore, brand transparency, as it is one of the primary conditions in establishing positive relationships between consumers and corporations. Transparency is built by brand trust along with communication (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). It impacts the economic, social and environmental spheres of corporate behaviour.

Furthermore, communication enhances the relationship between consumers and companies. It is influenced not only by the transparent actions of the company but also by the consumer's subjective estimation of how the company is behaving, even in situations where actions cannot be transparent (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014).

Therefore, attribution theory is an appropriate framework for exploring the role of consumer scepticism toward CSR. This is because it provides knowledge about how people explain

corporate social involvement and how this cognitive perception affects their subsequent attitudes and behaviour (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

2.2 Sub-conclusion:

From this literature review, it becomes apparent how trust, loyalty and scepticism are often frequent in academia about brand transparency. Concepts of authenticity and willingness to share transparent information were also established to be essential for the research. The majority of the studies conducted on brand transparency disclose results that emphasise how brand transparency is necessary to a brand's success. However, issues arise when conceptualising its application to the brand's business operations. The studies suggest the essential angle of consumer perception and the brand's perceived drivers behind implementing transparency.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Concepts

The literature review is conducted to find essential concepts to provide a guideline for today's current gap in the research field. The concepts utilised in this study to answer the research question are *Brand Transparency*, *Attribution Theory* and *The four Motives*.

3.1.1 Brand Transparency

Brand Transparency is constructed through the perception of several factors, such as Product transparency, Quality transparency, Price transparency, Value Transparency and Supply Chain Transparency (Tapscott & Ticoli, 2003); (Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020).

As with transparency, Brand Transparency regards the willingness of brands to offer information to the consumers to create trust and subsequently create brand loyalty while being held accountable for their business conduct (Donlan, 2021). Having brand transparency

is crucial to building a brand-consumer relationship. According to Hustvedt & Kang (2013), this can be done by developing trust. Brand trust is not only created by transparency but also by the perception that consumers have of the intentions of the brand in every single situation (Hustvedt & Kang, 2013). Cambiera & Poncin (2020) found that brand owners should incorporate transparency into their business efforts as well, as the actions they communicate to their consumers will have a high impact on increasing brand integrity (Cambiera & Poncin, 2020). Yang & Battocchio (2021) states that when brands communicate transparently to consumers, consumers' awareness of the brand's initiatives and value increases. These transparencies can be those regarding the ethical use of labour, sustainable manufacturing process and social responsibility initiatives (Yang & Battocchio, 2021).

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3.1.2 Attribution Theory

Attribution theory explains how people attribute causes to events and how this affects their subsequent attitudes and behaviour. It divides how people attribute causes to events into two main types: internal and external (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). Therefore, this theory is also linked to the Internal-external control theory, which proposes that everyone in the same situation will attribute the same outcomes to the exact cause (Hollyforde & Whiddett, 2002). In other words, it describes the cognitive process of people where they attribute causes to a

given event which subsequently leads to evaluations and responses to the event (Kelley & Michela, 1980).

The attribution theory describes people's beliefs about why they behave the way they do (Hollyforde & Whiddett, 2002). In other words, with internal attribution, one assigns the cause of the given event to the individual. An external attribution attributes the cause of the behaviour to the surrounding environment (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). Due to this fact, a close link is found between attribution theory and achievement theory. Achievement theory relates to when people seek pride in accomplishment or avoid the shame of failure. At the same time, Hollyforde & Whiddett (2002) states that attribution of success or failure at a task is instead linked to the perceived skill of the person with the complexity of the activity (Hollyforde & Whiddett, 2002). It could also be said that attribution theory applies to how people deal with other people's performance of other people (Hollyforde & Whiddett, 2002). This could be easily shown in Appendix 1, how these two theories are utilised in the model - *Ability, Task difficulty, Motivation, Luck*. According to Kelley and Michela (1980), certain factors drive causal attributions, information, motivation, and beliefs.

Further, they explain that the consequences of attributions refer to the behaviours, feelings (affects), and expectancies about future events in response to the perceived causes (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Attribution theory and attributional theory (Kelley & Michela, 1980). The general model of the entire attribution field is illustrated in Appendix 1.

This thesis applies the attribution theory as this analysis needs to understand human behaviour. Human behaviour embodies people's understanding of the causal world's causal structure, which is people's interactions with the world (Kelley & Michela, 1980). The theory assists the thesis concerning internal-external control, as brands can use both to influence their transparency and/or scepticism.

3.1.3 Corporate Social Responsibility and the four Motives of CSR implementation

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) focuses on responsible business conduct, meaning how a brand or corporation is involved in social and environmental improvements (Dolan, Gilberthorpe, & Rajak, 2018). According to Dolan et al. (2018), CSR has been a significant focus

in business conduct since the 1990s. It presents a competitive advantage for businesses by implementing high ethical standards and practices of business conduct (Dolan, Gilberthorpe, & Rajak, 2018). It is relevant for the study to investigate the motives behind implementing CSR. Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) drew on the attribution theory by doing a study which posits CSR-induced consumer attributions. The study suggests that four different types of causal inference can be seen as motives instead of traditional self-motives versus public motives. These four motives are egoistic-driven, values-driven, strategic-driven and stakeholder-driven motives and influence the formation of consumer scepticism toward CSR (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). This, in turn, affects WOM, for example. This is interesting as this thesis focuses on how brand transparency potentially affects purchasing behaviour and how it is affected by scepticism and perceived motives. Concerning the business concept, scepticism is the focus of considerable research. This is because of potential and existing consumer response to advertising, promotion and public relations (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). As Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013) state, consumers can change their minds when presented with sufficient proof. However, scepticism is a cognitive response resulting from situational factors, and a consumer's doubting disposition may vary.

Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) contributed to the research by illustrating findings that reveal that egoistic- and stakeholder-driven attributions contribute to the development of consumer scepticism, while value-driven motives inhibit the information. However, this research allegedly proves strategic-driven attributions to facilitate neither nor alleviate scepticism. This further indicates that consumers tolerate strategic motives for corporate social engagement (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

It is stated by Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013) that scepticism exerts a direct influence on consumers' resistance to negative information and WOM. The thread between transparency and scepticism ties the four motives to this thesis. Sceptical consumers are vulnerable to negative information and denigrate the brand in conversations with friends and acquaintances. As WOM also affects the different motives, it is crucial for this thesis to understand and utilise it correctly and analyse it.

a. Egoistic-driven

According to Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013), egoistic-driven motives refer to beliefs that the brand is exploiting rather than supporting the cause. This further makes consumers doubt CSR efforts when attributing the retailer's social involvement to blatant self-centred reasons (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). Consumers are therefore more likely to engage in WOM to communicate their positive or negative experiences, feelings and emotions. The egoistic-driven part is that sceptical consumers can potentially share their doubts to verify suspicion and warn others, negatively affecting the WOM (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). Additionally, when customers have high satisfaction with the brand, experience notable and positive emotional experiences, and a high level of commitment and loyalty, positive WOM occurs.

b. Stakeholder-driven

According to Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013), stakeholder-driven motives refer to the consumer's beliefs that the brand/company engages in CSR to satisfy the expectations of different stakeholders. This explanatory attribution can lead to negative connotations about the brand's social initiatives due to the fact that consumers view them as not corresponding to the brand's true values and beliefs (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). This is of interest to this thesis as it shows that this attribution is likely to engender consumer scepticism. It will be utilised to analyse how scepticism affects purchase intentions.

Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) highlights that in the presence of scepticism, a consumer is not convinced about the real social consciousness of the brand, which further leads to the consumer expressing doubt about its ethical standards and social responsibility. This reduces consumer-company relationships; this is an essential aspect of analysing transparency. Furthermore, the consumer's sceptical stance might translate to lower consumer-based retailer equity, which also relates to brand transparency (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

c. Strategic-driven

According to Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013), strategic-driven motives reflect beliefs that the brand can achieve its business objectives while supporting the cause. In addition to this, strategic-driven motivation poses a perplexing problem to consumers. However, at the same time, consumers may perceive them as legitimate because a brand needs to be economically viable. This can be viewed as a brand attaining goals inherent to its survival by undertaking social activities, which subsequently promote them to create a win-win situation (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

d. Value-driven

The Value driven Motive is distinguished from the other motives as driven by the perceived value of the consumer (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). According to Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013), value-driven motives are the belief that the brand engages in CSR actions purely because of its moral, ethical and social ideals and standards. They further elaborate on this by explaining that this means that consumers believe that the brand is acting out of character, cares about the cause, and has a genuine concern about the social problems (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). It is interesting regarding transparency to investigate the likelihood for consumers to raise doubt about a retailer's CSR activities when the brand shows profit-seeking reasons.

3.1.4 Positive or Negative Word of Mouth (WOM)

This is also related to the term WOM, as the perceived value from the consumer is derived from the perceived quality, which is, in turn, reflected on the brand. In addition to this information, it can also be stated that negative feelings are more strongly coded in consumer memories, leading to negative impressions having the most significant influence on outcome variables (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). With positive WOM, consumers give favourable brand recommendations to others in their reference group. According to Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013), positive WOM in projecting a better image about themselves and their choices as well as potential post-purchase anxiety or dissonance to assist others to make more informative choices.

3.1.5 Relationship between Green scepticism and Brand Transparency

An interesting aspect arises between Brand Transparency and Green scepticism. While it is generally accepted that green scepticism will cause purchases to decrease due to a lack of trust (Nguyen, Yang, Nguyen, Johnson, & Cao, 2019). Leonidou & Skarmeas (2017) found how green scepticism causes consumers to seek further information on products (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017). This focus highlights that consumers seek additional knowledge on products to make more informed decisions (Nguyen, Yang, Nguyen, Johnson, & Cao, 2019). Consumer perception and the perceived value they receive from a given brand, can be affected by negative prior knowledge (Nguyen, Yang, Nguyen, Johnson, & Cao, 2019). This includes existing awareness of a poor brand reputation or prior knowledge of negative WOM towards the brand (Hustvedt & Kang, 2013). Consumers are more likely to do negative WOM marketing to other consumers if the brand has a negative reputation, which in turn decreases purchases (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017).

Studies show how consumers often regard poor reputations and business conduct in relation to lack of transparency as the driver of being taken seriously (Lee, Seifert, & Cherrier, 2017). However, according to Cambiera & Poncin (2020), Transparency can also function as a mechanism to repair poor brand reputations in order to regain the trust from consumers (Cambiera & Poncin, 2020).

3.1.6 Purchase Intention

In order to aid the four motives of Leonidou and Skarmeas, the purchase intention of a consumer is included in the theory utilised for the thesis. The purchase intention of a consumer is defined as the subconscious decision to purchase a given product, before the purchasing moment or prior to a need arising (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The stages prior to the actual purchases define the purchasing intent and rely on stimuli and social constructs and impressions of the individual consumer (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Purchasing intent has provided a theoretical base of knowledge for what might affect a consumer's behaviour and in turn what might affect purchasing intent. According to Mehrabian & Russell (1974), key aspects prior to the purchasing moment can be mapped and quantified through observation of a consumer. Consumers might display similar values, but potentially differ in decision-

making and display different needs or perceptions of how to yield, and what constitutes, value. This namely regards constructed beliefs and behavioural habits, such as developing a purchasing pattern. The concept is used when attempting to describe the apparent reasoning and behaviour of a consumer, and what stimuli they respond to individually (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Mehrabian & Russell (1974) emphasise how purchasing intent consists of three aspects, Stimulus, i.e. the social constructs and social impacts an individual is exposed to, Organism, i.e. individual processes of perception and needs; and Response, i.e. the moment of purchase or non-purchase (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). This definition is relevant when addressing investigations into the cognitive behavioural aspect of a consumer, as it directly addresses the impressions a consumer is susceptible to. The starting point is that consumers recognise or potentially have a relationship with a brand to be affected (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

Sub-conclusion/Summary

After conducting this literature review, many interesting perspectives and information became apparent. For this thesis, the subject is the perception of consumers towards brand transparency and what consumers potentially perceive as their motivations. Utilising attribution theory will therefore aid in discovering consumers' attribute motives towards brand transparency. This will be included in the discussion to explore motivations further. The thesis will investigate what these motivations stem from, such as negatively perceived experiences or general scepticism towards certain brands. According to Leonidou & Skarmeas (2017), transparency is either a response to green scepticism towards a particular familiar brand or a demand from consumers (Leonideou & Skarmeas, 2017).

The literature on the four motives highlights how consumers' purchase intentions affect the brand with a positive increase or negative decrease. These motives are affected by transparency, especially transparency through social initiatives and green scepticism. Social activities and scepticism will further be investigated by utilising these motives during focus group interviews. By those results, the study will be able to identify the degree of transparency regarding the millennials participating in the study. The different aspects concerning purchasing intention are relevant to this thesis as a deeper understanding of the theory. It will consider brand transparency as a stimulus and the motives behind the potential purchase

intention as behaviour directly affected by it. As such, it will be relevant to include concepts such as green scepticism and the four motives of CSR and WOM (Leonideou & Skarmas, 2017).

4. Methodology

This section of the thesis will consist of the methodological aspect. The following paragraphs will constitute the utilised philosophies, methods, approaches and perspectives structured following the model "The Research Onion" (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009), pictured below in Figure 1. The application will be substantiated by the theory of Veal & Darcy (Veal & Darcy, 2014). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill developed the model. It was first published in 1997 (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The model is deemed relevant for methodology guidelines due to its thorough and complex listing of relevant aspects to consider when writing a thesis dissertation (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

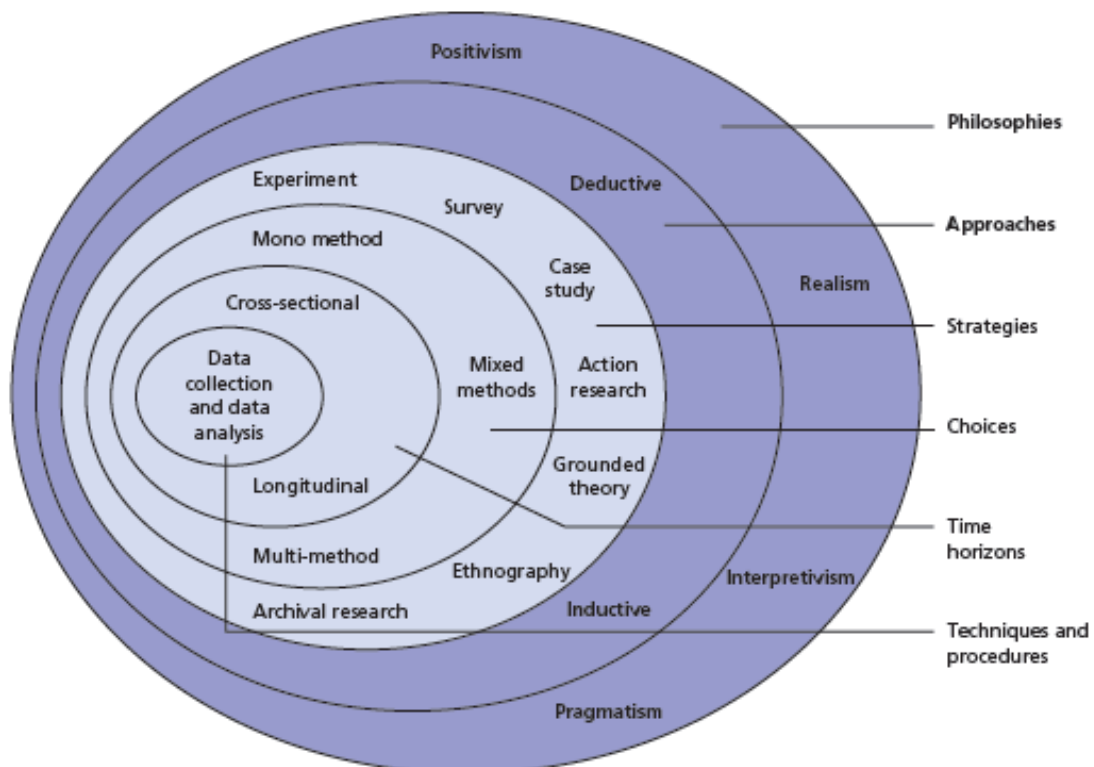


Figure 1- The Research Onion. Source: Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009).

The Research Onion consists of six layers, hereafter known as steps, to construct the optimal methodological approach to data collection and thesis methodology. The six steps are 1. Philosophy, 2. Approach, 3. Strategy, 4. Method, 5. Time Horizon, 6. Data Collection and Analysis (Veal & Darcy, 2014).

4.1 Philosophy

This first step of the Research Onion consists of the utilised perspective to conduct the research for the thesis. According to Saunders et al. (2009), the perception of a subject is essential as it sets the proverbial tone of research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

4.1.1 Ontology

Ontology regards the nature of reality. The reality in research can consist of and vary between many different factors. This essentially means the reality of how the world operates and how different views are reflected differently. However, the various research philosophies and approaches are still accepted in academic contexts. This further establishes the need to decide between philosophies and the intended approach as the primary objective before research (Veal & Darcy, 2014).

The ontology of a research design is dependent entirely on the differentiation between subjectivism and objectivism. This aspect of philosophy is constituted by the realisation of distinguishing between the opinions and perceptions of individuals or entities and the potential social factors.

Subjectivism regards how reality differs between individuals, despite having similar external impacts. It furthermore entails the notion of validity of different realities, as reality is perceived, not necessarily factual. Subjectivism regards the opinions and actions an individual associates with a specific phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

Objectivism regards how individuals and socially constructed entities are not impacted by external factors but have an objective reality. In research concerning individual opinions, objectivity is difficult to achieve. As such, subjective ontology is deemed the proper assignment to this thesis. Objectivism can be regarded as improbable in this study concerning

corporate practices and consumer perception of greenwashing; therefore, subjectivity is the realistic ontological reality. This further substantiates the decision to retain subjectivist ontology.

4.1.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is research's context between knowledge and reality (Saunders et al., 2009). The distinction from Ontology is focusing on what constitutes knowledge rather than perceived reality. Epistemology is aligned with the perspective of research, as epistemology differentiates between an “absolute truth” and “feelings”, namely the positivist and the interpretivist perspective (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The epistemology for this study regards the lack of knowledge on consumer perception and feelings. This epistemology is important to adopt in the thesis, as it negates the assumption potentially made and establishing that the knowledge of the topic is unknown.

4.2 Perspectives

According to Saunders et al. (2009) the four perspectives are: positivism, realism, pragmatism and interpretivism (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). As Pragmatism and Realism are beyond this scope of research, a definition of Interpretivism and Positivism will be provided.

4.2.1 Positivism

According to Saunders et al. (2009) Positivism is the perspective with basis in one absolute, often data-driven truth. Positivism is often utilised alongside quantitative data with a more logical aspect and in the context of natural science. Saunders et al. (2009) also emphasises on how this perspective prospers in the objective observations and ability to conduct data collection through generalisation (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

4.2.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism is the perspective where the focus is on how data and research can be interpreted and generated subjectively rather than pursuing an absolute truth (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). In contemporary practice, Interpretivism has been given different

sub-perspectives, such as Constructivism and Post-positivism (Veal & Darcy, 2014). The main commonality between the perspectives is how truth is subjective, entirely constructed, and subject to being interpreted in a variety of different ways.

4.2.3 Post-positivism

Post-positivism, as opposed to Positivism, is the realisation that while data might be fixed, the truth can be perceived differently and interpreted thusly, and is often impacted by the opinions of the researcher. The researcher does not oppose this, but rather embrace bias and differentiating opinions and attempts to utilise these factors objectively.

4.2.4 Constructivism

Constructivism, similar to post-positivism, is a direct opposition to Positivism, is establishing that truth is subjective rather than objective, and can be constructed, both individually and collectively through experiences. After being exposed to an experience, the individual then incorporates the newly acquired opinions and impressions into their ideals.

The relevant perspective to be utilised in the thesis is deemed relevant to be Interpretivism, namely the integral approach of Constructive perspective (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The reasoning for this assumption, as stated by the aforementioned definition, is due to the truth being a construct and not an objective truth (Veal & Darcy, 2014). The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how brand transparency is perceived by different consumers, and potentially alter the purchase intention. It displays the relevance of constructing new knowledge on consumer behaviour and perception towards brand openness and trust within a specific segment.

4.3 Approach

The second step of the model, "Approach" will justify the initial approach to the research. Two approaches exist to differentiate from, namely the Inductive Approach and the Deductive Approach.

The Inductive Approach is utilised when the research is not initially determined in terms of what exactly to investigate. Firstly, preliminary research is conducted in order to determine interesting points in relation to the topic. Hypotheses are formed according to what is proposed in the research and preliminary data. The potential ideas or research aims are then formed after the literature review and the research will then seek to discover how the data is connected and which potential patterns emerge. This approach does not necessarily seek to support existing ideas of the topic, but rather adjusts the study to what data is created throughout the data collection and analysis. The inductive approach is often used in a qualitative research design, as data is constructed and interpreted throughout the research.

Contrary to the Inductive Approach, the Deductive Approach is utilised for accepting or rejecting initially formed hypotheses, usually constructed prior to literature review and research. This approach seeks to establish whether a hypothesis can be confirmed or rejected by the research and data collection to be conducted, rather than developing hypotheses after the literature review.

By having presented the two different approaches, the utilised approach for this research will be inductive, as it proves the more relevant approach to the research topic. This is due to the research proposing different aspects of approach and not testing one stationary hypothesis in order to confirm or reject it. By conducting qualitative research, the most suitable approach is one where truth is subjective and can be constructed, rather than a stationary and objective definition of truth. This is because it might generate ambiguous answers in a comparison, which can possibly not be properly analysed or generate a narrow output (Veal & Darcy, 2014). This approach focuses on finding new patterns and asking *why*, rather than searching for predetermined patterns of the potential consumers (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

4.4 Strategy

The third step of the model "Strategy" will primarily explain the different potential methods of data collection. Subsequently, this section will display the reasoning behind the chosen strategy for the conducted research and the methods to be utilised in order to answer the research statement and adjoined Research question. The different methods to utilise according to Saunders et al. is Experiment, Case-Study, Survey, Grounded Theory, Action

Theory, Ethnography or Archival Research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). By reviewing the different strategies and their purpose of data collection, one strategy is deemed relevant to utilise and will be elaborated on in the following paragraph.

4.4.1 Case-Study

The method deemed relevant is a non-standardised Case study. According to Veal & Darcy (2014) a case study is a singular or plural observation effort in order to extract data linked to a certain context (Veal & Darcy, 2014). In business academic context, a company is often chosen to observe in order to analyse the outputs generated, such as business model, strategy or how the chosen company managed a given external factor or impact. Another approach to a case study is to observe predetermined groups of consumers through interviews, which can either be conducted through individual interviews or focus-group interviews (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). According to Veal & Darcy (2014) an interview is the utilisation of a data collection, which can both be done with closed ended, often quantitative, or open-ended, often qualitative, questions (Veal & Darcy, 2014). The collected data is perceived with equal value, but with the importance to distinguish between research areas and approaches. Closed-ended are often utilised in order to confirm a hypothesis through a survey strategy, while open-ended often are utilised to generate interesting new data for further coding and potential for triangulation (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Within a case study, a wide range of different people and activities are invariably examined, which in this case will be utilised through focus group interviews (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). For this study, the focus-group interviews will be qualitative, while providing the Participants with semi-structured open-ended questions in order to generate the most data.

4.4.2 Focus-group Interviews

The analysis will be compacted by data from several focus-group interviews, in order to utilise a case study strategy. Interviews for qualitative utilisation are either standardised or non-standardised and vary in different forms of structure. For the purpose of the thesis, a semi-structured qualitative focus-group interview approach will be used (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The approach of how to ask questions need to be carefully considered

(Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). This has been done and the interviews will be conducted with a primary focus on the topic *Brand Transparency*, and secondary focus on consumer behaviour, specifically focusing on insights into *four Motives* and *Green scepticism* by Leonidou & Skarmeas (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). Using open ended questions within these topics will allow the focus group to both define and describe a situation. Saunders et al. (2009) says open questions are designed to encouraged Participants to provide an extensive and developmental answer which may be used to reveal attitudes or obtain facts. The thesis strongly relies on revealed attitudes for analysis. Moreover, nowadays most interviewers audio-record their interviews where permission is given (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). It is needed to highlight this can be an advantage as well as a disadvantage. Using audio-recording the concentration will enable interviewer to listen attentively to what is being said as well as the expression and other non-verbal cues the focus-group might give away during their respond. To keep concentration and focus Saunders et al. (2009) believe that taking notes would be helpful, as audio-recordings can solely capture the tone of voice and hesitation, but not facial expressions and other non-verbal cues. Some of the advantages of audio-recording except concentration is the availability to re-listen, direct quotes and permanent record for others to use. The negative aspects to acknowledge are how this might affect the relationship between the participants and interviewers, it might reduce reliability, the time required to the audio-recording and of course there is the possibility of technical problems (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

Participants in focus-groups are according to Saunders et al. (2009) are normally chosen using non-probability sampling, often with a specific purpose in mind. This thesis has the specific purpose of analysing the millennial segments consumer behaviour and how it reflects their purchase intention. This kind of group-interview focuses on a particular issue and encompasses the need for interactive discussion amongst the participants. These participants are selected because of their characteristics in common that relates to the topic being discussed and are encouraged to discuss and share their points of view, without any pressure to reach consensus (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). This aspect will constitute the primary method of conducting data collection. A thorough

elaboration of the chosen methods will be provided in the next section, along with the desired participants of analysis.

4.5 Method

The fourth step of the framework, "Methodology", will provide the reader with an overview of intended methods.

By utilising Focus-group Interviews, the interviewers function as facilitators, rather than active participants (Veal & Darcy, 2014). Furthermore, by conducting the interviews using semi-structure in an exploratory study, the participants are able to offer their subjective perceptions and thereby explore arising patterns. This approach is essential, as the motives of the consumers are a key focal point for the research, namely how Participants assign their individual values and perception to a given phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Since the interviews will be semi-structured, the participants are supplied with a clear set of questions but are not restricted to answering the questions. This enables the participants in further providing insight into their own perceived motives and behaviour.

The method utilised for this thesis is mono method as the focus is on one single data collection technique and corresponding analysis procedure (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). By utilising a Case Study with focus group interviews, the participants will produce vast amounts of data for further analysis. This is due to the potential for generating responses throughout the interview, as they have the potential to react to the fellow participants. The emphasis on utilising one method is cooperated by the different potential outputs generated from the interviews and how they are each relevant to the thesis. By conducting several interviews, we seek to ensure quality and reliability in terms of results (Veal & Darcy, 2014).

4.6 Time Horizon

The fifth step of the model "Time Horizon" will provide an overview of the intended research timeframe.

Cross-sectional research revolves around a singular event or phenomena, with a particular limited timeframe (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). According to Saunders et al. survey or

case study strategy are the frequently utilised strategies (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Longitudinal research examines a large period of time, with the possibility of observing potential change and potential development throughout the stated time horizon (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

For this thesis, the cross-sectional aspect is considered relevant in the primary research, as the focus is to determine how consumers perceive the brand transparency of different fashion brands and how it potentially might affect the purchase intention. As the research is conducted to determine their current perspectives, the interviews will function as a phenomenon, while gaining insights to which motives might arise to subsidise their opinions. The cross-sectional aspect is considered the relevant timeframe for the consumer interviews, as the thesis is time constraint and focuses on a given phenomenon. The phenomenon in question is the individual perception of consumers and the brand transparency projected towards their preferred or favourable fashion brands.

4.7 Data Collection and Analysis

The final step of the model "Data Collection and Analysis" will provide an overview of the data to be examined and interpreted.

The data to be utilised in this thesis is provided through both primary and secondary data, derived from existing source material and data generated from interviews. This data will be providing the reader with new perspectives on the published data, while supplying the reader with new research aims and research designs, while offering new research opportunities. The primary data collection will be conducted through focus group interviews, and the generated data will be subject to the main chapter *Analysis*. The data generated in the Analysis will subsequently be further analysed and interpreted through coding. The coding will consist of potential emerged keywords and observed patterns from the interview responses. After establishing whether and what patterns can be distinguished from the consumer perception, a discussion of relevance will be further provided. Finally, the newly derived data and aspects will be interpreted and discussed in 6. Discussion.

4.8 Research Ethics

Another aspect of methodology proposed by Saunders et al. is Research Design and Research Ethics. Furthermore, when utilising a semi-structured interview, the data quality issues that can be identified are usually related to reliability, bias, validity and generalisability (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). These different aspects and concerns will be addressed in the following paragraphs.

4.8.1 Ethical choice of Case Studies

By not utilising specific brands or companies, the ethical standard of the research is elevated. By not asking the participants to provide any personal information rather than simply consenting to their suitability for the chosen segment, the participants are likely to feel less exposed or vulnerable (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). This is due to a non-negotiable set of ethics requirements proposed by Saunders et al. and Veal & Darcy in order to optimally obtain ethical and credible research. However, the focus of the thesis is to discuss previous experience with brand transparency, and it is therefore considered likely that the participants provide concrete examples of brands themselves. However, this arguably only amplifies the validity of the study, as it is a representation of individual perceptions. The comfortability of the participants can potentially be reflected in their desire to answer the stated questions thoroughly, as they might not perceive the interviewers as facilitators, but rather listeners.

When conducting interviews with consumers as your primary data source, it is essential to provide a safe environment, as it will concern individual expressions of opinions. By providing this for the participants, they are more likely to offer deeper insight which in turn might reveal deeper patterns or motives (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009); (Veal & Darcy, 2014).

4.8.2 Credibility

By utilising secondary published data for the literature interview, the researchers negate the possibility of breaching confidentiality or imposing an undesirable position for the respondents. In terms of accessibility, the data will still be optimally accessible and in supply for analysis. By conducting the primary study either online or physically, in a non-official environment, the participants are more likely to be comfortable without the risk of pressuring

respondents or otherwise ethically compromising the integrity of the data collection. Focus group interviews will diminish the risk of uncomfortability of having one respondent risk feeling pressured to answer questions they might regard as unsuitable. This will further substantiate the assumption that the integrity of the research is unimpeded. By using mono method qualitative analysis, the research will be easier to interpret and discuss, and in turn will produce more reliable results (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). It is important to note how the consumers were selected based on their age and nationality, while also acknowledging another reason why these consumers were selected. The participants were found amongst the personal relationships of the researchers. This aspect might produce issues in regard to what responses the participants would express. However, credibility and unbiasedness are arguably upheld through the establishment of guidelines for the participants to follow. Creating a similar structure for the participants will ensure credibility, while the familial relationships with at least one of the interview facilitators will enable the participants to express more opinions.

4.8.3 Reliability

As this thesis consists of qualitative research, reliability is a concern in regard to whether alternative researchers' information would reveal similar information (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). This is strongly related to interview bias. These biases, interviewer bias and Participants/response bias are discussed in Section 4.8.4 (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). By conducting several interviews, a large data source will provide the researchers with more resources for further analysis. Reliability can further be enforced in qualitative data utilising more than one method and then subsequently perform triangulation of the generated results.

The comparisons and also distinctions between types of transparency aids the researchers in displaying the desired points proposed in the research statement. By demonstrating an understanding of business practices in brands, the researchers will furthermore be able to demonstrate how different companies handle transparency.

Furthermore, by not supplying the respondents with a topic or impacting them with the word "brand transparency" beforehand, the responses will be more empirically accurate for further analysis, as words as "transparency" might render confusion or bias towards a given company.

Moreover, one of the issues of reliability are the findings derived from using non-standardised research methods as they are not necessarily intended to be repetitive. This is due to the fact that this research method reflects the specific time of collected data in a situation that might be subject to change (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). As reviewed in Section 5.1.2, this thesis regards a new, unutilised segment of analysis, in relation to brand transparency. It will arguably reflect this point in time view of brand transparency from the consumers. Due to previous literature, the change in perceived brand transparency is ongoing and moving fast. Therefore, it is known the interview responses would change if taken at a different point in time. It would be interesting to investigate these changes in perception due to time but is out of the scope of this thesis.

4.8.4 Bias

According to Saunders et al., the research within the relevant field is less likely to be exposed to bias if the bias is realised initially, as to display to the reader an understanding of potential limitations (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

Interview bias relates to when the comments, tone or non-verbal behaviour of the interviewer creates bias in the way participants respond to the question being asked (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). As the focus of the group interview is to analyse purchase intention in relation to brand transparency, it is crucial to not impose the researchers' own beliefs and frame of reference through the questions asked. By utilising a focus group interview rather than, e.g., an in-depth interview, the consumer is however likely to expose biases extracted from social constructs. By utilising this method of approach, the participants is also likely to be affected by the opinions of the interviewer. Additionally, interviewers should be cautious about sending out bias when interpreting responses as well. According to Saunders et al. (2009) taking part in a semi-structured interview is an intrusive process. This is true for this thesis as it seeks explanation of relation between purchase intention and brand transparency while analysing the motives behind the association. In relation to this, participants could be sensitive to the certain themes this thesis wishes to dive into and could lead to them choosing not to reveal or discuss an aspect of that specific topic (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

No bias was detected in the initial process regarding the perception of the researchers.

4.8.5 Generalisability

There are concerns in this thesis surrounding the generalisability of findings from qualitative research based on the use of a small and unrepresentative number of cases (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009), as this is a fairly new area to research. However, a single case study in this thesis is arguably related to the significance of this type of research to theoretical propositions as little to no interviews with consumers have been conducted on *brand transparency*. Therefore, whatever data is generated will be deemed relevant for further research, as it will provide insight into the field of study. Relating this data to existing theory in section 6.6.1. will demonstrate this further and how it has a broader theoretical significance than solely belonging to this thesis.

4.9 Concept Map

By conducting extensive literature review, several areas of interest have emerged and with them several relevant focal points. After the previous application of the Research Onion framework, the chosen methods and approaches will be demonstrated and elaborated on in accordance with the literature review.

To further clarify the direction of interest, a concept map was developed through visual brainstorming. In order to emphasise the utilised concepts, a graphical representation has been presented in order to further clarify the focus points of the thesis. The figure is depicted below.

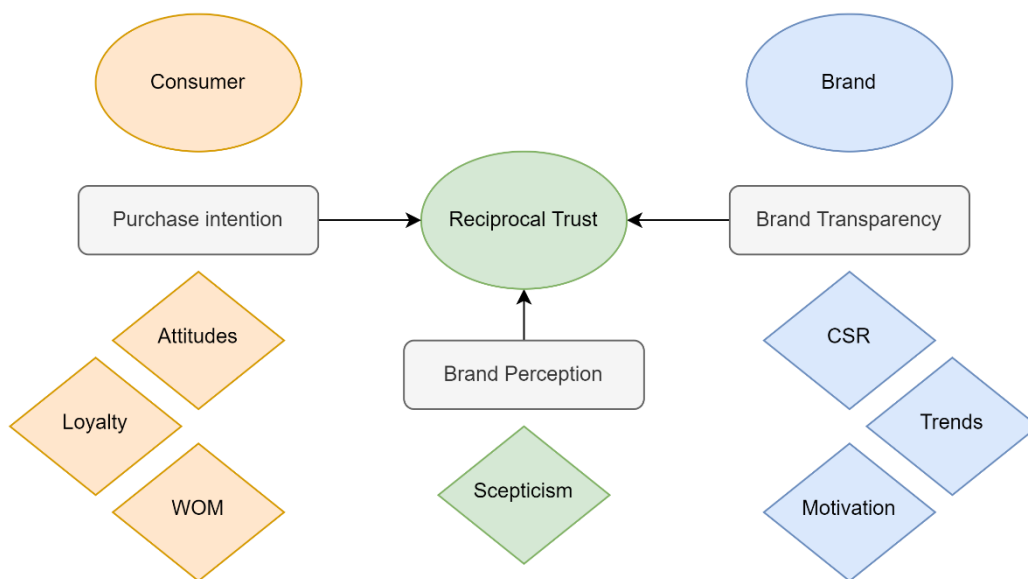


Figure 2- Concept Map (Larsen & Jørgensen, 2022)

This is to further narrow the focus of the thesis, and to discover the optimal approach to answering the research question *“How can brand transparency be utilised to affect consumer purchase intention?”* and the adjoined Research Statement.

Sub-conclusion

The relevant methodology for the study into brand transparency and consumer perception provides many interesting research designs and potential approaches to the topic. However, the relevant philosophy utilised to address the research statement was deemed to be the constructivist perspective. This is due to the relevant data being generated through subjective truths and constructed beliefs. The approach was deemed to be conducted through the inductive approach, as the researchers do not seek to accept or reject a stated hypothesis. Rather, the approach addresses a topic which will in turn generate interesting opinions of consumers of what constitutes brand transparency and how it affects them individually.

The utilised strategy for the study is a Case Study of the Millennial Scandinavian consumers, and their view on brand transparency and perceived brand motives without adhering to any specifics.

As the data will be constructed of subjective opinions to investigate the perceptions of consumers, the Mono Method is deemed the most suitable method design. This is due to qualitative data potentially being difficult to compare to existing studies, as it is not the main purpose to substantiate existing studies. Data collection conducted through interviews often generates a large amount of data, which can be time consuming and requires careful planning. The time horizon of the study will be Cross-sectional, as it concerns what the opinions of the consumers are at one given point in time. Data collection and analysis will be conducted through qualitative focus-group interviews. The data generated will subsequently be analysed further and coded in order to establish the presence of potential keywords and patterns.

5. Analysis

This section of the thesis contains the main analysis. The results of the analysis will be presented in the following chapter. The analysis has been conducted on the transcripts of the three focus group interviews. Coding will be subsequently conducted in 5.3 in order to identify common keywords, patterns or potential characteristics. After the Analysis, the results will be discussed and interpreted in 6. *Discussion*. The transcripts consist of appendices 7 through 9.

5.1 Data Collection – Focus Group Interviews

5.1.2 Segmentation

The data collection of this thesis has been conducted through qualitative focus group interviews. The interviews consist of carefully selected participants, who match the segmentation requirements. The requirements meant the participants met the conditions of being a) *A millennial*; an age group spanning from 1980 till 2000 (Smith & Nichols, 2015); (Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, & Kaifi, 2012) and b) *Scandinavian*; meaning an individual who shares either Danish, Norwegian or Swedish nationality (Dictionary, 2022).

5.1.3 Size

In order to reach a significant population size, Guest, Namey & McKenna (2016) argues how a significant number of focus-groups should be between two and six focus-groups, depending on the number of Participants per group (Guest, Namey, & McKenna, 2016). Veal & Darcy (2014) argue that a reasonable population consists of no more than 5 or 6 active Participants per focus-group interview, excluding the facilitator and notetaker (Veal & Darcy, 2014). This is due to the risk of not having all Participants share their beliefs, due to uncomfortability or confusion.

Three interviews were therefore conducted in order to maximise potentially relevant output. Three groups were preferable to two, as the chance of generating saturating data would be greater with three (Guest, Namey, & McKenna, 2016). The three interviews consisted of 13 Participants overall. These were dispersed on 4, 4 and 5 active Participants. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to approximately 100 minutes. When the interviews had reached saturation and no new responses were given, the interviews were terminated.

5.1.4 Language

In order to enforce comfortability and further encourage a larger data output, the Participants had the choice of having the interviews in either their native language, or English (Veal & Darcy, 2014). Common for the Participants, the consensus was preference towards their native language. The interviews were therefore conducted solely in Swedish (Interviews 2 & 3) and Danish (Interview 1) divided between the researchers. Furthermore, by conducting interviews in their native language, the risk of misunderstanding the questions from the facilitator, or the outputs from the Participants (Veal & Darcy, 2014). The utilised answers have been translated into English for coherence and subsequently introduced to the text.

5.1.5 Structure of the focus-group interview

Interview 1 consists of Participants A-D (Appendix 7, pp. 132-153). Interview 2 consists of Participants E-I (Appendix 8, pp.154-175). Interview 3 consists of Participants J-M (Appendix 9, pp. 175 -188).

Prior to the actual interview, the Participants agreed to the terms and conditions of the interview, including being recorded through a dictaphone and having the audio subsequently transcribed.

In order to secure an organic flow in the process, the interviews were conducted both physically and via online communication in order to accommodate the convenience of the Participants (Veal & Darcy, 2014).

Firstly, the Participants were introduced to the interviewers and the thesis purpose. The individuals then accepted the appropriate conduct during the interview, while being assured of complete anonymity. The Participants were not introduced to the topic prior to the actual interviews. This was due to the answers needing to be spontaneous and in order to mitigate the risk of planning their answers beforehand (Veal & Darcy, 2014).

They were then introduced to the priorly undisclosed topic of *Brand transparency*.

In order to prevent a stagnant interview, the structure of the interview consisted of open-ended questions (Veal & Darcy, 2014). This allowed for the conversation and the responses from the Participants to naturally develop. Touchpoints were introduced to facilitate active involvement from the Participants (Colucci, 2007). These touchpoints consisted of several tasks.

5.2 Focus-Group Interviews

Perceived definition on Authenticity (Oh, Prado, Korelo, & Frizzo, 2019); (Yang & Battacchio, 2021).

Participants A: “For my part, it is that you know what the brand stands for, and that they can vouch for the things they claim to stand for”. Participants A continues: “If a brand publicly discloses their actions and standpoint, that I can believe that there is no hidden, secret agenda” (Appendix 7, p. 132). Participants B agrees and adds the notion of authenticity of the actual product or service they wish to deliver to you (Appendix 7, p. 132). Participants C formulates how “authenticity for me is when I can see it. I understand the distinction between transparency and authenticity, but to me they are linked. When I, as a consumer, am to choose a brand, that they are straightforward with what they provide (...) That they are vocal with their purpose” (Appendix 7, p. 132).

Participants E & G discusses what authenticity is. Participants E: “So, from my perspective I would say it is what they stand for. Or rather what they outwardly show they stand for. Like when you claim to use recycled materials.” (Appendix 8, p.153). Participants F agrees and adds “I agree but would also like to add that authenticity does not only come from what the brand itself claims but can also come from their reputation.” (Appendix 8, p.153) which brings Participants E to further add that it comes down to honesty, and to not have a hidden agenda.

Participants J and L discussed that authenticity is about being yourselves and being open. Participants I also add that it comes from the company's own opinion and values.

Participants M states “Life's greatest mission is to be authentic and honest to make the world a better way. Part of me doesn't trust companies because it feels like they're withholding important information, but another part of me blindly trusts companies that, for example, claim to be vegan. At heart I am sceptical.” (Appendix 9, p. 176).

Opinions, examples and associated industries

“I often think that those small local brands are the ones putting all the cards on the table, especially with information on their ingredients”. The Participants, e.g. Participant A, states that local brands are arguably more likely to be authentic, especially in the food industry and cosmetic industry, unlike the large brands (Appendix 7, p. 132).

Participants C: “Textile brands. (...) I am not normally concerned with it, but what struck me was how H&M changed suppliers, where the quality of the clothes became different” (...) “In that way the brand changed entirely to me. I do not think that is authentic, thinking, “Well it is a Swedish brand”, and then it said, “Made in Bangladesh”. That and it affected the price level” (Appendix 7, p. 132).

Participants E: “Yes, so I think H&M is authentic. They include us customers more and more in their what to say, process or what goes on before the clothes end up in the store. It's something that they've also gotten better with, over time. Feels like it may also be extra important for us Swedes, as it is a Swedish company that they represent our standard of honesty and authenticity. Thinking that it can vary from country to country as well, what the given standard is. Then, they're also international, but I feel like we're a little harder with this that everything should be authentic.” (Appendix 8, p. 154). Participants I agree with this example.

Participants F evolves on Swedish brands: “I think Swedish brands can be quite good on this point. Like small organic company environmental oriented brands. As of this moment I am thinking of Jordklok” (Appendix 8, p. 154). Participants G could not find any specific brand but added great points to the question: “You all have good examples. I really can't think of a specific brand. Thinking more that you usually hear about when they failed big. It feels even if the bigger brands are allowed to be more closed to yes their reputation type. While the new small businesses need to put everything forward. Especially local, I feel like they're really authentic now that I think about it.” (Appendix 8, p. 154). Participants H also added: “Yes, being authentic feels like it's very individual. But on some level, I still think it has to do with what information or how much information you as a person get.” (Appendix 8, p.154).

Participant K starts with the clothing industry by saying “Then I immediately think of Swedish brands, such as Dagmar. Their website has a lot of information. I'll be honest and say that I didn't read it carefully, but rather skimmed through it. For me, the most important thing is that they have information about their path towards sustainability and so on.” (Appendix 9, p. 176).

Participant J: “I would say MQ Marqet. When you buy their clothes online anyway, it says for example that they use raw materials that do not come from endangered forests. Which I think is very good.” (Appendix 9, p. 176)

Perceived transparent brands

Participants C & D from Interview 1 each mention the cosmetic industry independent from each other. Participant C mentions The Body Shop and describes an experience they encountered in a physical store.

“I remember the sales assistant cared greatly about attempting to explain “This is our current campaign”, this being CO₂-neutral. (...) It is great to be passionate about that, but it was not my intention, as my purpose was to get in and get out (...) Then again, they could probably try to convince you of anything, when entering their physical locations” (Appendix 7, p. 132).

Participant D mentions Danish brands *Nilens Jord*, *Ole Henriksen* and *Matas* as brands they perceive as transparent. This is further narrowed into the refusal to include harmful ingredients in their cosmetic products; “Neither which are included, visibly, on the actual product” (Appendix 7, p. 133). Participant D also emphasises a personal interest in avoiding cosmetic products which are tested on animals but finds the source of information lacking on whether tests on animals are actually conducted.

Participants D & A mention the food industry as a general impression of transparency. The perception of these two Participants is the need to be aware of what exactly is put in one's body. Food allergies and dietary restrictions lay cause for the need to be transparent with ingredients for several consumers, and both Participants can find it difficult to navigate

whether the brands are actually transparent (Appendix 7, p. 134). Several Participants mention the Swedish brand H&M as one they perceive as transparent.

Participants G and E both discuss H&M as being transparent. Participants G: "I kind of have the same brands I've been buying from for years and honestly don't have a very good handle on this. But I think H&M probably claims that they are transparent, so that's probably it." (Appendix 8, p.155) and Participants E adds: "I've actually shopped from their website as well as in store and it feels like you get a sense of their transparent spirit there. You can kind of see in a different way which products are sustainable and such." (Appendix 8, p.155). Participants F highlights how difficult it is to trust the information provided from brands or companies. Moreover, Participants H highlight the trend of veganism: "I'm thinking more about all the brands now that are actually starting to become more vegan. That like most people have in product descriptions that it is artificial leather and such, or when it says it is leather. In any case, I think it's good that more brands implement a more transparent vegan foresight." (Appendix 8, p.155). All of the Participants agree that they are sceptical regarding the information provided from the brand. Participants F highlights the makeup industry and testing products on animals as well as stating: "Then I as a customer have to sort of not only read on the back of the product, but then I have to do extra research on the internet, as I said earlier with looking up on their website or kind of googling. Then if it's a local business that we also discussed earlier, it may not have a website and then it immediately becomes more difficult." (Appendix 8, p. 155). Participant E confesses: "I have always thought it to be quite safe to buy Scandinavian brands" (Appendix 8, p. 156). Participant H also take the opportunity to add another industry to consider: "Since I mentioned dog food before, I can probably also take the opportunity to mention the food industry. It can be difficult to read all the ingredients, as well as it is more difficult to trust them. Also thinking about vegan products here, that you have to trust that they are not traces of non-vegan if you are now an extreme vegan. I also feel more distrustful now that everything is being raised and feel even more demanding that they be transparent." (Appendix 8, p. 156). All of the participants discussed how it is difficult for brands to be 100% transparent and that it is more responsibility on the individual to do research on brands. This divides the participants, as some participants do not do research at all if it not brought up for the public. Where the rest have their different areas where they do research such as food, cosmetic or fashion.

Participant L mentioned H&M as an example here "H&M says they are transparent, at least when you read about them and think the energy, they put into advertising shows it." (Appendix 9, p.177). Participant K adds: "Dagmar hasn't said it directly, or done an excessive amount of advertising for it, but I think they are. For me, it's better that it's kind of visible for the consumers (...) Or that it stands on the first page something about sustainability or something. Feels very "in your face". Because if you then go into the clothing items, you can sort of check clothing care and what they are produced from. In addition to that, they also have a small description of why the garment is a good choice for each garment." (Appendix 9, p.177). The Participants further added: "Yes but I was looking for a knitted cardigan and saw one that was so pretty. It was on sale, but I won't lie, the price is quite a lot more than H&M and MQ. When I then went in to check it out, just like with previous garments, I can read why it is a good choice to buy. In this case it was then wool which was like 70% or 80%, can't remember exactly, less carbon if compared to conventional wool. There was a lot of other stuff, but that can really make me think the price is worth it." (Appendix 9, p.177). Furthermore, Participant M made a statement regarding the overall picture: "It feels like most people do it, because they are forced to be. It is trendy to be vegan and environmentally friendly. So I would say the eco brands are more verbal." (Appendix 9, p.177). The Participant M further develops the answer: "I think there are companies that are honest, where the founders genuinely want to provide a good product that doesn't paint a picture that isn't true. Where the environment and all employees and invaders are taken into account. Then I also think there are a lot of companies that lie and withhold information. Or that they deliberately choose something bad that they chose. They might have 5 bad dark secrets but use the least vulnerable one to show they are open. I think it's easy to withhold things, especially for big companies." (Appendix 9, p.178). Participant K also expresses scepticism "So maybe I'm a little sceptical, but as I said, I trust the companies but maybe not the industry itself. That's why I read and trust the companies even though I know the industry is quite unreliable." (Appendix 9, p.178).

There is a growing trend for brands to be transparent with their customers. Transparency is defined as being honest, open and willing to disclose information and decisions within several fields of business operations (Donlan, 2021).

Perceived definition of brand transparency

The Participants of Interview 1 profoundly agree with the definition provided by the researchers, and particularly identify with the willingness of a brand to disclose information. Participants A & D both utilise the term “putting the cards on the table” and describes how it constitutes the ideal metaphor for their understanding of transparency. Participant D elaborates: “I particularly agree with the willingness to put the cards on the table, because sometimes one would claim to have told everything and been honest and open. It is not always certain that everything is as it has been told. They need to be ready to make themselves known, as questions are bound to be asked” (Appendix 7, p. 136).

All the Participants from Interview 2 agree with the definition provided by the researchers. Participant F highlights the value of customers being able nowadays to have more knowledge about the ingredients in the products they buy. Participant G further describes this: “I definitely think that everyone would benefit from putting all the cards on the table. I wish I could mention a brand that I feel told everything, was honest and open. Unfortunately, I don't feel that way. Most people have something that they don't tell it like it is. Fortunately, there are others, not me then, who question these and if they find anything, they make it known to the public. Then the company must be prepared to be held accountable. I like that about this trend, that companies can't get away with anything” (Appendix 8, p. 159).

As in interview 2, all the Participants agree with the definition provided during the interview. Additionally, Participant J highlights openness “(...) But being open would benefit both large and small businesses. It increases trust. Being honest goes a long way, so putting all the cards on the table lowers one's scepticism and increases trust.” (Appendix 9, p.180). Moreover, Participant M adds on the definition further in relation to today's perspective: “It is important that you are willing. I think there should be a law so that big companies can't withhold anything. Like an inspection to uncover bigger companies. So, you have people behind the scenes. There must be a system. I don't care if they are willing or not, there should be organisations that investigate companies like this. It must be difficult to get away with, for example, child slavery and such.” (Appendix 9, p. 180)

Prior experience with brand transparency, and individual importance (Hansen, 2005); (Oh, Prado, Korelo, & Frizzo, 2019)

Participants C experienced a positive experience with brand transparency, with the brand Karen Millen. “I was very fascinated with the designer Karen Millen, a somewhat expensive designer who had a few stores in Copenhagen. (...) The quality matched the price”. They elaborate: “She did not utilise much fur, but when she did, they advertised profoundly on the website. This was focused on the utilisation of fur from animals which died from natural causes, rather than slaughtering the animals for fur” (Appendix 7, p. 136). The participant describes how transparency is important in this instance, as the price is higher than their average expenditures and habits.

Participants D & A both mention the brand E-Cooking and explains the transparency in the physical description of ingredients included visibly on the label of the products, and available information of their website (Appendix 7, pp. 137). Participant A describes their perception of the brand as one inherited by a relative. They emphasise how E-Cooking’s value proposition to its consumers is the utilisation of their products for both consumption and external use (Appendix 7, p. 137). Both Participants value transparency in terms of what information is available on the product.

Participant H had a positive experience with a brand when they were treating themselves to something special from a designer store. “They were so caring and nice, so I really had a positive experience there. They were allure (...) generally excellent service. The quality was also fantastic and worth every penny.” (Appendix 8, p.158). Participant F had an experience not as pleasant, but this was not the store who provided bad service, but the information provided to Participant F afterwards that affected the experience. “Bought a pair of shoes from Nilsson's shoes. They were very handsome. Got good service and a totally okay price. (...) Felt confident in my decision and had a good attitude towards them when I left. (...) when I used them, someone asked if they were real snakeskin. So of course, I checked it out and unfortunately it was true. As she who works there did not say anything I felt cheated.” (Appendix 8, p.158). Both of these Participants now associate the brand with their experience.

Two Participants had experience with a brand that they now associate them after. Participants J: “Well, but after I found out about the kingfisher, I started checking out more local shops or farms. Found one and it was a very positive experience. Felt very transparent to come to a farm, see how all the animals live a good life and so on. Then I can know with a clear conscience that they have been well treated, even if it costs a little more.” (Appendix 8, p.157). Participants K adds with another experience: “Continuing on the animal track, one of my negative was a friend who told me about it and I was completely shocked. I boycott them. How can I use a product that does something so horrible?” (Appendix 9, p.179).

Perceived role of brand transparency within business conduct, and perceived importance (Donlan, 2021)

Participants C describes product transparency, stating “what you see on a physical product, the information you are given” (Appendix 7, p. 138).

Without knowing the exact terms, the Participants have described both product transparency, price transparency and supply chain transparency previously in the interview. They however find it difficult to define anything specific academically correct terms. After having the interviewer outline the definitions of these terms, Participants A expands on this response saying, “all the things a brand might wish to hide from its consumers”, describing information which are often not available to the consumers, represented in the links of the supply chain.

Participants C emphasises the personal importance of value transparency, as they believe “values are what we construct our entire behaviour on” (Appendix 7, p. 139). The Participants, however, acknowledges how price sensitivity can be a potential limitation in terms of facilitating purchases based solely on values. The exact examples are concerned with apparent animal-welfare products, such as make-up and eggs. An interesting statement made was how the Participants Hs very value-driven, even experiencing “consumer guilt” when not able to purchase products from transparent brands, as they tend to be expensive (Appendix, p. 149).

Regarding the importance of transparency, Participants D mentions the direct consequence of the lack thereof. The Participants states an instance when they discovered a brand, they

preferred, MAC, utilised animal testing, despite advertising to the opposite. When the Participants became aware, they boycotted the brand entirely and sought substitutive brands (Appendix 7, p. 152). The Participants stresses how it depends on their interest in a given industry. They specifically mention how purchasing transparent clothing is more of a coincidence, rather than a purpose. “Well, you purchase clothing made in different places, I at least do, without necessarily being aware of the conditions they were made. We are consumers after all” (Appendix 7, p. 140).

Participants quickly started discussing the supply chain transparency of clothes. “I'm thinking of those who make their clothes in China, Bangladesh and India. Thinking, you don't really know what their working conditions look like.” (Appendix 8, p.159). Participants C and D also mentioned this aspect on a previous occasion. Participants H also brings up Zara, as they have been accused of child labour. The participants further add: “Values are insanely important because human behaviour is based on it. Then of course it is also related to price, as we talked about earlier you associate higher price with better quality. Or at least I do. I like to buy a few expensive things from good organic places rather than more things for the same price.” (Appendix 8, p.159). Participants I also have a unique opinion regarding this subject: “I think about what we talked about earlier with slave conditions. It's not that I haven't been aware of it, but I honestly haven't cared enough. Because I can see that it says on the clothes where it is produced, but I don't put much energy into it. Now I sound really horrible. But I'm thinking that we all buy clothes from different countries without knowing. (...) We as consumers do not really have the responsibility and we should not have to work to know the truth, but it is our responsibility to express what we believe is wrong.” (Appendix 8, p.). All the Participants agree that being aware of every brand one buys from is not something people do. “I think you choose certain things you care more about and it shows more when you sit in a group like this and everyone has different areas they are passionate about. It would have been very exhausting if we had been aware of just about everything. Or yes, all the goods we buy. But you also learn a lot from sitting and talking like this, of course.” (Appendix 8, p. 163). The Participants were divided between animal, food, fashion and cosmetic.

Participants J and L starts discussing working condition in relation to supply chain, and further mentions slavery workers. Participants L adds: “I remember that a few years ago I read about the textile industry is today's slave labour for cheap clothes. Of course, this can make it difficult for me to trust, for example, H&M. Although I trust them more than Zara” (Appendix 8, p. 182). This assumption affects L and N view of fast fashion. Participants K says: “I think it happens to everyone, but I want to believe that if the clothes cost more, you also get them more. It feels terrible that they get as little that was previously released” (Appendix 9, p. 182). While Participants M says: “It affects my view of cheap clothing chains because of child labour and such” (Appendix 9, p. 182-183).

Perceived transparent brands in the Fashion Industry

Participants D mentions Swedish brand H&M, which was previously mentioned in the interview. They mention visible markers, such as various H&M items being equipped with a “visible green tag”, concerning sustainability (Appendix 7, p. 143). Participants A agrees and supplies, how this observation is also apparent in the German fashion platform Zalando (Appendix 7, p. 143).

Participants C mentions how they perceive Vero Moda to be a transparent brand, disclosing the utilisation of recycled materials. They emphasise the value they receive from purchasing these transparent items, but how they do not seek them out or research them (Appendix 7, p. 143).

Participants E mentioned the Swedish brand H&M again, as they mentioned earlier in the interview. Highlighted the fact that H&M have improved their sustainability and that the clothes that are sustainable are tagged (Appendix 8, p. 178). Participants H mentioned Jack & Jones as a transparent brand. “They have a factory list and they also want to expand their transparency in the factory department even more. I, who am very aware, also read up on this stuff. Have gone through their website and it says a lot about how materials and manufacturing is done. And that it addresses the issue of animals' well-being.” (Appendix 8, p. 168). Zalando was also briefly mentioned as it is an online store.

Participants K mentioned the Swedish brand Dagmar (Appendix 9, p.177). Participants L highlighted the fact that H&M have improved their sustainability and that they trust H&M sustainability path (Appendix 8, p.169). Participants J also adds a distrust towards Zara (Appendix 9, p.184).

Fashion Transparency Index 2021 assumptions and actual rankings

The general impression before the disclosure of the positioning of these two brands, was how H&M would score lower than Vero Moda on the Fashion Transparency Index. Participant C believe they are both relatively low, with approximately a 20% difference between their positions. Participants A describes the assumption of H&M positioning at 30-40 percent, while Participants B exclaims “at least under 50 percent” (Appendix 7, p. 143).

Potential altered perception

The Participants are all surprised about the rankings of the two brands, especially the revelation that H&M ranks higher than Vero Moda.

Participants C explains her reasoning by acknowledging the prejudice of how a Danish Brand should be more transparent than a large Swedish, globally marketed brand. The Participants elaborates: “It might be due to gullibility, that when it is a Danish brand, so it must be good. We have a welfare where attention is being drawn to the need for utilisation of local products and resources” (Appendix 7, p. 144).

Before revealing the rank of the H&M and Jack & Jones, which both was mentioned during this interview, the Participants were asked who they thought scored higher. All except Participant F thought H&M would score lower. Their estimation of price differed. Participants I thought both were around 30%. Participant G and F thought the difference were around 20% while Participants H thought H&M was about 30% and Jack & Jones on 60%. When the interviewer told them the ranks all except Participants E were surprised. To keep it within Scandinavia as well, the Interviewer also disclosed that Vero Moda which is a Danish brand

also scored the same as Jack & Jones. One of the Participants give a comment on this: I would say that it is actually good for us in Sweden that our brand is more transparent. It says a lot about the fact that we have good working conditions, production and such. Then maybe we as Swedes should not be as sceptical and a little more gullible.” (Appendix 8, p.169).

The Participants were not that shocked as they guessed H&M to be higher before it was revealed. Participants L said: “Represents Sweden” (Appendix 9, p.183). Furthermore, Participants J adds: “They haven't been perfect, so I thought they would be a little further down given that they weren't flawless but still good.” (Appendix 9, p.183).

Tasks

Task 1: Case Studies: Transparency in Action Ditty, Barry, Simpliciano, & Williot, 2021) pp. 24-25 “Fashion Transparency Index 2021”.

- 1. Unlawful union dismissal of workers in Asia with subsequent reinstatement
- 2. Correct identification of facilities and locations, as to better determine liability and environmental concerns
- 3. Forced labour and associations to detention camps

Immediate and initial reactions brand activity of disclosing their supply chain and associated partners (Hansen, 2005)

A minority of the Participants display awareness of how competition in the market affects some willingness to disclose suppliers or logistics in the supply chain, but regard this as a powerful example of how business is conducted without few, if any, tangible consequences.

Participants C displays a shocked attitude and mentions how “it seems transparency was key in order for external entities to intervene. They elaborate on how it “directly affects human rights”, while establishing a large gap; the lack of regulation from a governmental entity as the

proverbial root of the problem (Appendix 7, p. 146). C further mentions the paradox of wanting more transparency in brands, but living in a well-established country such as Denmark, as it directly violates their understanding of how people should be treated. One key focus of the statements is the word “credible” being repeated. When asked how this brand transparency should be conducted in a literal sense, Participants C argues: “the continuous need for reporting on these practices (...) Conducted by external entities in order to decrease the risk of misinformation” (Appendix 7, p. 147). They specify their response, stating how the respective countries or governmental bodies have a large responsibility in preventing these practices, perhaps by appointing an active, investigative body of people (Appendix 7, p. 151).

Of all the examples the Participants ended up discussing human rights. Participants E thought it was terrible that people are at so-called camps, and it is important that it ends (Appendix 8, p. 169-170). The Participants also highlighted the fact that “we live in two different worlds, and you don't know their perspective either. They may not be able to get another job so the little they get we may also deprive them of. But it's so reassuring to know it's been fixed and hope it doesn't happen again.” (Appendix 8, p. 170). Participants H raises the question to how a company can obtain credible information to their customers without sounding like they are sugar-coating to them (Appendix 8, p. 170) The Participants further comes with the suggestion to establish summaries from every industry that is created by someone external and not attached to the brands or industry (Appendix 8, p. 170).

Participant L expressed concerns regarding example one “It's wrong that it was so easy to fire people. Really think it might have something to do with their openness. This must have caused the remaining employees to have no trust. Which might affect loyalty and people quitting.” (Appendix 9, p. 184). In relation to example 2 Participant K expressed: “There should be rules concerning factories. You shouldn't just be able to say one place. Someone has to answer. In situations like this, transparency should be demanded. Harming people and the environment is terrible!” (Appendix 9, p. 184). Regarding the last example, Participants K and L again mention slavery worker and conclude “This is really due to companies not being transparent enough.” (Appendix 9, p. 182). Participant M expresses distrust in companies “You can't trust

companies in general. Everyone should be required to demonstrate that they do not use slave labour." (Appendix 9, p. 184).

Task 2: Perceived scale of Price transparency and Ethical Standard

(Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020) (Appendix 6).

Price transparency is deprioritised in the initial phase of the purchasing decision. Participants B emphasises: "It might be too excessive. That would require a higher level of involvement than I am prepared to spend" (Appendix 7, p. 145)

Participants D & C agrees, despite the fact that C finds the notion "interesting (...) I think it depends on the consumer type, but I personally look solely at the price compared to how much I get" (Appendix 7, p. 145).

The Participants stress how the physical attributes of the product, which are visible to the consumer, such as label design etc., should not be equipped with information on Brand Transparency. Participants C notes, nor should it be present in the physical stores Appendix 7, p. 148). This information should rather be available on the brand's website, where the consumer can research both the variable costs and the ethical standards in which the price has been determined. They would prefer not knowing the different stages of spending, labour wages, production, logistics etc., as the consumer might feel "cheated" if the mark-up was too great. They furthermore acknowledge the lack of knowledge as to whether this information would actually be cheap, address actual social concerns or provide proper wages to the labourers (Appendix 7, p. 145).

Participant D however, mentions the notion that it is generally accepted that the price of an item is changed significantly due to competition (Appendix 7, p. 146).

Or if a substantial amount would be spent on miscellaneous links, such as "administration", as was mentioned by A in an attempt to investigate what their donation actually went to (Appendix 7, p. 147). Participant D also emphasises how brand recognition is heavily influencing their purchases, despite maybe being aware that the cost does not match the price, but instead receives value from the brand itself" (Appendix 7, p. 147).

The task of price transparency was not taken as thought. The participants thought it was too excessive having the information provided during the purchasing decision. "I honestly think it would be way too extensive. At least for me. At the same time, I have to stand by what I said before about not looking for information either, so it's really good for people like me. So it would probably benefit all consumers." (Appendix 8, p. 170). Participant E brought up that besides feeling it is too extensive it would also contribute to feeling shameful. (Appendix 8, p. 171) Participant H has a positive approach to this "Yes, I'm trying to do this. So I think I'd be fine if I knew what the money goes to. Then I can feel good about the products I buy even if it would mean that my products cost more in the end, then at least it is maybe fair." (Appendix 8, p. 171). Participant G shares that they would feel fooled if they paid that much for something that did not cost more to make (Appendix 8, p. 171). When this was brought up, Participant H added that it would be good if companies had the price easily accessible so that customer has the opportunity to see what the money goes to (Appendix 8, p. 171). However, the participant also states that it would be too much information to have on clothing labels (Appendix 8, p. 171).

With this task, all participants in Interview 3 compared to Interview 2, felt positively about brands to be more transparent in relation to their pricing. However, they would not want it as a label in store. Participant K "So, maybe not in stores, but it should definitely be in front of it on all websites where you can shop." (Appendix 9, p. 185). Participant M adds "I know things are much more expensive than they cost to make. I like to see the whole process and all the details when I buy a product." (Appendix 9, p. 185).

The outcome of this task revealed the participants of the three interviews lean towards *Scenario 7: Low Production Disclosure & Ethical* of the Maira-example (Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020) (Appendix 6). This is elaborated as the inability to process excessive information in the purchasing moment, which can be misconstrued or misinterpreted. This might create a negative impact on the consumer, rather than positive, when disclosing the production costs. Scenario 7 is substantiated by the consumers for the brand to maintain high ethical standards. They however display the desire for the production information to be available for consumers to find, if they are inclined to search for this information, which would be *Scenario 9: High Production Disclosure & Ethical*.

Perceived Motives for brands being transparent

(Leonideou & Skarmeas, 2017). The participants are informed on the four motives: Egoistic-driven, Shareholder-driven, Strategic-driven and Value-driven.

The Participants of Interview 1 describe a commitment from transparent brands to be mainly intrinsic and value-driven. They acknowledge the altruism in being transparent with their brand activities, while also perceiving the brands' willingness to stand behind their actions as more active. To these Participants, the consensus lies in perceiving values to be the biggest driver behind transparency implementation.

Participant A describes how the largest motive for brands to become transparent, is to appear authentic and thereby increase consumer loyalty. A further elaborates how "if I know they are as transparent and credible as they say, I am more likely to become more loyal and then purchase more products from that particular brand" (Appendix 7, p. 148).

Participant D introduces the general paradox in believing "electric cars are environmentally friendly, but the production of electrical cars itself is harmful in many ways" (Appendix 7, p. 143).

However, Participant B mentions the issue with sustainability measures in product-focused industries such as fashion and electric cars, as information lacks where the brand sources and discards their materials (Appendix 7, p. 143). This focus is more extrinsic, as B outlines a profit-driven egoistic motive, in order to meet consumer demand for product qualities, while allowing consumers to perceive them as transparent.

They perceive both the strategic aspect in adhering to consumer demands of implementing more transparency but maintain the belief that they do it because of their altruistic values.

The Participants are divided in if they believe they are intrinsic or extrinsic-driven. Participant G believes that the willingness of a company to clean up after a scandal makes them more credible and transparent (Appendix 8, p. 172). The Participants also emphasises "It is important for many today to be sustainable, if they had not focused on it, I would have shopped at one of all other sustainable brands." (Appendix 8, p. 173). The Participants think the brand is sincere mainly due to the trend to being so (Appendix 9, p. 178). However,

Participant I does not share this view “I don't think everyone wants to be there solely for the sake of customers. I think they're thinking about their wins. Certainly, it benefits both parties in the end. But quite honestly, I don't think they think of us the way we think. They just want their money.” (Appendix 8, p. 172). However, most of the Participants concludes the brands are intrinsic-driven.

Participant M starts off the discussion with “I don't think they win by being transparent. No company wins by being fully transparent. The problem is that it is better to come out yourself than to have someone else do it. I think it is better to hide both from their value and from their investors. The harder it is to sweep something under the rug, the better it is to reveal. There is no incentive for big companies to come up with it, because then they will lose out on it.” (Appendix 9, p. 185). Participant L mention it is a trend (Appendix 9, p. 185) as well as strategic (Appendix 9, p. 186) while Participant K continues with “(...) the companies will get better value with the customer, which increases their profit and if the profit goes well, it helps their investors.” (Appendix 9, p. 185). Participant M concludes with “That's why you can't trust big companies especially.” (Appendix 8, p. 186).

Transparency in relation to Greenwashing, Green scepticism and negative WOM

(Nguyen, Yang, Nguyen, Johnson, & Cao, 2019); (Goh & Balaji, 2016)

The Participants often mention sustainability and greenwashing as the main topic of transparency reasoning. The relationship between transparency and greenwashing is therefore described as a cause and effect due to lack of meeting their promises.

Participant B elaborates how “I think the corporations which are the most transparent often do something good for the environment, because they want to be associated with making better inputs in the world. While the others, which are trying to hide something, are probably not the most sustainable or transparent. And the working conditions are probably not the best” (Appendix 7, p. 149).

When the participants start to discuss the relationship between transparency and greenwashing, sustainability keeps appearing. Participant H also brings up the interesting subject of generation: “If we talk about us as human beings, I think we're more questioning these days. Our generation may not always be, but those who are younger really ask questions which is great as customers. I'm impressed. Not only that we ask questions either, but the companies have to answer, those who do not answer are kind of outed. So, in the past when the companies have controlled the customer has changed to the customer being more in control and the companies have to follow what we want. So that's probably also why companies today are more transparent and sustainable in how they produce their products” (Appendix 8, p. 175). The relationship between sustainability was also strengthened with participant F statement: “It feels like those who are most transparent are doing something good for the environment because they want to appear like they're doing a good job for the world” (Appendix 8, p. 173).

Brand Transparency and perceived Scepticism of the Consumers

(Leonideou & Skarmeas, 2017)

Participant C says: “Yes, you can say I'm sceptical. (...) I have to blindly believe in what is claimed on the product, unless I conduct extensive research myself, by going into their website etc. but not all brands have websites on which you can seek information, so it's difficult to know where to look in order to negate the scepticism” (Appendix 7, p. 133).

This mentions the issue with both being generally sceptical towards transparency, but also having to trust in their preferred brands, unless they are told otherwise. Participant A describes how their scepticism is conditional, since: “If a brand is authentic and puts the cards on the table, their consumers are more likely to believe in their transparency and their claims. This will only increase loyalty, so not doing it truthfully would make me choose another brand” (Appendix 7, p. 136). This speaks to an underlying scepticism of whether brands are transparent and honest but is negated by trust in given brands.

Participant C follows up, saying: “You should not always cover up your slumps. (...) I think for me as a consumer, actively saying “We made a mistake, but we have become smarter” would win back my trust. They should then go out and show what changes they have made, because covering things up does not work for winning my trust” (Appendix 7, p. 150).

Participant A agrees and adds: “I need to see actual change and a plan for how they intend to implement these changes. Otherwise, I will be even more negatively impacted. That would probably only increase scepticism. (...) But it depends on the brand, because if it is not important to me, I might not care” (Appendix 7, p. 150).

The participants were asked if they felt sceptical towards transparency, and all agreed to have some level of scepticism. Participant E acknowledge to be sceptical, however, the Participant also chooses to trust the brand in question and not dig deeper (Appendix 8, p. 156). The Participants also provides us with the opinion of “I've always thought that it was pretty safe to buy Scandinavian brands that we talked about earlier.” (Appendix 8, p. 157). Participant G says: “It feels even if the bigger brands are allowed to be more closed to yes, their reputation type. While the new small businesses need to put everything forward. Especially local, I feel like they're really authentic now that I think about it.” (Appendix 8, p. 155). This is interesting, as it highlights the alternative that smaller businesses are more willing to be transparent than larger ones. The statements further do not solely discuss scepticism towards the specific brand per say are transparent and honest. It also highlights the trust they want to feel from the brands. The participant would be keener to be able to forgive the brand that have misbehaved if the brand went out with the information themselves (Appendix 9, p. 187). This is due to the trust and honesty being jeopardized when it comes out to the public from someone else.

The Participants were asked if they felt sceptical towards transparency, and all agreed to have some level of scepticism. Where all are strongly sceptical. Participant L revealed “I can feel sceptical about the skin care industry.” (Appendix 9, p. 179). Participant J agrees to be sceptical to a certain degree (Appendix 9, p. 179). Participant M think there are companies that are honest, as well as there are a lot of companies that lie and withhold information (Appendix 9, p. 179).

Perceived brand betrayal of trust due to false advertising as transparent (Leonideou & Skarmeas, 2017)

Participant D previously stated how they experienced that exact scenario, when discovering a favourite make-up brand did not meet their transparent communication (Appendix 7, p. 136). Their immediate response was to exchange their products for other brands. Afterwards, they have completely disregarded this brand from their personal habitual purchases.

Participant A describes the need to relay their experience if a brand failed to meet their transparency efforts, especially if it was not communicated from the brand itself, but rather a third party (Appendix 7, p. 150).

Participant A acknowledges that broken trust would have a massive impact on their brand perception. If trust were to be broken, it is difficult to retain or rebuild consumer and brand relationships. They elaborate how “if you feel loyalty towards a brand and they hurt you, it feels very personal. You are basically familiar friends with this brand and feel personally hurt. Then it takes extreme measures for them to regain my trust towards this brand” (Appendix 7, p. 151).

Participant C follows up, saying how the key to a healthy and respective relationship is “to establish a set of rules beforehand (...) This can be directly referenced to the fashion industry, where the set of rules might be legislative measures or such” (Appendix 7, p. 151).

Participant E compared human relationship with brand to customer relationship. “If you are loyal, you probably have some connection to the brand. Surely talked a lot of good about it and then all of a sudden, it's destroyed. Imagine yourself that you consider someone a close friend and then you see that they hurt you in some way. Then it goes without saying that it will take time to regain trust. The same probably applies to brands, if you are loyal, it will take time and the relationship will always be changing and never be the same.” (Appendix 8, p. 172). Furthermore, Participants H opened up about being able to totally boycott a brand this due to this “one can always find alternatives. Usually, cheaper options that are better and more open. So, it would take more than them saying they have a good experience. Maybe a little more proof that they actually changed.” (Appendix 8, p. 167).

In relation to giving an example of the relationship between transparency and greenwashing, the participants were not too shocked as most are sceptical. Participant M says “I want to trust them but i as a normal person don't know of any method to find out if i can trust them. (...)” (Appendix 9, p. 186). Participants K felt upset “If my friends had told me this, I would have been as shocked then as I am now. Now I buy the pieces at Zara or H&M so it doesn't affect me.” (Appendix 9, p. 186). Participants L adds: “It doesn't surprise me to be sceptical of them. I feel no loyalty to them, especially not now. After all, they have shown that they are not honest or open in the past, so why would they not hide something now.” (Appendix 9, p. 186).

Negative or Positive WOM vocalisation (Hustvedt & Kang, 2013)

It directly affects their willingness to buy, and they would vocalise their experience to others if they had either a positive or a negative experience. Participant A describes a scenario where H&M was caught burning the clothes which were donated from consumers to physical H&M stores. They describe how, if they were invested in H&M specifically, they would be outraged: “If I had donated a lot of clothes to H&M and I found out they simply burned it, I would boycott them. (...) I would convince people to join “my side” and emphasise how angry I was and how bad it was that they burned my clothes” (Appendix 7, p. 150).

Participant D emphasises how a positive experience would generate the same equal response to pass on positive experiences while also placing great trust in the word of mouth they receive from acquaintances. This is due to their own need to research the transparency claims of the cosmetic brand they have built trust towards. They do stress, however, that it is more likely that they would be persuaded by familiar relationships over negative experiences with transparency, and actively vocalise a negative experience (Appendix 7, pp. 141, 150).

Discussing H&M the scandal of them burning clothes that should have been recycled and they were asked what they felt in relation to this effect. Participant H was very upset and felt their trust would be gone if they had been a loyal customer (Appendix 8, p. 174). The participants however also acknowledge that they have owned up to their mistake and become wiser

(Appendix 8, p. 174). Participant I was indifferent due to never turning in clothes (Appendix 8, p. 174). As Participant I, Participants F was thinking from a loyal customer perspective, “No, but I can imagine that if you are one of the people who handed in clothes for them to be recycled, you find out that they were burned. Then I wouldn't be happy.” (Appendix 8, p. 174). The distrust is very visible here and many would feel let down as shown. However, the strongest opinion was from Participants G “That's one reason to boycott them. They wouldn't get me back as a customer anyway. (...) Probably other brands have learned something from their mistakes as well.” (Appendix 8, p. 174). All of the Participants agreed that if the information was provided to them in current time, they would have told their family, friends and acquaintances.

The participants were not very expressive with their answer, as they thought in relation to the H&M scandal that the choice was obvious. All of them agreed that they would vocalise their experience. Participants M said that “the truth must come out.” (Appendix 9, p. 186).

Sub-conclusion

Knowledge of brand transparency amongst consumers is very limited in technical definitions. However, the general understanding of brand transparency provides insight into what constitutes important aspects of brand transparency and brand trust towards given brands. The Participants felt they had a better understanding of the definition after the interview. The common focus was the sustainability as well as often trust and loyalty was mentioned.

5.3 Data Coding

Several keywords and patterns have emerged from the conducted focus group interviews. In this subchapter, the data collected from the previous paragraph will be further analysed and coded. This method is conducted in order to analyse commonalities between responses of the Participants and further interpret on potential meanings. Firstly, the observed keywords will

be presented. Secondly, any distinguishable patterns will be described and interpreted.

5.3.1 Keywords

Trust

Participants A-D from the first interview all agreed that *Trust* was an essential factor when put in context with different brands and industries (Appendix 7, p. 135).

Trust is a repetitive keyword and recurring theme, as it is mentioned throughout the different interviews. Trust was mentioned often in all of the interviews and was often related to loyalty. In the second interview, Participants E even provided a direct link between the two concepts “After all, loyalty is linked to trust.” (Appendix 8, p. 172).

Honesty

Honesty is another keyword which is observed in interviews 1, 2 and 3. Participants D juxtaposes honesty with transparency, saying: “Especially this with willingly putting the cards on the table. Because questions are bound to be asked” (Appendix 7, p. 136).

Participant E has a similar answer to Participants D in relation to honesty. “What I mean is that you're kind of honest in what you're saying. So, it kind of doesn't come out later that you have a hidden agenda type.” (Appendix 8, p. 154). Before fashion-industry was brought up, honesty was mentioned in relation to bamboo as toilet paper by Participants F “Yes, what I think makes companies or brands that deal with bamboo both open and honest, are probably those that have FSC-certification.” (Appendix 8, p. 165). Participant E mentions “Yes, so I think H&M is authentic. They include us customers more and more in their what to say, process or what goes on before the clothes end up in the store. It's something that they've also gotten better with, over time. Feels like it may also be extra important for us Swedes, as it is a Swedish company that they represent our standard of yes authenticity and honesty. Thinking that it can vary from country to country as well, what even the standard is on.” (Appendix 8, p. 155). By that Participant E thinks Swedish people value honesty and therefore, so should the Swedish brand also do. The Participants further stated, “loyalty is connected to trust” (Appendix 8, p. 172).

Local (brands)

Another keyword mentioned by Subject A, D & C was *Local brands* (Subject A; D; C, Appendix 7, pp. 133, 134, 144). Participants D and C from Interview 1 described how they experience a general larger degree of trust towards established, local brands (Appendix 7, p. 132). Participant C presents the notion that it might be due to a prejudice that Denmark is a welfare country with more strict regulations concerning production and might be affected by EU standards (Appendix 7, p. 157).

In interview number 2 local brands were not mentioned that much. It was solely mentioned twice. Once when authenticity was discussed as Participant G emphasised that not only small companies need to be transparent, but the Participants also felt that local brands felt more authentic (Appendix 8, p. 155). It was further mentioned in relation to scepticism, where Participant F brought to attention that it is difficult enough to do extra research as a customer, but it is even more difficult on local brands as they might not have a website to look up (Appendix 8, p. 156). The Participants also adds that googling a local brand would not assist in figuring out if the brand is transparent or not (Appendix 8, p. 156).

Scepticism

Participant B mentions a sceptical approach to general production and the adjoined processes. They specifically mention product-focused industries, such as electric cars and repurposed materials such as recycled textiles such as cotton. There is a scepticism towards how the process actually is. This also concerns storage facilities and treatment of products which are covert to the consumers (Appendix 7, p. 144).

Other industries participants display scepticism towards are the cosmetic industry and the food industry, as it directly concerns human health, as mentioned by Participants D & A (Appendix 7, pp. 133 & 140). If this brand is not transparent and truthful, the repercussions would be great, as allergies and dietary restriction dominate the selection process.

Participant H thinks Swedish people should not be as sceptical as one is and be more gullible (Appendix 9, p. 169). This was in relation to the ranking index as all the Participants expected a different outcome of the percentage. When discussing various industries, Participant G states "I'm thinking of the makeup or skincare industry for example. Many people claim, as now, that they are not tested on animals, but how do you know?" (Appendix 8, p. 157; Appendix 9, p. 181). Participant H suggest looking up lists on internet where it stat if they test on animals or not (Appendix 8, p. 157). In relation to scepticism a statement from Participant G sticks out when discussing the food industry "I really think it's hard regardless of industry to be 100% transparent. Think maybe bigger companies have more to lose if they were to be so transparent. The new companies still have a bit of a head start on being able to start being transparent today." (Appendix 8, p. 157). This shows a greater scepticism towards larger brands than smaller brands.

Loyalty

Loyalty fluctuates throughout the interviews. The general consensus is that loyalty plays a considerable role in determining which brands are trustworthy and thereby transparent. It was also perceived to be established between a brand and a consumer, similar to how loyalty is established between two parties of a friendship. Participant A described how this is not established properly, it would be near impossible to regain this trust (Appendix 7, p. 150).

Loyalty appeared numerous times in the second interview. Participant H was very early to state loyalty to all brands the Participants buys. This is because the Participant H has done research on them before as health and veganism is very important (Appendix 8, p. 158). Participant G further adds to loyalty when discussing H&M rank. "I think H&M, with their scandals, probably hasn't always been so high in the rank you showed before. But I think they realise that they've got a lot of loyal customers now that they've cleaned up and are more credible. They have really become better at putting all the cards on the table, which then means that customers will be more loyal and buy more products, in this case clothes and makeup, from them. You know they're doing something good these days and investing in sustainability. It is important for many today to be sustainable, if they had not focused on it, I would have shopped at one of all other sustainable brands." (Appendix 8, p. 172). With the

statement it also strengthens how sustainability affects loyalty due to the emerging trend. Participants E adds: “They sell more if we trust them and especially if you become loyal in the bargain and buy the majority of their clothes then from the same brand.” (Appendix 8, p. 172). This adds how important loyalty is in relation to sales as well as trust. When explaining loyalty Participants E adds: “Just like with people, if you have confidence in someone, you will also be loyal on some level and probably invest in the relationship. So, if we then have a brand that we feel loyalty to, we will invest more money in their products. After all, we want things to go well for them, because no one wants to lose their favourite brands.” (Appendix 8, p. 172). It is a great way to show another perspective of the relationship between customer and the brand itself. Participants E also discusses how the relationship is affected if an action or decision a brand has made affects a customer negatively, “If you are loyal, you probably have some connection to the brand. Surely talked a lot of good about it and then all of a sudden, it's destroyed. Imagine yourself that you consider someone a close friend and then you see that they hurt you in some way. Then it goes without saying that it will take time to regain trust. The same probably applies to brands, if you are loyal, it will take time and the relationship will always be changing and never be the same.” (Appendix 8, p. 175).

This is usable information as it shows the correlation between loyalty, trust and transparency.

5.3.2 Patterns

1. Degree of interest

One pattern which emerged from the interviews was how the need for brand transparency depends on the level of interest from the individual consumer. Participant D described the interest in researching the transparency of a brand if it is in a certain industry of interest; in this instance the cosmetic industry (Appendix 7, p. 151). Both Participants B and A agree that it depends entirely on what brands you use regularly and their respective areas of interest; in this instance consumption or cars.

There was an interesting difference in degree of interest in group two and three as well as knowledge about brand transparency. Participant M in interview three explains how

meticulous they research their product before buying (Appendix 9, p. 181). In interview 2, most of them had a high interest but mostly for a specific industry, rather than an overall interest.

2. Brand Transparency and loyalty

Another pattern which emerged is an apparent connection between perceived *brand transparency* and perceived loyalty towards the brand.

In Interview 1, Participant A implies how the perceived honesty and transparency from a brand directly affects their loyalty towards that given brand multiple times throughout the interview (Appendix 7, pp. 148, 151). This opinion associating the two terms was further substantiated by Participant C, stating how trust is important in order to create consumer loyalty.

Perceived *brand transparency* and perceived loyalty towards the brand was one of the clear patterns in the second interview. As mentioned in coding, honesty and trust affect loyalty. Participant E was the one highlighting the importance of loyalty in relation to *brand transparency* the most (Appendix 8, p. 172). As written in Coding, participant E gave great examples of the view of the relationship. In Interview 3, loyalty was not as much mentioned as scepticism. participant L mentions loyalty amongst workers regarding one of the tasks (Appendix 9, p. 184)

3. Prior knowledge or lack thereof

There is a general difficulty in determining the prior knowledge of brand transparency of the Participants. A pattern emerges in the ability of the Participants to conceptualise the term and explain the overt associations they establish. As this is done from a subjective standpoint, it produces the general impression that brand transparency is a vaguely known term to millennial, Scandinavian consumers.

It was visible from the beginning that the knowledge of brand transparency differed between participants. While conducting the interview it was shown some were more active and passionate about the issue than others. It was discussed during the interview if their view had

changed by discussing brand transparency with each other to further observe what they thought. Participant E said: "Getting a definition of where brand transparency is has been good for me. It has strengthened my interest in it to find out what is needed and what I can do. Put more focus on what's actually happening behind closed doors." (Appendix 8, p. 175). This is clearly observed during the interview, both through body language and engagement. Moreover, it was one Participant who stood out in regard to the understanding of transparency and knowledge about the subject and that was Participant H. The awareness is clearly shown in the last statement: "As I said before, I think it has a lot to do with generations. We do little but I also said before that the generation after us is even more well-read about the green transition, transparency and above all has much more overview of what is actually in the products you buy. However, my understanding has not been affected much as I think I am very conscious. So, I will continue with my vegan products and read up on everything I can about ingredients." (Appendix 8, p. 175). The difference in knowledge is observed when hearing Participant I's comment: "I've also gained a better understanding with where it actually means and is. However, as you may have understood, I do not have that ambition or energy to want to make an effort to investigate things. It's a task I don't think is up to me. Sure, they will come up in front of me on Instagram, newspaper or I will of course keep up to date, but I do not actively search." (Appendix 8, p. 175). The other two were very neutral towards the question and both stated they might do a bit more research but nothing heavy. With this it could be stated the prior knowledge was not extensive. However, they all left with a deeper understanding of brand transparency and are able to utilise their gained knowledge further. In interview three, Participant M had great knowledge beforehand of the importance of being transparent. The Participant thinks regulations should exist in relation to transparency (Appendix 9, p. 181). Participant J also expresses that openness would be beneficial for both big and small companies and it also can affect trust (Appendix 9, p. 181).

4. Word of Mouth affects Purchasing Intention

The participants from Interviews 1, 2 and 3, agree they are affected by opinions or experiences of familial relationships. Participants A-D particularly are open to being affected by positive WOM and acknowledge how this might change their opinion of a brand's authenticity

(Appendix 7, p. 141). Participant A, however mentions that the attempt of being swayed by positive WOM from a familiar relation towards a given brand, will deem the brand switch unlikely if having a negative experience of the brand prior (Appendix 7, p. 142).

This is a noticeable pattern, which is emphasised through both a positive word of mouth perspective from the Participants' sister (Appendix 7, p. 142) and a negative word of mouth perspective based on a personal experience they would be inclined to vocalise themselves (Appendix 7, p. 141).

The WOM was shown to have a great impact on the purchase intentions. However, it is a great chance to affect purchase intention if it is negative than positive. Participant H clearly states it would be hard to change a negative experience towards a brand to something positive, it would demand numerous proofs of change in behaviour (Appendix 8, p. 167). Even if sceptical, Participant M would search for further information to not make any rash decisions (Appendix 9, p. 183) while Participants K states she has no issues boycotting brand (Appendix 8, p. 181) and even if provided with positive WOM it would be a very slim chance they would be given a second chance.

5. Social awareness and generational expectancies

Participant C displays a continuous acknowledgement in being affected by the social norms and sanctions, however lacking to adhere to the actual supposed interest. This is apparent in the answer: "But if you do not make an effort yourself, which I don't always do, because well maybe I am supposed to want to, but. Then it is the price or what I have available" (Appendix 7, p. 134). Participant E further displays this aspect, when stating: "The reason I don't think we consider it, is that we are consumers. (...) People might be expecting transparency from brands, but do they as consumers know how business is constructed, cause I don't? All these impacts from demands, like norms or social values. I don't think about who is a CEO, or what values a specific brand has, maybe I should. Since I don't, I feel this consumer guilt, or people expect me to get it" (Appendix 7, p. 144). This is also seen in participant A, as they express how they "maybe should care" about transparency in the fashion industry and working conditions (Appendix 7, p. 140).

Several participants furthermore disclose the generational expectancy of awareness towards holding brands accountable for their actions.

Participant A describes how: "I think the demand for transparency only continues to increase, and the generation after us will be even more invested" (Appendix 7, p. 153). An opinion which was supported by Participants D, stating; "how it (the interest) is expected to increase with each generation" (Appendix 7, p. 153).

Participant J stated, "I think when our generation is a little older and the younger one starts to get into the world of work that we're going to get a lot further with not being as for-profit." (Appendix 9, p. 185). It shows the gap between Millennials and Gen Z is apparent when it comes to social awareness and brand transparency. Participant H also states that in comparison to earlier generations, the Millennials are more questionable in relation to brand transparency and the social awareness is increasing (Appendix 8, p. 173). Participant H further agrees with participant J that Gen Z will have more knowledge about transparency and sustainability (Appendix 8, p. 173).

6. Public regulation and external governance

An interesting pattern which emerged from the data, was a large emphasis on a required repurposing of resources. This entails a coherent set of legislation and public regulation of the corporate activities which are then communicated to the consumers (Appendix 7, p. 152). Another aspect of this pattern is reflected in the need for more common measures in publishing reports, which are preferably conducted by external entities (Appendix 7, p. 147).

The second and third interview did not get heavily involved with regulations as it was not mentioned by the Participants. This might be a lack of knowledge regarding this subject. The Participants mentioned the aspect of external governance solely when Participant H suggested an external report from each industry in order for brands to be more credible (Appendix 8, p. 170).

7. Convenience and accessibility

Several statements reveal how habits and preferences play a large part in whether or not a Participant wishes to conduct their own research into transparent brands. Visibility and habitual purchase coincide with general purchasing behaviour. Participant C stresses how despite having the wish to conduct research into whether a product matches their values and beliefs, access plays a considerable role in the purchase situation and so does price (Appendix 7, p. 135). Participant A also stresses how they might not seek the transparency information, but they support the belief that the information should be available to consumers (Appendix 7, p. 145).

As in the first interview, the second also revealed that preference plays a large part in whether or not Participants wish to conduct their own research into transparent brands. It discussed how gathering knowledge is a consideration which most saw as an issue. Especially when it comes to if one wants to look up specific ingredients (Appendix 8, p. 157, Appendix 9, p. 179, 180). Participant I further agrees with this as it is neither convenient or accessible, and Participant I thinks it tiring to need to put so much effort into it (Appendix 8, p. 158). In interview 3 it is discovered that for a product “certifications are sometimes worth their weight in gold” (Appendix 9, p. 180). As it is the most accessible way to discover a brand is syncing with one's own values and beliefs.

8. Visible stimuli and physical markers

A lot of trust is placed in the qualities of the physical products the participants consume. Visible markers and writing on the product label are aspects that weigh heavily for the Participants, as they might not always find themselves in a position where they can research the values and transparency of a given brand or product. Then they would often determine the price of the product (Appendix 7, p. 134) or choose another brand entirely (Appendix 7, p. 134).

The participants are not keen to search further for information, they like the information to be visible on labels (Appendix 8, p. 171). However, when it comes to having the whole product line on the label, it was not favourable (Appendix 9, p. 185). Participant F mentions several

times how researching is not something they want to do put down time to conduct. Furthermore, as ecological choices are discussed within different industries, a clear pattern is observed. Participant G states: “Yes, I would probably say that I have great confidence in such markings. As well as, I really trust it if it says something is organic. Then of course all the etiquettes are good to have, but there can also be too many different etiquettes that stand for minimally different things I feel. I don't always know the difference. But I'm always looking at egg packs about this if they're free-range anyway (Appendix 8, p. 159). As well as Participant E mention the preference in H&M now when their clothes have a physical marker if they are ecological or not (Appendix 8, p. 168). Compared to the other interviews, interview 3 was keener to supply chain transparency. Two of them agreed that there should be a price visible for every clothing product, as they both would rather know what their money goes towards (Appendix 9, p. 182). Participant K has, interestingly enough, a similar suggestion as Participant H in interview 2 “I think it's good that companies have it available so that customers have the opportunity to go in and see what the money has gone to. However, I can well agree that it shouldn't be on labels because then in all the fall I would just think that there is too much information.” (Appendix 8, p. 171), where Participant K said “maybe not in the stores but it should definitely introduce it on all websites where you can shop.” (Appendix 9, p. 185)

9. Brand/Consumer relationship is compared to personal relationships

A pattern emerges in the personification of the brand to consumer relationship. Several times through the interviews, the Participants emphasise how trust between people can be directly transferred to the relationship between brand and consumer. Participants A and I, independent of each other, both mention how their loyalty and trust toward a brand is similar to the feelings they would invest in a friendship. Participant A says:” It is like every other, sort of, relationship you might even say friendship. If you feel loyalty towards a brand (...), it feels like you are friends” (Appendix 7, p. 151). They further describe how they invest time and resources into getting to know a brand, and therefore expect to be provided with a service they can believe is as it is supposed to be. As described under the keyword Trust, participant B even states how a brand can hurt you, which will have a negative effect on the relationship,

similar to when you are being hurt by a friend or someone you have placed trust in (Appendix 7, p. 151).

In the interviews, it became apparent that there existed a personal relationship between brand and consumers. Participant L emphasises how important it is for a brand to have an open relationship with their consumers, both good and bad sides to show authenticity (Appendix 9, p. 177). Participant E compares the relationship with a brand to a friendship. How loyalty is connected to trust, and how the degree of trust to the other party will increase one's loyalty and how much one invests in that specific relationship (Appendix 8, p. 172). This is true for participant E as if they feel loyalty, they will invest more money in the products as participant E are keener for the brand to do well (Appendix 8, p. 172). This was further developed when discussing distrust, as participant E stated that it would be possible to forgive, however it would take time to regain trust and the relationship between the consumer and the brand would forever be changed (Appendix 8, p. 175).

10. Accountability will negate the risks for brands

In relation to the pattern above on familiarity, a participant specified the need for a brand to acknowledge and take accountability if a “shitstorm” happens, because it is arguably inevitable for large brands (Appendix 7, p. 132). Participant D mentioned: “If you know you have a lot of customers who seek something in particular, it would be in the brand’s best interests to publish this information themselves. Especially to the extent that they are aware that what they did does not live up to the expectations of the consumer” (Appendix 7, p. 151). The participants furthermore suggested that they would prefer a brand having been at the centre of such a scandal, regarding transparency communication, if that brand changed. This specifically requires tangible evidence to display their issue, and how they intend to address it, through specific measures and actions.

Participant C notes: “You should not always hide your failures. (...) To me, as a consumer, to regain my trust, they need to show everything and say “Yeah, we figured it out, but we have also gotten smarter in the process”. They should actively go out and show “Okay, we are doing

this and that differently”. Because hiding something or covering it up, will just lose me even more” (Appendix 7, p. 150).

It was a coherent pattern through the interviews that the Participants viewed accountability would negate the risks for brands. Participant H states “It would have been better for them not to be caught without saying it yourself. I feel like it's always better to be honest in the long run (Appendix 8, p. 175). Whereas participant M mentions: “It is always better to tell yourself. I think there are lots more secrets than came out. After all, companies are first and foremost profit-making” (Appendix 9, p. 187) . Participants J also adds that honesty always rewards itself in the long-run, and also states the brand in that case does not have to be the one who gets caught in a “shitstorm”.

Sub-conclusion:

The coding and analysis provided the research study with several important observed findings. This regarded keywords and patterns observed directly in the opinions and responses from the participants, while also paying attention to values and unspoken aspects. The emerged keywords were: Local brands, Trust, Honesty, Loyalty and Scepticism.

Moreover, patterns from the analysis section 5.3.2 were observed and further coded to be more coherently presented. These ten emerged patterns were:

1. *Degree of Interest*
2. *Brand transparency and Loyalty*
3. *Prior Knowledge or Lack Thereof*
4. *Word of Mouth affects the purchasing intention*
5. *Social awareness and generational expectancies*
6. *Public regulation and external governance*
7. *Convenience and Accessibility*

8. Visible stimuli and physical markers

9. Brand/Consumer relationship is compared to personal relationships

10. Accountability will negate the risks for brands

The generated data from the interviews, along with findings of the conducted coding, will be further discussed and interpreted in the Discussion Chapter of the thesis.

6. Discussion

This chapter constitutes the discussion of the results generated from the chapter 5. Analysis. The structure of this chapter will follow that of the Analysis Chapter to a great extent. This has been done to enhance readability to the reader. Furthermore, is it done to organically present the previously generated, in a familiar sequence.

The data gathered and analysed will be discussed and interpreted. Finally, Attribution Theory will be applied to the data in order to determine the various potential associations between consumer behaviour and brand transparency. This discussion will be conducted in order to answer the Research Question, which is restated below.

The relevant problem was presented in Introduction section 1.1. To reiterate the purpose of the research study, the Research Question and Research Problem, which was stated in the Introduction Chapter 1.1, will be re-introduced and presented:

How can brand transparency be utilised to affect the purchase intention of a consumer?

The study of this thesis seeks to discover whether the correlation between brand transparency and consumer purchase intention is positive, by utilising attribution theory. It is relevant to investigate the effects of brand transparency, as transparency has become a fixture in perceived success of brand's business conduct. However, the motives of brands implementing

transparency has caused scepticism in consumers, as to why brands choose to implement it and what their motives are perceived to be. Existing academia suggests there is a relation between consumer perception towards a brand which prioritises being transparent and their subsequent purchase intention.

By conducting interviews with conscious consumers, the thesis seeks to investigate which perceived motives of brands align with consumers' purchase intentions, whether it be consciously or subconsciously. By conducting this research, the thesis takes into account the potential scepticism towards brands in the fashion industry. It will simultaneously investigate the issues associated with brand transparency and determine what the consumers view as yielding value.

6.1 Part 1 - Interview responses

This section of the analysis addresses the motives for the questions provided to the Participants of the interview, and what the purpose was. This thesis seeks to answer how brand transparency can affect purchase intention. Therefore, it was relevant to establish the current knowledge base of consumers. Firstly, the Participants had to establish their subjective meaning of "authenticity" and "brand transparency" (Oh, Prado, Korelo, & Frizzo, 2019); Yang & Battacchio, 2021).

6.1.2 Brand Transparency

This thesis study mainly seeks to analyse the effect of brand transparency in relation to consumers purchasing decision and scepticism. A definition from Dolan, K. (2021) was utilised in order for everyone to be on the same page (Donlan, 2021). Participants could agree or disagree with this provided statement, and further explain. This focus stems from the growing trend for brands to be transparent with their customers (Oh, Prado, Korelo, & Frizzo, 2019).

The researchers expected the participants to associate brand transparency with the fashion industry, but they largely regarded the food and cosmetics industry. This was explained to be according to perceived interest. Many brands were mentioned, mainly Danish brands, but also Swedish brands to a smaller extent. The focus was maintained on fast fashion brands, as the Participants regarded these brands as needing transparency, due to potential questionable business conduct and sourcing. This displayed a sceptical aspect of perceived qualities. One participant L mentioned a luxury brand, which emphasised on animal welfare when using fur, and a price that reflects high ethical standards, which displayed an internal attribution of the given consumer. This directly addressed perceived brand authenticity, which in turn enforces personal values of the consumer and their perceived self (Oh, Prado, Korelo, & Frizzo, 2019).

To conclude the section of brand transparency, the researcher narrowed the focus down to the fashion industry, and therefore utilised the Fashion Transparency Index 2021 (Ditty, Barry, Simpliciano, & Williot, 2021). The Participants could freely choose a brand they perceived as transparent before being shown the Fashion Transparency Index 2021 with quantitative results of brands. In order to further engage the Participants more actively, the researchers provided three scenarios from the Fashion Transparency Index. These supply chain transparency examples provided for the Participants, included specific incidents in the fashion industry where transparency has made a significant impact. This generated information, which suggested that governmental entities are lacking, and that formal regulation is highly needed. The Participants described little need to research supply chains themselves to that extent but expressed an interest in disassociation from such reported brands. The need to research brand's supply chains relies on the individual consumer's degree of interest.

In order to investigate the effect of price transparency on a consumer's purchase intention, the Participants were presented with nine different scales of ethical standards and price transparency (Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020). The results of the Maira-case example exercise demonstrated an interesting insight into price transparency. The Participants in all three interviews perceived complete price transparency as an unnecessary inclusion to a physical product and label, but necessary to offer. They defended this view, by stating that consumers are often misled by competitive mark-up pricing and fail to distinguish whether the price is

actually fitting for a given product. This might only create confusion and be overwhelming in the purchasing moment.

This is a surprising outcome of the tasks, as the researchers expected the Participants to prefer complete transparency in both instances. They, however, suggested that this information should be available if anyone did indeed have an interest in investigating these reasons. This is particularly important to mention, as this speaks to the need for information transparency. Then it would be up to the individual consumer to decide whether they would pursue the information.

The participants were asked about their subjective experiences with brand transparency, and whether it plays an active role in their decision-making regarding purchases. This aspect is essential to address, as this directly concerns the research question. The respondents described a willingness-to-buy, if brands include transparency throughout their business conduct, as they will be positively affected - if the brands are indeed driven by values. It is however, important to note, that it is not an initial factor in the given purchase, but rather due to brand recognition and knowledge of the given brand. The Participants acknowledged that this relationship between brand and themselves as consumers, is highly built on trust and the brand's willingness to be accountable. A main take away from this study is how the Participants highly regard the fashion industry as value-driven, and rarely mention aspects of profitable or strategic actions.

When discussing their willingness-to-buy, the consumers were also asked about word-of-mouth marketing. They responded that they were highly affected by their personal relationships, both in regard to positive and negative word of mouth. An important notation was, however, that once having had a negative experience with a brand, it would constitute great difficulty in actually changing their beliefs to positive. They also mentioned how they experienced great willingness-to-punish said brand, providing massive amounts of negative word of mouth to others (Sweetin, Knowles, Summey, & McQueen, 2013). This would be done due to the arisen distrust towards that given brand. In the interpretation of the responses,

trust and transparency are juxtaposed to the consumers. The consumers continuously compared the perceived loyalty and trust they felt towards a brand, directly compared to the relationships between individuals.

6.1.3 The four motives

As the relationship between brands and consumers is key for this study, it was relevant to analyse the Participants' view on brands' transparency in regard to hidden motives and scepticism. These motives were defined by Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013). The Participants were not directly asked questions in relation to the motives initially, it was the interviewers' task to observe and define where these motives were identified, as it was not expected that the Participants knew the definition of these motives. After their initial thoughts, the Participants were asked about which of the four motives was more aligned with their own perceptions of brand's motivations for including brand transparency. The interviewers focused on the egoistic-, stakeholder-, and value-driven motives as they connect to brand scepticism and consumer behaviour (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). These four motives were utilised to see if Participants saw brands to be intrinsic or extrinsic, as further described by Skarmeas & Leonidou (2017). Therefore, the four motives were further used to define if Participants viewed a brand to be profit-driven or action-driven when it comes to brand transparency (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017). They generally displayed belief in brands being altruistic and value-driven.

6.1.4 Transparency in relation to greenwashing, green scepticism and negative WOM

A general observation from the interviews is the difficulty in distinguishing the difference between transparency on business conduct, and not necessarily directly linking it to sustainability. This demonstrates a strong relationship between transparency and scepticism. According to the interviews, the consumers generally perceive a substantial relationship between scepticism towards a given brand and negative word of mouth they were subjected to from a familiar relationship. As this is a relationship they personally trust, they are more likely to be persuaded to develop negative associations.

Skarmeas & Leonidou (2017) focus on the sceptical aspect towards transparency and insincere advertisements. This was utilised in the interview as the study seeks to find out if false advertisement will affect purchase decision and view of transparency (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017).

6.2 Part 2 - Keywords and their meaning

The keywords presented in the analysis, section 5.3.1., need to be discussed in order to interpret what it means for this study. They all have a red thread, and a main finding is how these keywords could be tied together in one way or another. These established propositions for relations are detailed extensively below, while addressing their relevance to this study. The keywords were: *Local brands, Trust, Honesty, Loyalty and Scepticism*.

Firstly, when discussing brands, local brands were mentioned in all interviews. It further means, when choosing their own brands, consumers are keen to choose local brands. In this study, it was Swedish and Danish brands. This could be seen as a sign consumers feel a congruence between values and beliefs. The mentioning of local brands and this established congruence, was further interpreted to affect authenticity. In other words, localness, and familiarity affect how consumers view brands to adhere to their true self and reflect a consumer's sense of their own beliefs and values.

Brands attempt to attract consumers by reaching out to consumers and positively relating to them does not solely strengthen the Participants view of their authenticity. This was further observed to generate scepticism amongst the consumers. In regard to this, it will affect and relate to this study next to two additional keywords, which are trust and honesty. These two intertwine and are believed by the participants to be a symbiotic relationship, meaning that one cannot exist without the other. Trust relates to consumers' presumption that the brand will act in a beneficial way to both them and externally. The consumers who evaluate the expectations are – as seen in the appendices 7, 8 and 9 – formed with a view of motivation,

characteristics, situation, and interaction. The degree of trust is partly a measure of honesty, which happens to be the third key word. Honesty, however, speaks to consumers' moral character, which is dependent on attributes such as integrity, truthfulness and straightforwardness. Honesty furthermore relates to trust, as the participants displayed difficulty in what constitutes complete honesty from a brand.

Honesty relates to the fifth word for this study, loyalty. There is no question among the participants that in order to achieve loyalty, the brand would need to obtain consumers' trust. This, as well as being transparent for consumers to believe and stand behind them, believing that they are in fact authentic and honest. The meaning of loyalty is the devotion or faithfulness a consumer feels towards a specific brand or more brands. As brand transparency is the focus in this thesis, this could be considered brand loyalty as it is the consumers' preference for a particular brand as well as the commitment to repeatedly purchase from the same brand. In this way companies are able to retain consumers if succeeded to establish this previously mentioned brand loyalty.

By failing to achieve any of the key words above, it will generate the opposite reaction from consumers. This will have a large potential to decrease the established positive relationships of previous keywords from the perspective of the consumer, as it can cause scepticism. This would mean consumers start to question attitudes, for example beliefs, within the brand. It could also raise doubt towards brands, due to discovered knowledge that interfere with morals, such as values and beliefs. To test this theory of how scepticism is the result of lacking these keywords, especially if honesty and trust is not established, the Participants were observed further when presented with active tasks. Providing the Participants with three case examples in the interview, and interpreting the analysis, displayed the relation between morals, values and belief. This was shown to have a different impact on the individual Participants, as they expressed very differing opinions on what they considered essential and perceived.

The importance with these keywords as well as results from analysis is to emphasise there is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to consumer type. The focus of a long-term company would be to retain loyal consumers, as those are the ones committed to the service or product of the brand. This consumer type is also the smallest type – also was discovered in results as few had loyalty towards a specific brand. However, they will also arguably generate the majority of a brand's revenue, which is why it is so important for companies to retain them. The thesis focus was to target this consumer type solely for those previously stated reasons as well.

6.3 Part 3 - Patterns

After the interpretation of the correlation between the keywords was provided, the patterns from the analysis are to be discussed and interpreted. In the analysis, the observed patterns which emerged were based on both the actual responses of the consumers, but also the impressions of the facilitators. In the following section, the ten established patterns will be presented and thoroughly discussed in relation to brand transparency. The ten patterns are: *1. Degree of Interest, 2. Brand transparency and Loyalty, 3. Prior Knowledge or Lack thereof, 4. Word of Mouth affects the purchasing intention, 5. Social awareness and generational expectancies, 6. Public regulation and external governance, 7. Convenience and Accessibility, 8. Visible stimuli and physical markers, 9. Brand/Consumer relationship is compared to personal relationships and 10. Accountability will negate the risks for brands.*

6.3.1 Degree of interest

This thesis aims to find out the non-existence of familiarity with brand transparency. Therefore, the consumer's interest is vital for the theory as it will affect the contribution level. The interviewers observed that the statement was correct to some degree. It was observed as some were less keen to join the discussions. The degree of interest is also tied to prior knowledge and interest in different industries. To give some examples, some of these industries were cosmetics, food, and clothes. As viewed in the analysis, the participants' interest in this subject concerned sustainability and ecology. It was fascinating to consider how

food had a different and significant impact on the interviews. The interviews discussed food in foreign relations, as seen in the analysis. Interview one talked about allergies, the second one concerned the connection to animals' welfare, and interview three discussed ingredients. Moreover, there was a difference in how interested the Participants regarded the fashion industry. It is shown in the transcripts that the interest in fashion.

There were some evident characteristics and consumer behaviour exposed. The pattern was clear that consumers have an interest in brand transparency. However, the appeal to make own research is lacking. It is lacking as it takes time to learn if one is not familiar with brand transparency and does not have a passion for learning. Thus, if presented with information through communication from the public – such as new, commercial, the company itself, etc. – all of them would care and show their interest. Therefore, it was discovered that there was a level of interest in all of the Participants. Because of this, the reasoning and motives of the degree of interest are affected by how they are perceived in society, which connects to social awareness.

In conclusion, to increase the degree of interest in brand transparency, the first tangible action companies could do, is to research and develop initiatives that make information more accessible to potential consumers. As the trend of transparency increases, people will start to question more. However, as this is highly relevant in the field of studies, there is time to figure out how to make it simpler for everyday consumers. This is partly what this thesis aims to contribute.

6.3.2 Brand Transparency and loyalty

The relationship between brand transparency and loyalty was a clear pattern amongst Participants and an important such. Participants from interviews one and two shared strong beliefs about commitment and how it was visible. Furthermore, loyalty as an attitude was also believed to affect brand loyalty. Interviewers defined brand transparency. When describing

how it relates to honesty, openness, and keenness to reveal good and bad information, the Participants quickly mentioned how it affects loyalty.

Loyalty was also mentioned in the interviews about trust and honesty. When observing body language, it was clear that for most Participants, trust was an underlying factor in creating loyalty. Through the tone of the voice and heat of the discussion, it could be interpreted that Participants are not as sceptical towards honesty as trust. This could be because some of them expressed that they expect a brand not to be fully honest and, therefore, might be more forgiving. However, to lose their trust, most Participants would leave the brand, and some loudly expressed their distrust of the brand. The suspicion was not only mentioned through their personal experience. It was also revealed that if it were about their favourite industry and brand, they would also react.

Additionally, scepticism existed in every interview to some degree in every Participants when discussing brand transparency. This scepticism was not solely about perceived openness. It was higher regarding the level of brand transparency communications. This communication can significantly affect consumers' values, norms, and beliefs.

In conclusion, if brands want to create a more genuine relationship with consumers, they will need to step up their transparency in relation to honesty. An honest brand is longed for by the youth. Millennials, as we interviewed, might not all be on the same page. However, Gen Z is even further advanced in brand transparency and demands it. Therefore, companies need to embrace the change and accelerate with it.

6.3.3 Prior knowledge or lack thereof

An interesting observation is made as the Participants seem to have a different opinion or understanding of what constitutes brand transparency. Before the interviews, the Participants

were given no information about the topic in the discussion of the focus groups, as it would negate the desire to investigate this subjective knowledge and understanding. They were solely informed of the relevance of their participation. This relates to the degree of interest as prior knowledge or lack of knowledge contributes to Participants' discussion. It can also be stated in the length and material from the interviews. Two of the interviews were long, while one was short. When observing Participants' body language, it was visible that while some discussed different issues, some looked down and closed their arms. This is a sign of closeness. Moreover, it was also noticed through body language, such as using hands more when talking, and the volume of talk of those with more knowledge wanted to take more place.

Moreover, the knowledge of brand transparency could also be observed as all interviews kept mainly the narrow approach of transparency and sustainability. As the Participants did not venture too far from sustainability, it could be observed that sustainability is where the knowledge from both brands themselves, social media, and public news highlights.

The Participants who acknowledged the risks associated with transparency from the brand's perspective were also those who researched the least. Whereas the Participants with higher awareness had a harder time reflecting upon the risks and understanding the company's motives of transparency.

In conclusion, there are potential initiatives that can be taken from the companies. They should become more transparent in order to gain trust and emphasis from their toughest critics, the sceptical consumers. Because the sceptical consumer, in this case, was also those who have more knowledge about transparency.

6.3.4 WOM affects purchasing intention

When it comes to purchasing intention, it is no doubt that word of mouth affects it. This was an obvious interest from the researchers to investigate. It is a key finding, as it does not only

reveal the characteristics of Participants but also reveals what kind of WOM affects their purchasing behaviour.

In the interviews, it was shown that the Participants both considered listening to the negative word of mouth as well as they are to also express negative word-of-mouth to friends and family. This also means that WOM mainly contributes to negative purchase behaviour, which brands should try to minimise. It is a clear psychological behaviour as a human to want to express when one feels hurt or fooled for example.

This further relates to scepticism, as it was also brought to attention that some did not trust brands' own websites. Research minimised this for those who are invested, however, all Participants agreed that it should not be difficult to investigate a brand's openness. Interestingly this was discussed in relation to supply chain transparency, as participants wanted to obtain knowledge about it but lacked the energy to learn, and therefore trust others' opinions more. Additionally, this will be discussed further in relation to social awareness, but viral videos on social media are also easy access for consumers. This could also have a negative effect on word-of-mouth. The marketing department could use this tool to further express their transparency in a viral way to not vanish into the hundreds of videos out there by making something that stands out.

In conclusion, brands should aim to research what tangible actions they can make to increase their word-of-mouth. They might consider how important supply chain transparency is for the younger generations and extend this further. As most Participants did not want to know the supply chain transparency to be detailed on every clothing item, they would want it more accessible on companies' websites. There is potential here to become more transparent within this matter. Furthermore, to affect word-of-mouth positively, it is a pattern from the interviews to become transparent.

6.3.5 Social Awareness and Generational expectancies

Social awareness ties in with the degree of interest but also the level of knowledge. Generational expectancies were also discovered and discussed to affect the ambition to learn about social awareness. This further relates to negative WOM. Therefore, this aspect is an important pattern to include.

The level of social awareness shifted in the interviews, and some were more heavily affected by it while some were not. It was interesting to note that documentaries had an effect on Participants' social awareness and brand transparency. As the documentaries described in this thesis were about revealing companies' secrets or hidden agendas, this affects the viewers' word-of-mouth negatively. Moreover, the Participants, who are all millennials, discussed the rising of Generation Z. How the younger generation is more updated on transparency and sustainability and takes responsibility to research. This also brings up how more powerful social media in terms of going viral reach out to consumers more than marketing themselves. Therefore, it might be the reason why the younger generation has a greater aspect of transparency as they are exposed to viral commercials and videos more often than the average Millennial. It would be interesting to observe if a focus group of a younger segment would have further knowledge to contribute in relation to brand transparency.

In conclusion, social media and becoming exposed do not have to be negative, as social awareness goes hand in hand with transparency. A brand could use this focus in order to market itself in a new light. For example, they could use their marketing skills to make viral videos on Instagram or TikTok. By doing this action successfully, a chain of positive word-of-mouth would be possible.

6.3.6 Public regulation and external governance

A large portion of the Participants determined the need for further legislation and external governance in order to monitor the implementation and transparency of a brand. They stated

how they perceive the law to be neglecting these aspects entirely. The law should be improved in order to diminish the risk of exploitative measures, and similarly, direct consequences to lack of brand transparency.

The notion of third-party monitoring was proposed as a mean to negate the risk of brands taking liberties and will in turn diminish the risk of a brand deceiving its consumers with fraudulent claims of transparency. This directly concerns the motives of the brand to be perceived as both strategic and egoistic, while acknowledging the implications of being truthful in all regards.

This was specifically mentioned in regard to monitoring different aspects of the supply chain, production, logistics and distribution. By monitoring the different links of the brand's operation, the participants argued how it is simpler to uphold a brand to its alleged values. They furthermore emphasise how this will increase trust in the brand, being confident that the brand has a specific set of guidelines of claims and operations that will be followed or in turn punished. They proposed the notion of external monitoring rather than internal, as they have little to no faith in the authenticity of such internal inquiries.

They proposed a tangible action by increasing the transparency reporting initiatives and adapting them to the different industries, while still upholding them to similar standards. It was furthermore proposed that each country should have individual standards, but be adapted to secure commonalities, such as the EU etc. Their perception was mainly positive in regard to European standards but displayed a lack of awareness in global aspects.

However, by developing a standard set of regulations fit for cultural adaptation, the participants argued the need for external monitoring to an even larger extent. This monitoring would have to be conducted domestically and by other countries, in order to secure the legality and authenticity. It is important to mention how it is unlikely that brands should be willing to exchange their information with potential competitors. This aspect addresses issues which are out of scope for the thesis, as it concerns cultural differences. A relevant aspect is how brands should implement transparency reporting into their operations, on a holistic level.

6.3.7 Convenience and accessibility

A small portion of the participants are concerned with the accessibility of information on transparency. Specifically, they focus on not only the information of a product, but also the information of the brand itself. An interesting point is made about how it can be difficult accessing information, or whether this information even exists. The participants display a reluctance of having this information available on the product label or in physical stores, in order to not be overwhelmed in the purchasing moment. However, they emphasise how they want to be able to access them, e.g., on a brand website.

Convenience plays a large part in the interest of brand values and transparency, as they lose interest if the information is difficult to access or the items are not easily obtained.

As stated, they might not be motivated by transparency beforehand when searching for particular items. However, when they purchase from a transparent brand, they achieve a level of value and satisfaction, especially if the price is indicative of the quality. This is directly correlated with the impression of having made a perceived difference in supporting such a brand.

Essentially, this speaks to the want rather than the need to purchase or find information of transparency, but is less inclined to do so, if the information is too inconvenient to invest their time in.

The participants generally display a wish to investigate the claims of a brand but decline to do so if the task is too time consuming. They furthermore acknowledge that they conduct purchases based on habitual patterns and personal preferences. As explained in 1. Degree of Interest, the observations rely solely on their individual interest in purchasing from transparent brands. It is fascinating that the main interest in transparency stems from the cosmetic industry and the food industry, rather than the proposed main interest in the fashion industry, and generally product-focused industries.

The participants who share this mindset are arguably not motivated by transparent brands but display a shared wish to have such preferences. This speaks to the motives of the

consumers, as they have a personal wish to become more invested in transparency but fail to compromise with their time or spending.

6.3.8 Visible stimuli and physical markers

A pattern which is mentioned several times in the different interviews was the trust placed in physical markers of a transparent brand. They displayed the possibility of being drawn to a product due to these markers, despite not actively seeking them out.

They defend this perceived trust in physical markers, as they do not see the reason why a brand should lie. This specifically addresses the alleged ignorance a brand can exploit in order to reach more consumers. The Participants value the transparent attitudes of the brands, when their attitude reflects "What you see is what you get". This suggests the establishment of perceived trust, while acknowledging the potential of the brands having hidden agendas for transparency.

The majority of the participants displayed the interest and positive impression of the visible markers a product or brand might be equipped with. This is particularly in regard to sustainability measures and transparency in relation to ingredients, fabric materials etc. The Participants not only displayed interest, but also a large degree of trust in these brands' claims. Their beliefs stem from trust in the governmental bodies in charge of monitoring such claims. However, as they acknowledged, these claims can be vague and inconsequential to others than the consumers and bear no actual responsibility from the brand.

Another visible stimulus of the products is the price. If the price is explained, as mentioned by one of the participants, the consumer might be willing to spend more. If the price on the other hand is affordable and the brand is transparent as to why, the consumer will also gain value from the purchase and might be inclined to purchase more products from the brand. This especially is the case if the consumers perceive the price to be aligned with their comfortability, and not compromising their own spending limits. One Participant even discloses how price impacts their behaviour and habits to a larger extent than they would prefer.

An experiment was conducted in order to investigate what level of transparency and ethics should be disclosed to the consumer in relation to the price. The expectation was that the consumers would prefer the highest level of ethics and disclosure, but the results were ambiguous. They emphasised the awareness of how brand transparency might be appealing to some consumers, and how they might be attracted to this format. However, the findings of the interviews displayed reluctance in having a completely transparent pricing reasoning, as they might develop animosity towards the brand rather than accept the price. They however state that they believe the information should be available for scrutiny and to accommodate the potential need of other consumers to investigate the price reasoning.

6.3.9 Brand/Consumer relationship is compared to personal relationships

A surprising aspect from the interviews was how the Participants proposed that reciprocal trust between consumers and a given brand are directly comparable to a familiar relationship, such as friendship. This relationship is entirely built on trust and subsequent loyalty from said consumers. This is interesting as it personifies the perception an individual consumer might have of a brand. If a consumer has a negative experience with the brand, they essentially compare it to being hurt by a familiar relationship. As the instinct is to vocalise a wrong treatment or “hurt” by a personal relationship, the consumer arguably feels the same need to express their dissatisfaction with a brand. This is specifically the case for a brand breaking the reciprocal trust between the brand and their consumer, as determined in the interviews. The participants continuously mention how authenticity of a brand is directly linked to their willingness to be authentic and transparent. It is interesting how the metaphor “putting the cards on the table” is used numerous times, by different consumers. If a brand maintains the idea that this relationship is vital to their success, they have every incentive to create consumer-focused touchpoints in their brand, if they do not currently employ such measures. This would provide a direct funnel of information directly from their targeted and potential consumers. In order to gain market share and expand their brand, consumer demands and transparency reporting will aid them in achieving success. This is due to the physical act of showing consumers they value their relationship and value their potential input. This can

potentially generate output for strategic implementation in what best ways to communicate their transparency.

This speaks to how it is in the prime interest of a brand to value their consumers and be completely transparent with them. This aspect further substantiates how trust and authenticity is directly correlated with successful brand transparency.

6.3.10 Accountability will negate the risks for brands

As determined in the analysis, a pattern arose between the perceived trustworthiness of a brand and how the consumers perceive accountability of a given brand. Accountability is perceived by consumers as a maturity, in which the brand makes responsible choices, concerns itself with CSR and will take accountability for any malcontent or irresponsibility.

An unexpected point was made when mentioned how a brand should also have contingencies in place for such scandals, if they do it insincerely. They specifically mentioned how a “shitstorm” is bound to happen with large and global brands which appear to be transparent. However, there seemed to be a continuous degree of trust towards brands making these transparent claims, as they had no other choice but to believe these claims.

As transparency is arguably mainly a pre-emptive measure of communication, the direct association to consequences is interesting and unexpected. This speaks to an underlying degree of scepticism towards brand transparency.

A common conception amongst the Participants was how a brand should negate the risk of scandals as much as possible, by being completely transparent. This is an emphasis on not conducting transparency measures insincerely, as they would face immense difficulty in repairing the brand’s credibility and image. This speaks to the actions a brand needs to involve itself with, e.g., implementing transparency throughout their business operations.

The participants mentioned how successfully conducting damage control if a scandal is imminent; namely how they should address the issue themselves, rather than having the news break from a third party, could improve the perception of the brand despite the scandal. They

specifically made requests into how the brand expected to deal with the scandal, explaining what changes they propose to make in the future.

This pattern directly concerns how brand transparency can be utilised to affect the purchase intentions of consumers, while also addressing the perceived risk a brand is taking by being transparent.

From the literature review, it was determined that some brands are reluctant in becoming transparent, due to consumer retaliation or exploitation of information. The means to negate this issue is being completely transparent in all the brands' business conducts, according to the findings from the interviews.

6.4 Applying the Attribution Theory

The study will utilise the attribution theory as it assists in explaining how consumers attribute causes to two main types of events - external and internal - but also how attributes affect their subsequent attitudes and behaviour (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). It will assist the researchers to describe the cognitive process of Participants from the focus group interview in regard to where their attribute causes a given event, which further leads to evaluations and responses to the event. On the consensus side there is information, beliefs and motivation which further creates attributes that later leads to the consequence such as behaviour, affect and expectancy (Kelley & Michela, 1980). In short, during the interview the researchers will observe the information, beliefs and motivation towards brand transparency. Firstly, it is how brand transparency is affected by the information and is compared with the consequences of other actions. Secondly, are the participants' beliefs about what other actors would do in the same situation. The third one is motivations; this interpret if the brand transparency affects the participants welfare for example.

As the participants discuss their beliefs in relation to sustainability and brand transparency, it is interesting to observe how the attribution theory comes into play, and how it affects their purchasing behaviour. Observing this strengthens the understanding of human behaviour. As

the researcher cannot see the Participants behaviour, they need to determine which of the two causes (personal/internal and situational/external) by observing behaviour while conducting the focus group interviews and taking notes. As there are many models utilised in the attribution theory, this study will focus on the one sought out in the Theoretical Framework Chapter 3, as it has coherence with the behaviour in relation to brand transparency.

The information in this case is very limited on brand transparency and therefore the knowledge regarding this subject varies between participants. The beliefs of brand transparency relate to the expectations about behaviour in this particular subject. When observing past consistency it is viewed that Participants do not share a strong belief in brand transparency. The effects of beliefs on information processing, which is what is conducted in the focus group interview, does also affect the intake and use of relevant information provided during the interview. The interplay between prior belief and new information involves sequential processes in which both affect the information and are affected by it. In this qualitative study the beliefs were expected to be coherent amongst participants, however this was not true. In every interview there was one or two whose' beliefs conflicted with brand transparency. Moreover, the motivation between these participants was observed to be to present a positive presentation of oneself to others, as attributions are an important part of what people communicate about themselves and their activities. It was observed by the interviewers that the motivation for brand transparency was influenced by other participants to some degree as it was discussed, and participants wanted to present themselves in a favourable manner. It was especially visible to those who previously had no interest in brand transparency before listening to the other participants.

Consequence include behaviour, affect and expectancies of future events and is therefore interpret in that way by the researchers. Here, the researcher firstly observes the internal-external approach which parallels the general person-environment distinction. As this is related to heightened affective reactions such as pride and shame, it is highly appropriate to consider in regard to brand transparency. Some of the participants mentioned shame and guilt

in relation to transparency. Additionally, pride could be sensed by those who were more invested in brand transparency beforehand.

In conclusion, it is clearly seen that the beliefs, information and motivation play a huge part in the participants perceived brand transparency which is the three aspects of attribution theories. As Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) drew on the attribution theory that is even more in focus on the consumer attribution, the qualitative findings from the attribution theory are further discussed in the findings of the four motives (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

6.5 Findings of the four motives

Instead of the traditional self-motives and public motives, four different types of casual inference (egoistic-, values-, strategic-, and stakeholder-driven) can be seen as motives, according to Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013). These four motives influence the formation of consumer scepticism towards CSR, which in turn affects another key word in this study, word-of-mouth. The researchers analysed these perceived motives during the focus group, both in words and body language. It was also evaluated if Participants could change their minds when presented with sufficient proof. This varied from Participants to Participants, strengthening the cognitive response that Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) discussed could result from situational factors and how doubting disposition could vary (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

With this focus group, the researchers wanted to study if the thread between brand transparency and scepticism affected Participants and if some were more vulnerable to negative information and denigrating the brand in conversations with friends. This was found to be accurate, as when given an example of where a brand was not transparent, most responded that they would share their negative experience.

During the focus group interview, it was observed that egoistic-driven motives were in focus. The participants questioned and doubted CSR efforts when attributing the retailer's social involvement to blatantly self-centred reasons. This was further strengthened as they discussed how brands exploit rather than support the cause of being egoistic-driven. It was

also shown in the interview that the Participants were more likely to engage in word-of-mouth to communicate their positive and negative experiences, feelings, and emotions. Thus, more negative word-of-mouth in these groups than positive was expressed the most.

This was not significantly discussed in the focus groups; however, with some guidance, it was discussed to a small degree. This was in the Participants' belief that the brand engages in CSR to satisfy the expectations of different stakeholders. In this case, the brand's social initiatives were discussed with the participants' view of the brand's actual values and beliefs. In task one, the researchers provided the Participants with three cases to analyse how scepticism affects purchase intentions.

In the interview, Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) highlights that if there is scepticism, a consumer is not convinced about the real social consciousness of the brand. This is shown by some of the participants who felt distrust of how genuine brands are regarding what they obtain from social engagement (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). As those participants do not buy or have already quit buying from a brand, they felt this kind of scepticism towards, it can also be interpreted that consumers' sceptical stance translates to lower consumer-based retailer equity, which is related to brand transparency in these focus groups.

The abovementioned motives distinguish this as they regard the consumer's perceived value. Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) explain this as the belief that a brand engages in CSR actions purely on its moral, ethical, and social ideals and standards. This was also valuable information from the focus groups as the research sought to interpret if participants believed that the brand had a genuine concern about social problems. This has been interpreted when discussing social awareness, word-of-mouth, and brand transparency. It was observed in the focus groups how the value of brands could change in relation to the information provided. If participants got information that disrupted their belief of the brand's moral, ethical, or social ideals and standards, it was shown that this could affect their purchase behaviour and further increase scepticism (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

To conclude, it is shown in this study that the model within the fashion industry strengthens Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) statement that scepticism is related to egoistic- and stakeholder-

driven attributions, and value-driven motives inhibit information (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

6.6 Interpretation of Results

This thesis had mixed results; however, it differs a bit from what was expected to be found. As brand transparency is a relatively new area and not numerous studies have been conducted, the researcher hoped to see a non-existent familiarity with brand transparency. This was found to be accurate, as most of the participants' knowledge of brand transparency was limited. The few who had prior knowledge were related to sustainability and health-related, not focusing on transparency. This was interesting to observe as the participants viewed themselves as having expertise and agreeing with the provided definition.

Furthermore, the focus on the food industry regarding animal welfare and ecological choices was not expected to be as focused as it turned out to be. The participants were observed to care significantly about what food they eat. Another hot topic was the cosmetic industry; this is an area where further research can be done as there are many possibilities to expand transparency. The result from this study also shows that Participants are keen to have a degree of information about products they use in their skincare.

Moreover, it was needed to guide the participants into the area of this study – the Fashion Industry. It could quickly be seen that the knowledge of fashion was low. The participants rely on brands to use certificates; if the brand states clothing is ecological, the participants believe it and gladly buy it. It was also understood that some brands use the word transparency on their websites.

Before conducting the study, the researchers assumed that perceived trust and perceived loyalty were based on personal experience with the brand. In the focus groups, trust and loyalty were usually mentioned in relation to each other. In other words, trust was found to be an underlying factor in creating loyalty. This was also observed that the Participants were not as sceptical towards honesty as trust. The participants expressed that they were more

forgiving when it came to honesty. It might be due to the fact that they did not expect a brand to be sincere. Additionally, while honesty was observed to bypass, trust was not as quickly regained. Some Participants would go as far as loudly expressing their distrust of the brand, especially if it was their favourite brand.

The connection between scepticism and perceived transparency was not found to the extent the researchers had expected. The expectation was that the degree of scepticism relies mainly on the level of brand transparency communications. There was some connection. However, it was that apparent. When Participants were asked if they were sceptical or not, all said yes, as it was a right or wrong answer. However, during the interview, many failed to show through their discussion that this was something they had in the back of their head. It could be observed that those who showed distrust against brands also had a higher scepticism. However, most Participants relied on what the brand communicates when discussing transparency. Either from their website or through certificate labels. This was discussed during the interview, how almost nonquestions the brand. Those who did were very aware of transparency before the interview and had adequate knowledge of the subject.

Moreover, the findings were discussed in relation to attribution theory and the four motives. It has been stated by Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) that the four motives drew on the attribution theory by doing a study which posits CSR-induced consumer attributions (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). Therefore, the attribution theory will be used limited and mainly qualitative solely to interpret the Participants' behaviours toward brand transparency. Additionally, the information provided in this theory will be further utilised in regard to the four motives.

The four motives were used to analyse and interpret extrinsic or intrinsic motivation results. As seen in the transcript, it differed from interview to interview, which reasons were in focus. However, this was not as coherent when analysing all three interviews. The focus group thought differently and therefore, also discussed differently. This was interesting to observe. The researchers assumed that the profit-driven motivation would be mentioned more than it

was. This could be because the Participants do not view brands as profit-driven or because they do not want to be considered someone with that view. Either way, it is seen here how difficult it is to find results that would fit all, as consumer behaviour is very individual.

As discussed earlier in this interpretation concerning familiarity, the researchers expected to find a consistent interest in transparency and sustainability, particularly within the fashion industry. This was not what was found. The Participants were keener to discuss transparency and sustainability in the food industry. However, this could be because the food industry has been exposed to various adverse effects of WOM through social media, documentaries, news, and friends and relatives. Furthermore, the food and cosmetic industry has been more in the spotlight regarding transparency and converting to more sustainable and ecological choices. The fashion industry has been relatively quiet and an area where few studies have been conducted. A question appearing here is if the fashion industry has become that great or if they are just better at hiding. In other words, as one of the Participants mentioned, if they strategically plan out to what degree they are transparent, and if so, how do they choose what to be okay with? So, in one way, the results can be interpreted as a consistent pattern of interest in transparency and sustainability. Still, it was not mainly related to the fashion industry.

When it comes to reflecting and acknowledging the risk associated with transparency from the perspective of the brands, it was not done without guidance. The researchers observed that this was not an easy task for Participants as it was a more complex struggle for some than others. It could be interpreted that those with more knowledge were less forgiving towards brands than those without previous knowledge; they were more open to forgiveness towards the brand when it came to reflecting on the risks. The researchers could see that thinking brands have hidden agendas skewed their perspective and limited them in being able to remember the risk associated with transparency from the brands' perspective.

Moreover, there was also an expectation regarding the question of price transparency and supply chain transparency. The researchers expected it to positively affect consumers' brand perception if more transparent with the supply chain and price. This was not as highly affected

as assumed. It was visible through the second task in the focus group. The Participants saw it overwhelming to have price and supply chain transparency when purchasing. The researchers observed that the participants felt more guilty and ashamed of what they bought if it were transparent. Therefore, the researchers' expectations were not met. The result contradicted the expectation as it left the Participants with a negative feeling. This was a surprise for the researcher but also further strengthened the importance of further investigation in this area, as consumer behaviour is heavily individual and therefore needs numerous more studies to conclude.

6.6.1 Comparison to literature review

As shown in the 2. Literature review and 3. Theoretical Framework, Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) revealed that egoistic- and stakeholder-driven attributions contribute to consumer scepticism development. Value-driven motives inhibit information, while strategic-driven motives are allegedly proven in their research not to alleviate scepticism (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013).

In order to address this, Ellen, Webb & Mohr (2006) conducted a similar study. Their study suggested that strategic-driven and value-driven motives were efficient in diminishing scepticism for consumers (Ellen, Webb, & Mohr, 2006). According to both Kim, Kim & Rothenberg (2020) and Yang & Battocchio (2021), information transparency plays a vital role in consumer perception towards a brand (Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020); (Yang & Battocchio, 2021). The findings of this thesis support that availability of information is essential to diminishing scepticism of a consumer, while increasing brand trust and brand loyalty.

Organisational transparency and price transparency were suggested as specific areas of business conduct where consumers are the most impacted or perceive the greatest honesty (Dubink, Graafland, & van Liedekerke, 2008). Furthermore, supply chain transparency is suggested to be the largest focus for consumer scepticism. It would therefore prove beneficial to brands to focus their efforts on this area (Egels-Zandén & Hansson, 2015).

The results of the interviews suggest a similar outcome of this study. The participants of the interviews reflected greatly on the different perceived motives but were essentially drawn mainly towards value-driven motives and occasionally strategic-driven ones.

Surprisingly, only few of the Participants regarded stakeholder influence as an important aspect of motives.

The data collection of this thesis supports the suggestion of elongated scepticism if brands are perceived as having extrinsic motives, such as profit-driven, egoistic-motives rather than altruistic, value-driven motives.

Rawlins (2008) suggested that reciprocal trust between a brand and a consumer was reliant on the success of brand transparency (Rawlins, 2008). He furthermore stated the necessity of brands to be willing to share delicate information in order to build this trust. This assumption was supported by Steele (2019) who believed brand transparency would breed accountability, further enforcing the reciprocal trust, as both parties would be disadvantaged (Steele, 2021).

The results of this thesis suggests an enforcement of this aspect made by Rawlins and Steele, amongst others, as the Participants would only perceive yielded value from a trustworthy, honest and transparent brand. They furthermore mentioned the need for a brand to take accountability and provide a detailed brand recovery plan.

The study conducted by Yang & Battocchio (2021) however, concluded that brand transparency in marketing communications were essential for positive perception (Yang & Battocchio, 2021). This aspect was not directly displayed in the responses of the interview participants. They regarded marketing communications and advertising as damaging towards a given brand, unless it was present for a consumer to investigate themselves, e.g., on a brand's website. It is interesting to mention this aspect, as the focus group interviews yielded different results. This might be due to a general scepticism towards brands advertising themselves, which is displayed in the opinions of the participants. It might also be due to cultural beliefs of Scandinavians and would therefore not necessarily reflect the same results as the original study, as it was conducted through different measures.

Other ambiguous results are the notions of price transparency functioning as a tool to increase consumers' willingness-to-buy (Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020). Despite expressing a desire to have information available for a consumer to investigate, the participants concluded a dislike towards including price transparency visibly on a product. It is interesting to notice the difference, as it speaks to an overstimulation for the consumer at the purchasing moment. This might in turn discourage the consumer from purchasing said item, regardless of the brand.

Sub-Conclusion

In the discussion the researchers interpret the key findings conducted from the analysis that is of value for the thesis. The first section analysed addressed the motives of the questions provided by the participants and to what purpose these were important. All questions in some way relate directly or indirectly with brand transparency, as the thesis aims to answer how brand transparency affects purchase intention.

Secondly, to determine the focus of the discussion chapter, the keywords from the analysis (section 5.3.1) were discussed in order to interpret what they mean for this thesis (6.2). The keyword - *local brands, Trust, Honesty, Loyalty* and *Scepticism* - does all have a red thread as shown in this chapter. Within each pattern of the ten presented, the views of different Participants were discussed and related to one another to observe the findings. Additional to the patterns, the findings from attribution theory showed beliefs, information and motivation plays a huge part in the Participants perceived brand transparency. This observation from the interviewees is essential to this study, as it reflects the actual understanding of Scandinavian Millennial consumers. Leonidou & Skarmeas (2013) drew on the theory and focused more on the consumer attribution (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2013). The Participants mainly leaned towards value-driven motives to lower their scepticism. Finally, the information generated from the analysis and the discussion was compared to the literature review.

7. Conclusion

This chapter constitutes the concluding chapter of the thesis. The conclusion will thoroughly summarise the thesis while presenting a summary of findings from the data collection. This last chapter will reiterate the answer to the research question and its adjoined research statement generated from the Discussion Chapter (6). The researchers will discuss the contribution to the field of research after the conclusion. It will also discuss how the study's potential limitations are affecting it to address possible shortcomings or provide insight into ambiguous results. Finally, the researchers will provide recommendations for implementation, and the researchers will provide future research.

The researchers conducted an extensive literature review in the initial part of the thesis research to determine the relevant aspect of brand transparency. These relevant aspects further provided the thesis with various potential approaches and focus. Brand transparency, as a topic, presented itself as a limited subject of studies, as the current issues mainly consisted of trust and green scepticism in relation to transparency. The literature review provided considerable insight into consumer perception and general attitudes towards brands. A key aspect of consumers' attitudes towards a brand relied mainly on their perceived motivation, both in terms of the brand's motives and consumers' motivation. These two motives affect their purchase intentions regarding a given brand. The existing literature furthermore expresses a need for mitigating scepticism, as it is significantly present in relation to brands and the transparent perception of consumers.

As these reflect two different approaches, the researchers narrowed the focal point to include consumer perception of brands' motives rather than solely focusing on consumer motivation. Therefore, it was deemed relevant to study a brand's ability to attract consumers by being transparent. This was suggested as being highly possible in this context, i.e. exactly how a brand can reach potential consumers by utilising transparency. To further narrow the research statement, the focus included the overall perception of what constitutes brand transparency from a consumer's viewpoint. To further elaborate, the literature review revealed a need to determine in what regard they perceive transparency to be relevant and where they perceive

the need for openness due to the vast existence of scepticism. Finally, this thesis's purpose was to demonstrate how brand transparency can affect a consumer's purchasing intention.

To answer the research question: *"How can brand transparency be utilised to affect the purchase intention of a consumer?"* the researchers created a research design which accommodated the subjective attitudes of predetermined consumer segments. Since the truth would be subjective rather than objective, the constructivist perspective was utilised in order to generate the most valuable output. This was deemed the most relevant approach, as the Participants constructed their own truth through beliefs and attitudes. These attitudes and attributions have been compiled by a lifetime of social constructs, impacts and personal experiences. As subjective truths differ greatly, it was interesting and relevant to investigate these individual perceptions of what constitutes brand transparency.

By utilising a semi-structured interview, the researchers provided a clear guideline regarding the topic and a non-restrictive potential for the Participants to divulge their individual opinions and experiences.

Focus group interviews were conducted in order to be able to analyse the Scandinavian view on brand transparency and how it affects their purchase intention. The questions were thoroughly considered in relation to the existing literature on brand transparency and scepticism. However, it is essential to notice that none of these studies was conducted in Scandinavia, and as it is a relatively new area of study, the literature was limited. These group interviews focused on authenticity, brand transparency, motives, greenwashing, green scepticism and negative word-of-mouth.

In the Analysis (Chapter 5), the main points of the interview were brought to light. These were also the points of relevance for further information about consumers regarding brand transparency.

The researchers expected the different business aspects of brand transparency to be mentioned by Participants during the interviews. However, of organisational transparency, supply chain transparency, price transparency and information transparency, the main focus was on price transparency and, to a small degree, price transparency. Both price transparency and supply chain transparency were sources of ambiguity. The Participants were disinterested

in having information available at the purchasing moment but preferred having the information available on a website. As for price transparency, they prefer not to know the reasoning behind the exact price, as it might generate animosity towards the brand if it does not meet their expectations. The Participants described how they generally respond to physical markers and react positively to visible stimuli of a product, if not too overwhelming, when making a purchasing decision. They emphasise how this relates directly to information transparency being present on a physical product rather than a source of information elsewhere.

The focus group interviews generated exciting insight into consumers' attributions to their purchasing habits and how they reflect their own sense of self. Several Participants displayed a personal connection with brands they felt loyal to and described it as a mutual relationship. If they possess prior knowledge or previous experience with a brand, they are more likely to seek products within the brand's selection.

It is further observed how sustainability and transparency were tied together amongst most Participants as if one relates to the other. Scepticism was found to be a typical pattern in the interviews of those who distrust brands more, while those more trust-friendly felt less sceptical of a brand's intention. The Participants viewed negative word-of-mouth as a stronger attachment than positive. This can be seen as Participants are more willing to share negative experiences through word-of-mouth than positive ones.

Results demonstrated that the ability to affect a consumer's purchase intention using brand transparency relies on several key factors. The researchers determined these factors to be: Trust, accessibility and availability of information, accountability, and WOM. These keywords and patterns were defined in the Analysis (5.3.1 & 5.3.2). When constructing the transcripts, the researchers determined the keywords be utilised. They were chosen in relation to how much they were used by Participants as well as their coherence with the subject. Furthermore, the research defined common patterns between all focus group interviews to be further analysed. The researchers went in depth regarding these in the Discussion (Chapter 6) and explained in detail, as well as discussing the findings of motives.

The perceived motives differentiated amongst the Participants. It was shown that the main motives in question were perceived to be altruistic and value-driven, meaning the Participants perceived the brands as sincerely wanting to make a positive impact socially and environmentally. However, the Participants also tended to perceive the motives as either generally strategic, in terms of competitive positioning on any given market, or egoistic-driven, because they acknowledge that everything is business and is on every level driven by profits. However, stakeholder-driven motives were also discussed to a small degree, but generally not very present in the responses. These findings strengthen that scepticism is highly related to motives such as egoistic- and stakeholder-driven, while value-driven relates to inhibited information. A commonality of the observations was the existence of both trust and scepticism amongst the consumers, as they argued both to be present in everything.

Scepticism was also determined to be negated by governmental bodies and monitored by third-party business entities. This presented an interesting angle to the research, as the Participants found the current legislation greatly lacking in terms of brand transparency. Their scepticism of business conduct stems from previous instances in the fashion industry, where a brand claiming to be transparent was revealed to be lying and therefore ended up in a public scandal. This resulted in general scepticism towards fashion brands, in which the previous trust will be difficult to rebuild. Establishing more thorough regulation on the matter of brand transparency was therefore deemed a key point in determining the effect on purchase intention.

7.1 Summarising the key findings

In order for brand transparency to be effective, brands furthermore need to mitigate the risk of scepticism. Scepticism can be mitigated by addressing previous negative events of the brand, thereby creating more trust in the brand due to perceived willingness for accountability. This will in turn increase trust. It can furthermore be negated by abstaining from insincere actions or communicating false claims.

The consumers of the focus group interview perceive Brand transparency to consist of: trust, accessibility, information transparency, accountability and WOM. The possibility to be affected by brand transparency relies on the potentially existing scepticism or established level of trust. If scepticism is apparent, the brands must invest resources in mitigating the risk of scepticism by enforcing more actions towards developing trust. Trust is displayed to be the largest mediator between consumers and brands. Perceived brand transparency is therefore reliant on perceived level of trust.

Based on the observed patterns, the Scandinavian consumers identify greatly with the perceived value they gain from a beneficial consumer-brand relationship. This provides positive associations with a brand, which in turn increases trust and thereby the potential of being affected by brand transparency. By increasing and establishing trust, the consumer becomes highly accessible to brand transparency.

This relationship should be based on reciprocal trust and loyalty. This means a) the brand having trust in the consumers not to abuse the available information, and b) the consumers believing the brand is completely honest about their transparency. If trust is established and their information on transparency is available and honest, consumers can be affected by brand transparency in the purchasing moment or change their purchasing intent entirely. If a brand is honest and transparent while having a good reputation, they can attract consumers by communicating their efforts within transparency, thereby affecting the consumers purchase intention.

7.2 Contribution to the field of study

The results from this thesis provide valuable insight into consumer- and purchase behaviour.

The essential findings aid in determining the role brand transparency plays in purchasing behaviour and how it is perceived by a Scandinavian population. It furthermore aids in characterising the preferences and perceived values of the millennial consumer segment.

The most significant contribution to the field of research is suggested to be the definition of valuable aspects of brand transparency, such as establishing reciprocal trust between brand and consumer.

By substantiating previous research on trust and brand transparency, this thesis helps provide credibility and reliability to the previously conducted methods which generated similar results. As brand transparency provides a massive potential field, the findings aid in narrowing down what consumers perceive to be essential when implementing transparency into their business conduct. Having generated these results differ from previous studies, and with different segments, the data further aid the credibility of the results of existing literature.

7.3 Limitations of the study

When conducting data analysis utilising mainly qualitative methods such as interviews, the truth can be difficult to navigate. As the Methodology Chapter (4) details further, the nature of the study is to investigate individually and subjectively perceived truths, rather than one simple truth (Veal & Darcy, 2014). An arguable limitation is the utilisation of three focus groups, rather than say five to ten. This would have generated larger data sources, with larger potential to compare and analyse. Having constructed a research design which only accommodated one method, the study might have benefitted from a second method in order to substantiate the results further. Utilising triangulation would have determined whether the keywords would be repetitive, such as whether the patterns would be similarly observed.

Another potential limitation is interviewing one segment. It is bound to portray similar qualities and opinions. One important assumption for the results, is the lack of prior knowledge of brand transparency. Investigating a segment with prior knowledge of brand transparency and general business conduct would potentially have generated different data, as the Participants would have a clearer image of the different aspects of business conduct. It is important to mention that the research purpose was to investigate how a generic millennial Scandinavian consumer views, and is potentially affected by, brand transparency, and as such, the responses still generate value for this thesis, and further analysis and scrutiny. As the

segment is represented by Danish and Swedish millennials, some levels of differences are to be anticipated.

The research statement could have potentially been narrowed further, in order to develop a potential framework for further adaptation and implementation for brands.

7.4 Recommendations for implementation

Brand transparency is a relatively new area of study and has therefore limited research. However, it is still important for brands to acknowledge and adapt their strategy in regard to brand transparency.

The focus group interviews could be used from a company's perspective to further utilise a strategic plan in relation to their Scandinavian consumers, as this might differ culturally from others. It is shown in the study that consumers are more forgiving and understandable if a brand is transparent enough. This emphasises brands' need to create contingencies, i.e. share their bad sides as well, instead of being outed in the media, by others, whether it be consumers or business-related entities. The study also emphasises how consumers view their relationship toward a brand, and how heavily loyalty is related to trust. Therefore, it should be in a brand's best interest to be as transparent as possible to maintain loyalty.

Moreover, it was clearly seen that scepticism was high amongst Participants. This also needs to be considered, how one as a company could make their brand more trustworthy for a consumer. This is not solely done through marketing communications, but also how to sustain a good relationship. Retaining consumers nowadays is mainly done by creating an individual experience for each consumer to feel special.

Finally, the Participants expressed the need for further regulations and governance. The concern was specifically raised, due to scepticism being negated by governmental interference, as to further hold brands accountable. Therefore, it is recommended for either governmental bodies or third-party entities to establish a formal set of regulations, which brands must adhere to. If failure to meet these regulations, the brands would suffer the consequences. Establishing such regulations would highly increase accountability, as a)

consumers' trust in brands would be increased, and b) brands would not need to debate what is responsible or fear what claims might present as ambiguous.

7.5 Potential for future research

A recommendation for future research would be to test the potential correlation between trust and brand transparency as key variables, in order to determine whether they are truly as reliant on each other, as the findings of this thesis would suggest.

The recommendation would specifically be to develop an online questionnaire. This is due to its ability to reach a larger population and create a large source of data with varying respondents and responses. This would be conducted in order to determine whether there is statistical significance between the proposed relationship and correlation between the suggested key variables: trust, scepticism, loyalty, accountability, authenticity and transparency.

By conducting quantitative analyses such as statistical analysis, the findings could potentially present itself in a more analytical way and appear to be more tangible.

Another potential in future research would be to develop a specific framework and model, which assisted the brands in properly implementing brand transparency holistically.

A future study can be conducted on the opinions expressed in this thesis, by comparing them to other relevant segments and populations. For instance, the Participants express a common conception relating to the continuous increase in transparency awareness; specifically, how it increases with each generation. Therefore, a study could include both older and younger segments, such as "Baby Boomers" and "Generation Z". The purpose of this would be to compare their generational beliefs and social awareness and see if they differ or agree.

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9. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Attribution Theory Model

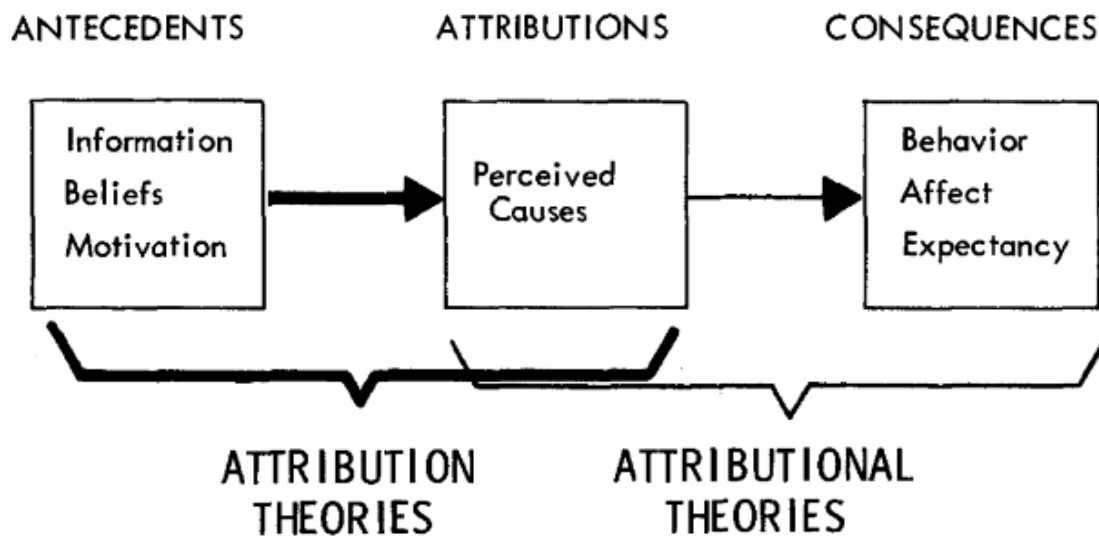


Figure 1 General model of the attribution field.

(Kelley & Michela, 1980)

Introduction

Hi and welcome. Our names are Mie and Gabriela. We are two CBS students finishing our master thesis. You have accepted to become a participant in this focus group interview, which is conducted to fulfil our research objective. The purpose of our study is to discuss brand transparency. We will provide a definition later on, and we will be having a task in between the questions to provide an active role for the participants. Please ask questions at any given time if needed.

1. Introduction and Brand Transparency

We would like to start off with the notion of authenticity. A lot of brands strive for authenticity but what is actually authenticity (**Hyunjooh Oh et al. 2019**); (**Yang & Battocchio, 2020**)? We were wondering about your opinions and examples of it. It can be from any industry, for example, cosmetics, fashion, cars etc.

- Could you give us some examples where you thought oh yes this brand is transparent to its customers? Again it can be any industry. (Note: Here you want to see what type of transparency they mostly talk about.)

There is a growing trend for brands to be transparent with their customers. Transparency is defined as being honest, open and willing to disclose information and decisions within several fields of business operations (**Donlan, K., 2021**)

- Would you agree with this definition? Would you add or change anything? What are your experiences with brand transparency? Is brand transparency important to you? (**Torben Hansen, 2005**); (**Hyunjooh Oh et al. 2019**)

- What do you perceive the role of transparency to have in (...)? How important is it to you, that these areas are transparent towards consumers? How believable is it?
 - Price, Supply chain, product, values, overall business conduct (Source: **(Donlan, K., 2021)**)

Now, specifically regarding the fashion industry. What are brands within the fashion industry which you associate with being transparent?

- Example: Think of H&M and Vero Moda. What are your initial thoughts on these brands regarding transparency? They rank at H&M 68% and Vero Moda at 25% in the Fashion Transparency Index 2021.

Inform: These brands claim to be sustainable and transparent in their supply chains.

- What are your thoughts on these brands now?

2. Tasks

Task 1: Examples from Fashion Transparency Index 2021: (Kim, Kim, & Rothenberg, 2020) pp. 24-25 “Case Studies: Transparency in Action”

- 1. Unlawful union dismissal of workers in Asia with subsequent reinstatement
- 2. Correct identification of facilities and locations, as to better determine liability and environmental concerns
- 3. Forced labour and associations to detention camps

What is your immediate and initial reaction to this brand activity of disclosing their supply chain and associated partners? **(Torben Hansen, 2005)**

Task 2: Price Transparency & Maira-example: Which Brand transparency in terms of price transparency do you relate the most to out of the 9 scenarios? **(Kim, Kim & Rothenberg, 2020) (Appendix 6)**

3. Motives

- Do you think brands have some hidden motives for being transparent?

In relation to those brands or industries you mentioned, what do you believe are their motives for being transparent? **(Skarmeas & Leonidou (2017)**

- Intrinsic -> Altruistic and sincere action-driven motives
- Extrinsic -> Often Profit-driven motives

Egoistic-driven

Value-driven

Stakeholder-driven

Strategic-driven

4. Transparency in relation to Greenwashing, Green scepticism and negative WOM

Speaking of brand transparency, it is often related to greenwashing and sustainability.

- What is the relationship between transparency and greenwashing to you? **(Nguyen (2019); See Kwong Goh & M. S. Balaji (2016)**
- Would you generally consider yourself sceptical towards transparency? **(Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2015)**

- If a brand you trusted were revealed to be falsely advertising themselves as transparent, how would that make you feel? **(Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2015)**
- Would you vocalise if you felt a brand has a positive / negative effect on you? **(Kang & Hustvedt, 2013)**

Thank you for participating. This information will be private and solely shared with our supervisor and censor. Thank you so much for participating in our research and providing us with interesting information. We value your participation.

Appendix 4 – Fashion Transparency Index 2021, H&M

51-60%

Esprit	60
United Colors of Benetton	60
Calvin Klein	59
Tommy Hilfiger	59
Van Heusen	59

61-70%

H&M	68
The North Face	66
Timberland	66
C&A	65
Vans	65
Gildan	63

Appendix 5 – Fashion Transparency Index 2021, Vero Moda and Jack & Jones

21-30%

Brooks Sport	30
Big W	29
Pimkie	29
Ralph Lauren	29
El Corte Inglés	28
Nordstrom	28
Fjällräven	28
Morrisons	28
Amazon	27
Lidl	27
The Warehouse	27
Topman	27
Topshop	27
JD Sports	27
John Lewis	27
Mango	26
Walmart	26
Vero Moda	26
Salvatore Ferragamo	25
Jack & Jones	25

Scenario 1: Control



Figure A1. The cost-breakdown for this cashmere sweater.

Scenario 2: Low Pricing Disclosure & Unfair



Figure A2. The cost-breakdown for this cashmere sweater.

Scenario 3: Low Pricing Disclosure & Fair



Figure A2. The cost-breakdown for this cashmere sweater.

Scenario 4: High Pricing Disclosure & Unfair



Figure A3. The cost-breakdown for this cashmere sweater.

Scenario 5: High Pricing Disclosure & Fair



Figure A5. The cost-breakdown for this cashmere sweater.

Scenario 6: Low Production Disclosure & Unethical



Figure A6. The cost-breakdown for this cashmere sweater.

Scenario 7: Low Production Disclosure & Ethical

The brand has not disclosed the production cost to the consumer but maintains a high ethical standard.

Scenario 8: High Production Disclosure & Unethical

The brand discloses their production in-depth but have been accused of poor business conduct in their production.

Scenario 9: High Production Disclosure & Ethical

The brand both discloses their production in-depth, but simultaneously maintain a high ethical standard.

Appendix 7 –Interview 1 Transcript (Participants A-D)

Interviewer: Okay. Hej og velkommen til dette fokusgruppe interview. Mit navn er Mie, og min kollega Gabriela og jeg er glade for I vil være med til at assistere vores master thesis research. Det første vi skal snakke om, det er generelt brand transparency. Vi vil gerne starte med, hvordan siger man, jeres forståelse af autencitet, for eksempel. Det er nemlig et key begreb i forhold til brand transparency. Så hvad er autencitet egentlig for jer, når man har brands i tankerne? I det hele taget, der er ingen begrænsninger for hvad det er for jer.

Participant A: For mit vedkommende er det at, man ligesom ved hvad brandet står for og, at de står inde for det de, står for, hvis man kan sige det på den måde. Så hvis et brand kommer ud og siger: "Vi gør sådan her og sådan her", jamen så kan jeg tro på at det er det de gør og, at der ikke er nogen skjult agenda som jeg ikke kender til som, som er totalt underligt.

Participant B: Ja altså, sådan hvad de vil levere til en, ja jeg har det også på samme måde med det.

Interviewer: Ja, og det er jo kun autencitet vi, snakker om lige nu men, for autencitet er jo defineret som at man ikke kun er ærlig, men også at man er reel idet, man foretaget sig man er autentisk. Det er ikke noget man har valgt at indføre for lige som du siger at have en skjult agenda. Du vil bare gerne være autentisk.

Participant B: Ja.

Interviewer: Har I nogle, sådan, ideer om industrier, brands eller andet i en kontekst som i forbinder det med når, jeg siger autencitet?

Participant C: Nej. Altså, det, tror jeg Nej. Altså, det jeg sidder og tænker det, er mere af de her med ja gennem, at, det skal være sådan gennemsigtigt at, sådan transparent.

Interviewer: Vi snakker kun autencitet nu. Transparens snakker vi om længere nede. For nu snakker vi kun om autencitet, ikke transparency.

Participant C: Fint, men for mig handler det også om det her med, når du skal være autentisk at, jeg kan netop se det. Så jeg er med på at, du godt ved skille det, men, jeg tror for mig er det også det her med at, som forbruger hvis, jeg skal for eksempel vælge et brand lad os bare sige, det ved jeg ikke så, må du guide mig hvis, jeg helt skæv ikke. Men hvis jeg går ned i Normal og vælger en eller anden særlig Nivea creme, eller sådan noget. Hvis jeg skal finde ud af hvad står de for jamen så, er det formentlig at, de er autentiske, ved at komme ud med deres formål. At. Altså, at, de ligesom ligger alt ud. At jeg ligesom kan gennemskue det.

Interviewer: Du kommer meget ind på det vi kommer til at snakke om senere. Så det er fedt du laver den forbindelse allerede. Det bekræfter os bare i hvad, vi allerede har teori og sådan

noget. Så det er kun godt at, du tænker sådan. Der er ikke nogen af jer andre der, har en industri eller noget andet i tankerne?

Participant D: Hmm.

Participant A: Jeg synes det svært og nævne en fordi, på en eller anden måde så man altid hørt at, andre brands hvor, det er at, de har været en eller anden shitstorm så, ja hvis, jeg kan ikke tænke på noget specifikt men, jeg synes ofte det er de der små local brands som, lægger alle kortene på bordet og. Der ved man okay der, er det her i det, den her creme for eksempel hvis det var det eller, det er det her der, er i det her mad. Øhm. Og det synes jeg oftest, man ser med de helt små frem for de store Ja.

Participant D: Men, så er det jo altid spørgsmål er "Hvad er det at være autentisk for et brand?" Fordi, det kan godt være at, nogle der så ikke har alle mulige stoffer eller sådan noget og og gøre bevidst om det Men.

Det kan jo lige så godt være et stort mærke som, har en eller anden retning de, går i selvom, de bruger alt muligt forkert i deres produkter.

Participant A: Klart.

Interviewer: Autencitet kan også forstås som, Jamen det er en fransk creme, så bliver kun brugt franske produkter, for eksempel. Eller autentisk, der tænker man tit mad så, skal det være orientalsk autentisk, men så skal det være tilberedt af dertil svarende etnisk personale og, ingredienser og sådan noget. Det er meget individuelt hvad autencitet er for folk og, det var også bare for at høre fordi, med industrier og det er ikke altid at, man tænker lige en eller anden specifikt. Nu sagde du jo både, de små lokale og der nævntes både creme, og mad. Der har du allerede to forskellige industrier, ikke. Og det laver man ikke nødvendigvis associationer til når, man ligesom tænker Okay bum, bum, bum.

Participant C: Der er jo også tøjmærker ikke, Altså? Altså det her men, det er blevet meget hvor kommer taget fra og. Jeg kan hvis, jeg bare huske ikke. Jeg synes ikke normalt jeg går op i det men, det der, slog mig var, for eksempel H&M kan huske, de havde skiftet fra en leverandør til en anden hvor, kvaliteten af tøjjet jo, blev anderledes. På den måde så blev deres brand noget helt andet for mig når, man tænkte: "Nå, det er jo egentligt et svensk brand", ikke? Det er sådan tror, jeg det, er det jeg, skal repetere hvor, jeg blev ramt. Og tænkte: "Hov, mine, penge går så til noget andet." Jeg synes ikke, apropos intensitet, ikke. Fordi jeg tænkte svensk og, så står der Bangladesh, ikke, og så sådan "Hov." Også særligt fordi det fik et udslag i Prisniveauet. Det er måske det tætteste jeg kan komme på autencitet som jeg kan relatere til.

Interviewer: Jeg kan godt lide din fortolkning af det på den måde og meget af det du nævner kommer, vi også mere ind på senere hen. Jeg tænker, er I okay med at vi går videre til det næste? Har i nogle eksempler på mærker der, siger at, de transparente overfor deres kunder. Og, det er uanset hvad industri der.

Participant C: Altså jeg, synes lidt det er en jungle, hvis jeg skal være ærlig. Jeg. Tror måske igen det tætteste jeg ligesom tænker over at, det var at, jeg skulle jeg skulle i The Body Shop og skulle købe en eller anden særlig håndsprit til min kusine i julegave fordi, det var et eller andet noget særligt som, de skulle Og der kan jeg huske at, hende der ekspedienten gik meget op i at, får forsøgt at forklare og sådan med: "Det her kører vi med." Det her med at, det skal være, netop forsøger at være CO2 neutrale og alt sådan noget. Og kender du det, altså sådan. Det er jo rigtig godt at gå op i men, det var ikke lige den tanke jeg, gik ind i da, jeg skulle ind og. Men alligevel, du kunne stå og bilde mig alt muligt ind når, jeg går ind i deres lokale butik.

Interviewer: Så for dig forbinder du også det her Transparency med måske noget mangel på noget tillid og måske også noget skepsis med i forhold til at, du kan få masser af viden. Men, du kan ikke nødvendigvis stole på det de siger?

Participant C: Ja jeg, siger ja man kan godt sige skepsis. Det er klart selvfølgelig når, hvis jeg tager et produkt hvor der står, for eksempel: "Er ikke testede på dyr", jamen så er jeg da nødt til blankt at stole på det medmindre, jeg sætter mig ned og laver en kæmpe research og gå. Ind på deres hjemmeside eller sådan noget. Men netop som det også blev sagt er det jo ikke altid alle produkter der, har en hjemmeside. Så på den måde er det nemlig også svært at finde ud af hvor, skal jeg så søge informationer henne hvis, det ikke står på produktet, ikke? Altså.

Participant D: Men, lige sådan noget med at teste på dyr står jo stort set aldrig på produkter Altså. Det, ved jeg fordi, jeg går meget op i ikke at bruge altså creme altså, makeup produkter creme, produkter hvor, de ikke tester på dyr og, jeg har måtte finde en eller anden altså. Bare søge på Google hvor, der så kommer sådan nogle lister op med hvad hedder det, animal cruelty-free produkter og, der er hele tiden nogen der, ryger af og på listen og sådan noget alt, efter hvor de sælger henne. For nu ved jeg at, hvis man sælger i Kina så, skal de testes på dyr. Det er derfor jeg, bruger stort set kun danske mærker og sådan. Nu ved jeg ikke om, Nilens Jord er dansk men, Nilens Jord, Ole Henriksen, Matas produkter. De er også rimelig transparente med hvad der er i deres produkter, synes jeg.

Interviewer: Ja lige, nu må du heller ikke teste på dyr i EU, men, der er nogle produkter i produkterne som, skal testes på dyr, fordi det er et kemikalie eller noget der, ligner.

Og der har danske kosmetik mærker en tendens til helt at vælge det fra, og det er jo meget godt. Så, der har vi også kosmetikindustrien. Ja. Så det ja, også, kæmpe industri. Som er meget paradoksalt i sig selv, og med mange kontroverser.

Participant D: Så kan man jo også snakke i forhold til mad, for eksempel. Med for eksempel nu har jeg en søster der ikke kan tåle hvedemel og det er ikke altid så let. Selvom der er på for eksempel rugbrød pakker, står at, der ikke er noget hvede i, så. Kan der sagtens være hvede i det alligevel. Så, nogle gange så er et produkt altså selv mad produkter, ikke særligt transparente altid.

Interviewer: Madindustrien. Det, er også en rigtig god pointe og industri.

Participant C: Men, hvis jeg må knytte ind igen. Min pointe er også bare. Jeg synes opfattelsen af at, selv om større firmaer forsøger så, synes jeg stadigvæk at, det kan være svært at være hundrede procent transparente. Man skal selv være man skal selv være altså, selv opsøgende. Eller. Det er måske ikke rigtigt at bruge men, det her med at, man skal selv gøre en indsats for at finde ud af hvad, der er i produktet eller, hvad er det de, står for. Eller sådan. Og. Det er fint nok at, man en gang imellem måske møder en ungarbejder, der godt vil brande og sige: "Ja, nu, er vi gået væk fra test på dyr", eller sådan. Men hvis man ikke lægger en indsats selv hvilket, jeg ikke altid gør for, det burde jeg måske. Så. Bliver det ja prisen, tilgængelighed, ikke, Altså? Sådan Og. Så får jeg ikke lige altid tænkt over: "Gud Ja". Ja, ja, men, også rent lokationsmæssigt, ikke, er Er det tæt på, er det let tilgængelig og sådan noget Eller? Er det via en eller anden service hvor jeg kan, for eksempel. Lad os bare sige Zalando, ikke, det er nemt og, så kan man gå ind og bestille bum, så er det foran min dør i stedet for, jeg skal ud et eller andet sted og, så bliver besværligt, ikke. Men? Så får ikke altid lige tjekket Gud. Var det egentlig uld fra den lokale fårefarm eller produkt testet på dyr der, stadig selvom, jeg måske ikke burde ikke.

Interviewer: Men, vil I sige I er opsøgende med sådan nogle slags informationer, sådan helt generelt?

Participant D: Jeg er opsøgende med det med hudprodukter.

Participant B: Jeg er ikke opsøgende, jeg researcher ikke rigtig noget.

Participant A: Jeg, gør meget sådan altså ja hudprodukter, sige nej men, også rigtig mange madprodukter. Men der er meget opsyn for at se okay hvad, der egentlig bliver puttet i min krop. Så, det gør jeg rigtig meget Så. Jeg kigger også for eksempel rigtig meget på med kylling. Jamen er der tilsat vand og lage og det ene og det andet og, jeg ved ikke hvad, de nu propper i. Det gør jeg rigtig meget ved at kigge også rigtig meget efter. Og det kan godt være at, jamen, så, vælger jeg noget gårdkylling, som, er måske dobbelt op på prisen men, så står der så også de her kyllinger eller høns har, haft fri adgang til natur og har ikke været i fangenskab og alt det her Så, der vil jeg hellere bruge mine penge på noget der, er lidt dyrere. Men. Så ved jeg også dyret har faktisk haft det godt og, jeg har ikke været. Har aldrig set dagens lys Hvis. Man kan sige det, på denne måde er blevet at tilsætte alle mulige forskellige kemikalier og, det skal jeg så prop i min krop det, er alt rigtigt lyst til så, der går jeg rigtig meget op i specielt med kød. Man, ved hvad, det er for noget kød og hvordan, dyret har haft det.

Interviewer: Så de her tydelige markeringer der, kan være produkter og sådan noget. Er det noget, generelt I har meget stor tillid til?

Participant A: Jeg. Vil sige jeg, har stor tillid til hvis, der står der for, eksempel økologi eller, hvis der står af velfærds mærker og alt det her med hvordan, dyr ligesom kan have haft det. Men, jeg læser da også altid for eksempel på æg der, står der oppe i bakken. Der står der jo de her høns har haft adgang til whatever et eller andet og og har altid udeområder tilgængelige eller noget i den stil. Så. Jeg læser faktisk stort set altid på æggebakker hvordan, de her høns blevet behandlet og, det er også en af grundene til at, jeg kun køber sådan nogle økologiske æg eller gård æg, eller noget andet end skrabeæg.

Participant D: Det var bare en forlængelse af det for, det gør jeg også, i hvert fald med æg. Jeg køber faktisk også typisk kun økoprodukter. Jeg ved ikke hvorfor jeg begyndte at få den her idé om at økologi] var lidt bedre behandlet, altså ikke så. Nu kan jeg ikke lige finde ordet, men at øko var lidt bedre at spise end andet. Og så gør det egentlig heller ikke så meget for mig at, de er lidt dyrere i pris.

Interviewer: Der betyder pris måske ikke så meget i forhold til kvalitet?

Participant D: Ja bedre kvalitet vægter jeg højere.

Participant C: Jeg vil bare lige runde af. Det ved jeg ikke om jeg gør, men jeg ville bare lige kommentere. For mig tror jeg også jeg, har større fokus på netop nogle værdier i det jeg putter i munden. I forhold til for eksempel på ansigtet fordi, Nej? Jeg, får ikke altid kigget på den her mascara eller det her skønhedsprodukt. Hvad. Er det Hvordan? Har du lavet sådan noget men, til gengæld æg for mig også virkelig vigtigt altså, Eller. Kød Jamen? Så, Jeg ved ikke om, det netop at, der er forskel på hvad, der kommer i hovedet eller i munden.

Interviewer: Det næste vi kommer til at snakke om, er ikke noget man indtager. Fremover, er fokus især på forbrugerne Det her krav med at, de vil gerne have alle brandsene er fuldstændig transparente og, der er vanvittigt mange måder en, virksomhed eller et brand kan være transparente på. Men. Det er ikke altid at, de her forbrugere ved hvad, det rent går ud på så, de ved jo kun hvad, der bliver projekteret fra markedsføring. Hvad nu, det kunne være deciderede forbruger fokuseret kampagner og, det kan være sindssygt mange ting. Men. I sig selv så, er det her brand transparency jo blevet defineret som at være ærlig åben, og villig til at være offentlige omkring en masse informationer. Det kan være skadeligt for dem, det kan være altså beneficial. Det kan være svært at sige. Det handler bare om at, de aktivt skal tage en beslutning om at være ærlige. Det kan komme til at blive gjort halvhjertet. Det ender ikke altid så godt og, det handler om hele rundt om den her store business maskine for, at de får lov til at køre. For det er klart der, er nogle sikkerhedsmæssige og konkurrencemæssige oplysning som, ikke kan udgive Men det er ikke noget vedrører, forbrugerne i de fleste tilfælde. Idet, jeg lige har sagt det her med at være villig og åben og ærlig er I enige med denne definition? Er det godt at, den stemmer overens med jeres forståelse af brand transparency? Vi kan også bare kalde det gennemsigtighed fra nu af.

Participant A: Det vil jeg helt klart sige, altså fordi, det der med at kunne lægge kortene på bordet og sige det her er det, det er eller det her er det vi gør. Og. Og som forbrugere kunne gå ind og se lige præcis hvad disse de putter i produktet nu Ja så jeg er helt enig i det der at, det er nu er, det for mig.

Participant D: Jeg. Synes bestemt den der med at være villige til at lægge kortene på bordet hvor, fordi noget at, man siger man har fortalt alt og været ærlig og åben. Det er ikke sikkert man har fortalt det, som ja det er. Man skal jo så være klar på så virkelig give sig til kende. Man stiller spørgsmål ved det.

Interviewer: Jeg går også ind i dybden med helt præcis hvad konstituerer brand transparency. Siger hvad, de forskellige led er så, det det kommer vi til. Der er et spørgsmål før det okay. Kan I komme i tanke om en egen oplevelse der, var vigtigt for jer i forhold til brand transparency. Var der, nu nævnte du H&M, var der øjeblik hvor, at I virkelig kunne mærke det her. Det her, det er fedt. Det var virkelig hvad jeg havde brug for. Eller modsat. Uha, det, her var slet ikke det jeg, regnede med. Som for eksempel med H&M må man gå ud fra var negativ.

Participant C: Ja det, var en oplevelse men, det var fordi jeg var vant til en kvalitet. Og så lige pludselig, selvom det var samme brand, ændrede størrelserne sig eller ændret alt. Man kan sige nej nogle gange når, de ændrer leverandører og sådan og, det er superfint. Og der er sikkert også noget økonomi og sådan noget. Jeg havde netop bare den oplevelse af jeg, følte mig snydt på en eller anden måde ikke, så derfor blev oplevelsen negativ.

Interviewer: Okay god, indsigt jeg ser det der med at føle dig snydt fordi, det er noget der, påvirker dig fremover. Du vil jo fra nu af associere mærket med den oplevelse.

Participant C: Der ingen tvivl om at, der var i hvert fald langt perioder hvor, H&M var sådan en god prisklasse og nemt at få sådan noget tøj hvor, man kan gå ind og tænker og, der ligger i store centre og sådan noget. Noget. Men. Da de så netop havde ændret leverandør og, størrelsen blev ændret så, var der en lang række udvalg og sådan Jeg.

Tror lige jeg, venter med at gå i den her butik så, det fik en betydning for mig. Men en positiv oplevelse.

Interviewer: Det behøver ikke at være fuldstændigt positivt. Det er bare om I har nogle eksempler. Er der et brand der betyder meget for jer. Det kan være et modebrand, et kosmetikbrand, kan være spillekonsol, hvad, man nu lige kommer mest i nærheden af.

Participant C: Nu siger noget igen Jeg. Går ikke så meget op i mærker men, en gang imellem så har jeg været meget fascineret af designeren der, hedder Karen Millen, er lidt dyr Designer som, har ligget her i København har, haft enkelte butikker. Og, det var sådan en butik som, jeg gik ind og, jeg skulle noget særligt og, der var ingen tvivl om Kvaliteten var også efter prisen. Altså. Det, var positivt Men så valgte hun at ændre altså gå lidt ned i pris bruge, nogle andre materialer og igen havde den der oplevelse af det hele indtryk af brandet blev lidt ændret og endte faktisk med at, hendes butik lukkede og fjernet for Strøget.

Interviewer: Men vil du sige hun var transparent?

Participant C: Det. Synes jeg gik meget op i at fortælle omkring netop brug Altså. Hun, lavede ikke så meget med pels og sådan noget men, men når hun endelig gjorde, så havde nogen egentlige pels ting gik meget op i at reklamere på hendes hjemmeside og sådan at det var fra dyr der var. Altså det var ikke det dyr der, var slagtet men, at det var dyrt at hade død naturlige, årsager og sådan noget ikke, Hvilket? Var faktisk årsagen til at, jeg lærte at kende fordi, jeg ikke er taget pels normalt Men. Ja

Participant D: Jeg har ikke rigtig nogen sådan yndlings brands. Eller i hvert fald ikke med tøj og sådan noget. Så altså der køber bare hvad, der sidder godt. Det kan også være meget svært. Altså det, er kun mest sådan hudprodukter som jeg. Jeg bruger rigtig meget det der hedder E-Cooking, eller det er jeg begyndt på. Det kan jeg rigtig godt lide, både deres cremer, deres serum og deres ansigtsmasker. Det er jeg blevet ret glad for. Og. Det er nemlig også produkter ikke, Altså? Fri for parfume og.

Interviewer: I forbinder meget det her med transparency til hvad I kan se altså stimuli, er det jeg hører, værdier, observerer både når I køber og i det fysiske plan. Det er måske ikke så meget den der Hvad siger man Brand forretnings øjemed af det Ligesom? I forbinder det med?

Participant A: Nej. Jeg kan godt lide også nu, jeg havde faktisk glemt den der E-Cooking. Det bruger jeg også til Altså. De, har jo nogle olie man, både kan bruge til madlavning Men. Man kan egentlig også godt bruge det som plejeprodukter alt muligt andet og, jeg ved ikke hvad, jeg nu skal. Jeg er måske også lidt farvet af min moster. Hun går meget op i de her ting. Og, hun har sagt til mig Jamen hvis, du kan spise det så, er det jo også godt at putte på huden og i håret og det ene og det andet så, det her egentlig gjort mig meget i. Og jeg har nemlig sådan noget E-Cooking olie der og, det er jo det er noget man, både kan spise men, du kan også bruge det til alt muligt andet. Og der står på produktet hvad, det ligesom er og, jeg tror ikke rigtigt jeg, har lagt mærke til det før. Men nu når du nævner det at, det her med at, man kan se hvad, der står altså, at du kan se der, står det her er at spiseligt eller hvad det nu kan være.

Hvis det er sådan en olie men, man for eksempel bruger til håret jamen, så så så. Så, tror jeg måske mere på det. Altså. At jeg ligesom kan læse mig til på produktet uden, at der skal stå med skrift nul komma fem og. Jeg skal bruge lup og, jeg ved ikke hvad for at kunne se hvad, der står. Men det her med at, der står med store bogstaver hvad der er i og bum bum bum, og det spiseligt for eksempel det det, betyder ret meget.

Interviewer: Det er de her synlige stimuli I reagerer på?

Participant A: Altså, ja det, er en af tingene i. Hvert fald uden at jeg har tænkt over det.

Interviewer: Men. Det er jo når, man snakker om det sådan så, er det jo også meget i sammenhæng Hvad. hedder det, tillid i forhold til mærket. Fordi i dansk lovgivning der er der ikke særligt mange regler for hvad man må skrive på en label, uanset, om vi ser tøjmærke eller et kosmetikprodukt eller madlavning Olie.

Økologi, for eksempel. Der skal produkter indeholdt firs procent økologiske ingredienser her så, må du kalde økologisk. Så på den måde så handler det om meget mere på den type forbrugere man er. Hvis man har nogle behov man skal have opfyldt så, er det det man, går efter. Og når det er vi snakker transparency så er det hvad, firmaet aktivt kommunikerer til sin forbruger og, det kan være gennem markedsføring. Det kan være igennem de her stimuli siger vi bruger. Vi tester ikke på dyr. Vi bruger kun bæredygtig pels. Der er mange ting man kan fokusere så, det er spændende at høre det på den måde. Og nu skal vi lidt dybere ind i hvad transparency egentlig er for sådan et brand her og, jeg vil starte med at høre jer.

Hvad for nogle områder I tror sådan et brand, og i må selv om det er et tøjbrand eller hvad det er. Hvad for nogle trin tror I de skal igennem? Så forbrugerne kan for det meste få adgang til. Når et brand for eksempel, vi skaber et produkt så, er der nogle ting de skal igennem før, produkter kommer ud til forbrugerne. De her trin er sindssygt vigtigt og kan alle sammen have stor betydning for den her transparency rent faktisk bliver kommunikeret.

Hvad tror I for nogle overvejelser vi, gør og, hvad er det for nogle områder så I som forbrugere kan se man, selvfølgelig påvirker på den måde

Participant C: Jeg tænker de, er nødt til at teste Lugter. Det godt dufter? Det gør Smager? Det godt Ser det lækkert ud Altså. Her snakker med informationer Jo? Jo men, det giver Jeg tænker også Det. Giver information det her med Når. Du kigger på et produkt hvordan, ser det ud Så? Er det farligt ud for, eksempel Altså. Ser æstetisk ud hvis, det er mad eller tøj eller sådan Altså. Sådan.

Interviewer: Og det er jo også mere produktets udvikling. Her der snakker vi om de led brandet skal igennem, væk fra forbrugerne, for at kunne give noget.

Participant A: Okay, altså så det de bliver nødt til at gemme væk for os eller hvad? Okay.

Participant B: Jeg synes det er et svært spørgsmål.

Interviewer: Ja? Det, er noget af det I, reagerer mest på for. Eksempel er price transparency én ting og, det er især en pris på et produkt. Det kan man være meget meget, forskelligt hvordan man reagerer på. Det er en af de opgaver vi, kommer til at lave så, den går jeg ikke så meget mere ind i men. Den store er også Supply Chain Transparency. Hvor får vi vores ting fra? Næmlich, Bangladesh. Har de ordentlige arbejdsvilkår i Bangladesh? Det er nemt at skrive det bliver lavet i Bangladesh, men bliver det lavet under slavevilkår? Ja ja, uha, hvad, sker der så? Og det er nogle af de der, især Nestlé er et kæmpe skræmme eksempel. Fordi, de bruger slavearbejde Børnearbejde. På de her kakaoplantager man har så mange ressourcer i deres hovedsæde i USA at, de aldrig er kommet forretning. De aldrig blevet dømt for noget på trods af at der forefindes ekstremt mange beviser. Og hvad hedder det Sådan noget som som produkt som, vi snakkede om med at, man kan jo godt se de her typer produkter og se jamen gør, det det skal, det er også en transparency til som du siger kan man spise den? Kan man tage den på huden? Der er mange forskellige ting ikke? Og så handler det også meget af det her ved værdi transparency. Hvad er det for nogle værdier af de ligger inden med?

Passer det med de produkter de, smider ud hvis, de sidder og siger vi bæredygtige Vi? Går meget op i ikke at bruge dyre testning og, man så finder ud af og det gør de altså alligevel Hvad. Sker der sådan Hvordan reagerer i blodet for noget hvis, det ikke stemmer overens med det indtryk vi, har fået?

Participant D: Så stopper man. Gjorde, jeg med MAC tror, jeg nok fordi, de var næmlich ud altså at sige at, de ikke testet på dyr men så slog jeg det op og kunne se den ikke passede. Fordi de

sælger i Kina og så sådan Så. Gik jeg bare væk fra at bruge med produkter så, fandt jeg nogle andre.

Participant C: For, mig Jeg. Er værdier også. Sindssygt vigtigt og det hele hvor. Altså vi baserer vores væremåde på og sådan noget omvendt så, taler som om jeg total grisk eller fattig og sådan og, det er jeg ikke men, for mig er rigtig meget prisen også. Så så netop. Jeg har også bare oplevelse at, hvis jeg netop skal have rigtig mange af de her produkter hvor, af der er rigtig god dyrevelfærd eller og jeg synes jeg der blev sagt lidt her for, eksempel fordi, I alle sammen nævnte lidt æg. Her med æggene. I skal have nogle lækre. Hvis vi er økologisk vi, skal have nogle gode ikke, Så? Skal vi også betale ekstra. Og det er også sådan lidt netop en værdi, Kan man sige mit liv. Jo så, ligger jeg lige det ekstra altså. For at få de her gode æg. Men så nu bliver det også kompromis for mig at, selvom vi måske godt ville støtte. Okay de, der mascara har som sagde bliver testet på dyr det, vil jeg selvfølgelig gerne støtte men, hvis der er kæmpestor prisforskel som, betyder det også bare en. Men så foregår jeg Har. Vi luft i maven over jeg har købt et produkt i dag så, glemmer jeg det i indtil den er tom igen ikke, Altså?

Participant D: Så. Ja jeg, har jeg da også lidt med For. Eksempel med tøj nu, vi snakker om hvis, det er blevet lavet i Bangladesh. Under slave forhold. Altså. Jeg, går med tøjet alligevel selv, om der står at, det har været i Bangladesh. Og vi køber jo også. Altså man, køber alt tøj der, er lavet vidt forskellige steder uden og. Det gør jeg i hvert fald uden at være klar over hvilke, forhold tøjet er lavet under, Fordi man er jo også forbruger til en vis grad.

Participant C: Jeg synes det, er svært fordi, selvom der står Bangladesh, så kan det måske stadig være fine forhold er jo også bare en fordom vi, har som forbrugere. Det kan vi lige så godt stå Sverige og, så har de måske sidde inde i en lagerhal. Og der havde været dårlige arbejdsforhold. Altså bliver de underbetalt? Er det fordi der er fysisk dårlige arbejdsmiljø eller sådan noget? Altså. Det, kan man ikke altid se på produktet den, kan man måske nemmere kan se hvis, man tager en kylling for kølemontren der, ligner et eller andet når, jeg tænker sådan er pumpet med saltvand eller sådan noget, kontra. En bluse hvor, man tænker og ja.

Participant D: Det, er også derfor man, vælger lidt Eller. Det har jeg i hvert fald gjort valgt nogle områder som, jeg går mere op i at, andre Ja? For, jeg tror også at, hvis man skulle være bevidst om det på alle alle varer man, køber så, er det virkelig noget at arbejde man, skal ud i hver, gang man skal ud og investerer i noget ikke, Ja?

Interviewer: Det, lyder lidt som om at, du er sådan der Du går meget op i at understøtte mange ting for noget der, har stor værdi for dig og, så er der måske nogen andre hvor, du vælger dine kampe du.

Participant D: Jeg vælger at se igennem ved nogle problemer Efterfyldning du går vi andre ting Ja?

Og, det er også fordi det kræver også det kræver. Mens altså meget at sætte sig ind i det også. Altså hvis pressen med mad produkter ikke hvis man skal kigge på for at man også køber med

så, har man valgt at gøre det Men. Det er jo ikke sikkert hvad, man så gør det med alle andre produkter man, køber ud over mad fordi, nej det, er også

Participant A: Det er noget af en opgave vil, jeg sige. Også igen fordi, jeg ligesom din søster ikke spise hvedemel og det. Det kræver også meget man skal igennem alle de produkter læs bagpå okay, hvad, der er inde i. Hov, der var faktisk lige hvedemel i, men, jeg synes det, er blevet. Det, er blevet lettere at se på en eller anden måde fordi, at alle de her allergener de, bliver jo de prøver på en eller anden måde. Det skal stå med stort så, det er blevet lettere at se. Men det er virkelig en jungle og og især mad så, derfor har jeg i hvert fald der, får lidt ligesom dig. Altså jeg, fokuserer på forskellige områder og mit er bare primært mad og, så ja så, kommer jeg nogle gange til. Eller det gør jeg, køber jeg noget tøj som, måske er lavet i et andet land som, måske ikke har det helt rette vilkår eller noget i den stil. Men jeg går ikke nok op i det som, som jeg for eksempel at gøre maden og jeg ville ønske jeg, gjorde. Men jeg tror også bare tidsmæssigt der, har jeg heller ikke, Altså, jeg, har ikke tid og måske heller ikke penge til at skulle sidde og kigge igennem. "Okay hvad er godt og har jeg råd til det her og..". Fordi så ender det måske i hvert fald hvad, jeg tror man, i en masse dyre mærker jeg, er nødt til at gå hen til i stedet for, fordi at, hvis der ved man det foregår på en rigtig måde. Men økonomien holder måske ikke til at jeg skal købe tre t-shirts om ugen som, om der er nogen eller, hvad du nu gør, jeg. Det ved jeg ikke hvad, det vil sige. Men altså så, jeg tror også at, mit fokusområde er bare mad fordi, det kræver meget at skulle holde styr på.

Interviewer: Men det er også interessant at, vi både har kosmetik i fokus og, så har den fødevarer, er i fokus så, lidt tøj fokus. Der er allerede tre vidt forskellige industrier som, har vidt forskellige etiske tiltag ja.

Participant C: Jeg kunne godt se så tid på at tænke på et eksempel som, nu netop snakket om gennemsigtighed og sådan noget. Og det her med prioritering af hvad, der er vigtigt. Jeg så en dokumentar omkring nedfældning af regnskoven hvor, jeg tænker Nu skal jeg prøve at lade være med at finde produkter ved palme olie og, jeg opgav simpelthen, fordi det er umuligt. Altså. Både apropos gennemsigtighed, på produkter og sådan noget. Der, er vildt mange shampooer og, sådan noget hvor det også er i, uden det står på, så netop det her så tager man det produkt som, man har en nogenlunde tillid til og, tænker de nogenlunde gennemsigtige. Det er nogenlunde okay pris og, det er nogenlunde nemt tilgængeligt fordi, det er lige nede i fakta ved siden af.

Fordi ja jeg, kunne nok godt investerer tyve gange bedre ved at gå hen et eller andet lokal shop så man selv ved hvad der bliver proppet i kroppen og sådan. Nå det, virker mere tilgængeligt for mig Det. Vil sige det, er også større tillid nøglehulsmærket mærke, og sådan noget ikke.

Participant A: Ja og, apropos fisk altså, det nu har jeg lige været på Færøerne færdigheder kan, man sige og der blev totalt chokeret over deres fiskeindustri. Altså, jeg, vidste slet ikke et den ene ting Det, er noget helt Det er, at de har buræg. Det var jeg virkelig forarget over. To, Den her fiskeindustri altså jeg, så de kommer med en lastbil som, bare ligner en benzintank lastbilen og, så fylder jeg tæller de, rører på og, så løber det derude at, fisk så, sætter de dem

ud i vandet. Der er et halvt år videre Godt. så sælger de dem færdige. Og, jeg sad bare der fordi, der er så mange der, siger Jamen fisk fra Færøerne og det ene og det andet.

Interviewer: I forlængelse med det, ville dit indtryk her være at det bliver solgt som et bæredygtigt produkt?

Participant A: Nej, for pokker da. . Jeg, ved ikke hvis, jeg så på den pakke der, står det her er fisk fra Færøerne, så ville jeg automatisk associere det. Jeg ved ikke hvor lang tid der går med de fisk, men et halvt år lad os sige det. Jamen så bliver de taget ud og slagtede og videre ud.

Interviewer: Men, vi har med noget tvivlsom etik gør uanset hvad. Og det er det der, er essensen af den her Transparency. Er at, de informationer vi får sande?

Participant A: Men, jeg tror også det handler om at, jeg Måske også fordi jeg har hørt fra folk. Jamen fisk fra Færøerne er bare den bedste og, så kommer man op selv og ser hvordan, det egentlig foregår og, høre historier om hvordan, det foregår også ja så, tror jeg bare det, ville jeg boycotte for nu spiser jeg ikke selv fisk. Så det er jo ikke et problem for mig kan, man sige. Men jeg vil sige hvis jeg skulle til at spise fisk jamen, så vil vi faktisk ikke være fra Færøerne.

Interviewer: Men spændende at de nævner det der med at få viden fra andre. Er det noget I, allesammen føler I, bliver påvirket af danner, jer en mening baseret på hvad, nogle andre har fortalt jer for, eksempel nogle I kender og har tillid til. Ville det kunne påvirke jeres købsvaner?

Participant A: Ja

Participant B: ja.

Interviewer: Eller ændre jeres holdning til et brand?

Participant D: Har, jeg også en søster som, Hun har faktisk en app der hedder Kemi-luppen som, hun bruger rigtig meget til at tjekke produkter fordi, det er jo også en ved at snakke om det ikke alt de altid skriver for produkterne. Og så er det sådan er hvor, man så kan scanne den og sige Passer det egentlig hvad, der står her at, den er clean for alt det her og så nogle gange så så passer det ikke, hvis vi så produkter ikke er derinde så, kan man faktisk sende det ind til dem så, de bliver mere bevidste om forskellige produkter.

Interviewer: Men hvis vi holder os til det her med at, man får viden fra andre hvis, I har negative holdning om for eksempel H&M hvis, nu er at, vi fandt ud af at, nu havde de vendt skuden, Og der var en der, havde haft et exceptionelt godt indtryk af dem. De havde fundet gode oplevelser de, havde fået måske lidt mere information at, man selv lige havde men, det der, er med til at kunne påvirke jeres negative holdning til noget positivt?

Participant A: Jeg tror der, skulle meget til rigtig meget til fordi, hvis først jeg har haft en negativ oplevelse med et produkt eller en brand eller noget i den stil jamen så, så boycutter

jeg det fordi, jeg ved der, er så meget andet på markedet som, så nok er bedre. Og så kan det godt være at, en anden, i familiemedlemmer eller hvad det nu en veninde kommer hen og siger: Jeg havde bare den bedste oplevelse med et H&M produkt, produkter men, men, hvis jeg havde oplevet at, H&M var noget værre noget Jamen eller jeg havde en dårlig oplevelse med det.

Interviewer: Denne, industri vi, faktisk skal fokusere på resten af tiden det er modeindustrien for det er den der er mest kontrovers, også i forhold til deres sourcing, logistik og generelt at, de indeholder, deres produkter. Der er rigtig mange eksempler på nogle som, ikke er i nærheden af lige så bæredygtig som, de vover at påstå de, er. Men inden jeg begynder at afsløre dem så, vil jeg rigtig gerne høre om I har nogle eksempler på modebrands som, er transparente?

Participant D: Som jeg sagde tidligere så, tøj ikke der hvor, jeg kigger mest på hvad, der er bæredygtigt eller ej. Men jeg ved at, nogle gange så har H&M sådan nogle forskellige t-shirts, hvor de har et ekstra skilt på hvor, det er sådan noget altså, økologi eller sådan noget. Og noget bambus tror jeg. Ja?

Participant A: "Sustainable".

Participant D: Ja. Ja, ja, det, har lagt mærke til at H&M har nogle varer hvor der så, de er lidt ekstra mærke på.

Participant A: Ja det er Zalando også begyndt på at, der står et eller andet bæredygtigt og, så kan man vælge det.

Participant D: Det er rigtigt, det har jeg også lagt mærke til. Jeg handler meget på Zalando.

Participant A: Ja det, jeg går ikke op i det som sådan, altså. Så jeg tror ikke jeg, kan nævne noget specifikt mode mærke eller noget som helst. Men ja jeg, vil sige H&M og Zalando at, nu er det dem hvor, jeg i hvert fald har lagt mærke til Det er den her som, du nævner lille, grønne mærke.

Participant C: For, eksempel som Vero Moda og sådan noget altså og, igen nej jeg, har også samme oplevelse. Det er ikke fordi jeg søger det, men når jeg så falder over det altså, så. Jeg købte en bluse fra Vero Moda og tænkte gud ja, den er egentlig lavet af genbrugsmateriale. "Ej fedt!" Tænker dog fedt men, jeg jagter det ikke. Det burde jeg måske.

Interviewer: Vil du sige du får noget værdi når der står det er noget bæredygtigt?

Participant C: Lige i den oplevelse gjorde jeg i hvert fald.

Participant D: Tror heller ikke jeg, tænker så meget over gå efter det men, når man så falder over så, det sgu egentlig ret fedt at, det her mærke er begyndt at tænke mere over det.

Participant C: Jeg, ved hvad, du sagde Zalando ikke er et brand ikke er altså det der, er en videreformidler ikke, Men? Men Der er også flere brands som, handler på Zalando som, også er begyndt at lave noget second-hand. Det er bare blevet meget moderne, og sender andre ting nu, hvor, vi snakker om mode men, for eksempel også med bøger og sådan noget. Men, jeg tænker Det kan jeg også igen jagter det ikke men, for mig hvad, jeg selv tænker om det er, det geniale.

Participant B: Om altså lige for at vende tilbage med det der bæredygtig med H&M har de der, mærker altså, så, tænker jeg til på Jo men, det er jo godt at, de genbruger tingene til at lave den her bluse men, jeg tænker mere på hvordan er produktionen med det. For I den kan godt jo ikke være den bedste og af rent faktisk skade mere. Man genbruger tingene og, derved får man bare det mærke så, går det op for hinanden? Ja.

Participant D: Også, det jeg hvis jeg tænker på det er, faktisk det samme lidt ud af modebranchen men med lidt samme eksempel med i forhold til elbiler. Man siger elbiler er mere miljøvenlige, men at lave elbiler er faktisk ikke særligt miljøvenligt.

Participant B: Men også bare det her med at afskaffe den. Jeg, tænker tit mest på produktionen og med logistik med, Hvordan transporterer man det? Og har man overhovedet vundet noget?

Interviewer: Det er nemlig de vigtigste dele inden for brand transparency. Det er: "Hvor kommer det fra?" og "Hvordan er det kommet derhen?" Hvis man ikke er en opsøgende forbrugertype så, tænker man ikke over okay hvor, de her materialer er blevet taget fra eller hvordan de er blevet behandlet. Er det blevet kemisk vasket, for eksempel nu når vi er i modebranchen. Hvordan, er de blevet sendt med privatfly, så at sige. Er de blevet opbevaret et sted der kræver ekstrem meget strøm eller elektricitet og sådan noget generelt?

Participant A: Ja. Det, gør jeg også. Man for, eksempel Jeg kan ikke huske det H&M eller Zalando hvor, man kan gøre det. Men der kan du jo vælge om, det skal sendes CO2 neutralt.

Interviewer: Det er godt at, de brands I nævner er H&M og Vero Moda, for det er de to eksempler jeg har med. Fordi det jeg har her er er noget der hedder Fashion Transparency Index. Og, det bliver lavet hvert eneste år. Det bliver lavet for luksusbrands, det bliver lavet for fast fashion brands, i procentdel. Hvor godt de ligger baseret på hvor meget transparency de reelt har. Hvor tror I de, ligger henne? Men ligger det højt eller lavt?

Participant A: Jeg tror faktisk at Vero Moda ligger højere end H&M.

Participant C: Det tror jeg også. Det er i hvert fald det indtryk jeg har. Men jeg tror stadig de ligger lavt. Altså.

Participant D: Jamen, jeg, tænker faktisk også lidt det samme.

Interviewer: Har nogenlunde sådant estimat hvor H&M nu ligger henne hvis, de ligger lavere end Vero Moda?

Participant A: Men jeg tror faktisk. Jeg tænker omkring tredive fyre procent.

Participant B: I hvert fald under halvtreds.

Participant C: Jeg, tror tyve procent imellem.

Interviewer: H&M ligger på 68 procent og Vero Moda ligger på 25.

Participant C: Må, jeg sige noget i forbindelse med det? Hvis, jeg skal bunde mine, altså hvorfor jeg troede Vero Moda lå højere end H&M, det Måske fordi at jeg har den fordom om, men Vero Moda er jo et dansk Brand. Kan måske være fordi netop man har den her godtroenhed når, det er et dansk produkt det må være godt. Vi har en god velfærd hvor, vi får eller netop fordi det kunne være mere opmærksom på det her Men vi skal bruge lokale produkter og ressourcer og altid.

Participant B: Kan det ikke stadig godt være et godt produkt? Den ligger vel bare lavt fordi den ikke giver informationer?

Interviewer: Det er jo netop lige det. Vi snakker om brand transparency. Jo så observationsmæssigt så, kunne de lige så godt have sindssygt gode arbejdsforhold, de kunne have god sourcing. De kommunikerer det bare ikke. Og nogle af deres transparency kommunikerer det jo så ikke rigtigt så, derfor ender de i bunden af kommunikationslinjen fordi, de jo nemlig ikke får levet op til det de gerne vil, eller i hvert fald sender ud de gerne vil.

Participant C: Man kan man bare fordomsfuld, Men netop på baggrund af det du siger så, er det jo også ja igen det er dansk brand. Nå, så må det jo foregå herhjemme. Men. Hvor netop når, vi så møder Bangladesh eller sådan et sted og tænker "Nej, det har jeg intet forhold til". Hvor man har en fordom om at herhjemme der kan man jo arbejde sådan.

Omvendt så bekræftede det jo også det, har været Det er sindssygt vigtigt at være gennemsigtigt for, måske afkræfte eller bekræfter nogle af mine fordomme i forhold til min min forbruger status.

Interviewer: I forhold til det her med price transparency, hvad reagerer I bedst på? Når I ser produkt, ville I så foretrække at, der stod den reelle pris og så den pris I får at vide hvad varen koster, for eksempel en jakke. I får at vide at, det her kostet ti dollars at producere den men, prisen er sat til hundrede dollars på grund af markedet. Ville I reagere på et brand hvor, der står cost for produktion, cost for logistik, cost for arbejdsvilkår? Altså, hele forsyningskæden er mappet ud. Og så prisen.

Participant C: Jeg tror det ville blive for omfattende, men altså jeg synes af egne interesser synes jeg det er spændende, men, jeg tror. Men det er måske også bare igen hvilken forbruger er man, hvis, jeg skal bruge noget går jeg ned og køber det og kigger på kiloprisen. Og så går jeg igen.

Altså hvis jeg først står og dvæler ved, det måske kostede dem ti kroner og producere den her t shirt men, jeg giver halvfjerds kroner så, giver det at, det er en super nederen følelse. Man skal tænke "Okay, er det billigt?".

Participant D: Jeg tror heller ikke jeg ville vide det.

Participant B: Nej, det bliver alt for omfattende. Så står man der og skal tænke over det.

Participant D: Man også mere i forhold til hvor, meget man føler sig snydt.

Participant A: Jeg, tror på det ene sted så, ville da have det rart med at, jeg vidste hvad, pengene så er gået til. Men på den anden side så, vil jeg også som egentlig under følte mig snydt fordi, hvis den har kostet ti dollars som, producerer og, den bliver sådan for hundrede som, jeg tænkte hvordan hvorfor skal betale halvfems dollars over.

Participant D: Men det er jo også på grund af konkurrence.

Interviewer: Der er mange der, har prøvet at foreslå Jamen Hvis I så fortæller os hvad, der er blevet brugt penge på så, vil du måske stole på jer med jer at, vi vil tænke om det var, det dejligt og, så har vi tendens så, kan forretning til den er Men.

Participant A: Jeg synes det, er fint at, man har tilgængeligt. Altså at det er muligt for forbrugerne at komme ind og se det her er hvad, hvad pengene ligesom er blevet brugt på. Men, det er ikke noget Jeg tror skal stå på en label fordi så ville jeg bare tænke hold og det er for meget information. Så går vi videre til næste produkt.

Interviewer: På en eller anden måde lyder det som om du er lidt begge typer? Du ikke kun have en pris hvis, du vil også gerne have mulighed for at undersøge.

Participant A: Det, tror jeg også fordi, jeg måske også farvet af at, jeg på et tidspunkt undersøgt i forhold til når, man donere til støt brysterne. Så var vi inde og tjekke hvad, pengene gik til. Og jeg var det sådan noget med det var ekstremt højt talt der gik til administration. Derfor synes jeg det, er fedt at, man har mulighed for at kunne se informationerne. Men jeg tror ikke at, det er noget hvis, jeg ikke går op i det at, jeg vil undersøge i nærmere.

Participant D: i Men jeg tror også det fordi, man er godt men, til en vis grad bevidst om at, tænk glas sådan dyrere end, det er at producere dem Fordi.

Der er jo altså konkurrence mellem ting og nogle gange Så. Hvis man har så godt for eksempel godt sports mark som, man ved man jeg går rigtig godt i Nike sko så, er man bare sådan så, ved man godt Det. Har måske ikke kostet så meget at lave de her men, jeg ved jeg, betaler for mærket mere end jeg betaler for selve skoen. Jeg, tror også bare så har jeg bare ikke behov for at, det står på den label som, jeg køber det på fordi, jeg ved jo godt at, der er en vis grad af det som, har noget med mere markedet og gøre i forhold til prisen.

Participant C: det er også igen det jo altid formidlingen altså, sådan. Jeg er fuldstændig enig i hvad, de siger. Hvis jeg ønsker at finde det så, vil jeg gerne kunne finde det. Men det skal ikke ud i alle butikker og sådan noget. Men det handler virkelig også en troværdighed. Hvordan de formidler det på Fordi lad os bare sige hvor laver hele den her det koster det det altså sådan det kommer virkelig Anfaldene kom til udtryk fordi, hvis nu de været Lad os bare sige at tage mig i tv hvor, de hele tiden blev sagt så, tror jeg måske sådan ja det, er fint.

Interviewer: Jeg har faktisk tre eksempler hvor af det her med at være transparent og havde gjort en ting ved forskel Og. Det er faktisk også på grund af fashion brand transparency, at der var så meget information omkring de her tre forskellige brands. Den første der var for eksempel en hel masse medarbejdere i Asien der, blev fyret uretmæssigt fordi der var ingen grund til de skulle fyres eller dårlige vilkår, så fordi der var nogen der fandt ud af at de havde faktisk en kontrakt om fagforening der sagde at de her ting så på grund af at de her informationer til gengæld det, måtte jo ikke en så kunne de blive ud genindsat, og, de kunne få nogle penge og en erstatning. Og den anden der, havde ikke fortalt hvor, deres fabrikker lå så, når det var de offentliggjort deres rapporter så, var der ikke nogen der kunne holde op på dem fordi, adressen var ikke den der, sagde det var. Så bliver der jo svært at få dem gjort accountable for noget som helst. De endte med at blive fundet og, så blev de smækket med en masse bøder fordi, det de, havde i gang med at det var totalt miljøskadeligt. Og de behandlede også deres medarbejdere ekstremt dårligt. Så der kommer ekstremt mange regler ind over. Og så sagde de ud af at, der var en brand som, havde associationer med noget produktion hvor, af det nemlig var mennesker lejre, arbejdslejr, men, hvor de fandt ud af at, medarbejderne faktisk ikke har noget valg. De arbejder der fordi, det var de nødt til. Så det der, skete efterfølgende var, selvfølgelig at, de her mennesker blev befriet af forskellige instanser. Men der blev også offentliggjort en kampagne for at, alle der, har noget med det her brand at gøre, skulle virkelig overveje hvad skal de så gøre nu? Har de lyst til at fortsætte med associeres ofte med det her mærke. Og, så må vi jo tage den følger der, kommer efterfølgende. Hvad tænker I den og høre sådan at det er på grund af transparency?

Participant C: Ja. Både, og Altså fik Man fortæller mig Jeg. Tænker det både på godt og ondt fordi, det er superfedt at, vi får det ved en anden Sådan. Nogle mennesker rettigheder vi, får fundet ud af men, omvendt så for mig Det. Er måske også bare jeg kender historien men, det er det jeg, reagerer på Den. Sidste hvor, du siger det, er mennesker lejr, og sådan noget så er der også faktisk sindssygt vigtigt. Hvis jeg skal tænke at, det er godt at, der er sikkerhedsnetværk som, får den genetableret altid været fordi, når jeg hører det så, tænker jeg Ja det, er så fint at, vi som forbrugere har været med til at påvirke at, vi belyser de her forhold Men. Hvis der er også nogle af de her mennesker som, jeg ikke kender til bedre, ikke, har nogen andre forhold som, måske har været den eneste måde de, faktisk har brug for verden til at dreje rundt på. Så jeg ved ikke ja fint, Super. Fint For. Os der, sidder i et

veletableret land og job, vi bare gå ud og finde et andet job. Jeg. Ved ikke hvad, det betyder for dem.

Interviewer: Man. Kan sige Det her er jo også det første træ det, er at, informationen har fundet dig eller, så vil de være lige ved med at være i arbejdslejr Det. Ved den her brand ikke har kommunikeret ud Så. Er det klart Så. Skal der være et land og sikkerhedsnet og en masse lovgivning der, skal træde hjælpende men, transparency er her ment som værktøjet til at, det blev opdaget og blev gjort bedre. Alt det efterfølgende det, kan vi ikke rigtig tage stilling til nu. De her eksempel der, er gået fra der er, en længere historie der, også fortæller at, det er blevet fiksede Det handler mest om det her med brand transparency.

Participant C: Men så tænker jeg at, det er fint. Altså, at vi får nogle faktor så, længe det er sandheden. Altså så længe vi får den reelle sandhed og ikke bare for at vide det, er noget værd. Det der, er klart altså, jo mere man kan til altså, viden er magt. Det er jo bare ligegyldigt hvad vi laver. Så, der er ingen tvivl om Men jeg kan få mig at få mere viden om et produkt skaber, jeg større tillid til det. Omvendt. Jo mindre jeg ved jo, mindre jeg stoler jeg måske på det. Altså sådan ja men, det skal formidles på en troværdig måde og, de skal formidles på en enkel måde de, skal formidle Altså.

Interviewer: De, skal gøre det på en troværdig måde Og hvad er det?

Participant C: Ja? Det, var sindssygt. Altså sådan man når man netop, hvis vi måske producerer nogle rapporter som er fyldestgørende som, som kommer med nogle tal som, kommer med nogle oplysninger om forhold og sådan noget.

Interviewer: Hvem skulle foretage de her rapporter? Uafhængige, interne, eksterne?

Participant C: Når, jeg tænker nogle eksterne fordi, altid hvis, det interne så, ved man jo aldrig om igen om, der er nogen der, der, pynter lidt på det. Men er sindssygt svært at sige. Og netop når du siger den her mål enheden altså bred man, må have så, må der nedsættes et eller andet udvalgt.

Interviewer: Det, er meget lovgivning der, handler om. Det. Er simpelthen fordi, det er relativt nyt område.

Participant C: Jeg tænker også det, kommer an på land.

Interviewer: Vi skal til den sidste del. Det handler om motiver. Det er både jeres egne Men det er primært brandets motiv. I forhold til de brands vi har snakket om for eksempel H&M eller noget sådant ikke. Hvad tror I de, får ud af uanset, om det brand eller industri. Hvad får de ikke ud af at være jeg tror transparente?

Participant A: Jeg tror de får forbrugernes loyalitet fordi, jo mere troværdighed til firma som sådan ligesom, her igen hvor, hun sådan her ligger kortene på bordet Og. Så vil jeg måske være mere loyal over for dem og altid købe flere mine produkter hos dem hvis, jeg ved at, de gør

noget godt eller, hvis jeg ved af Jamen de, er så bæredygtig som, de siger frem, for hvis det er at, at de ikke gør det så, ville jeg bare tænke, Nå. Altså, hvis, jeg finder ud af at, de for eksempel dårlige jamen, så finder jeg bare noget andet. Altså Og jeg tror også at, det som, vi har som forbrugere vi, har jo alt vi kan vælge og vrage mellem og, jeg tror det, er det der, gør det let for os. Så jeg tror hvis, man har et et produkt eller et brand der, vælger at sige vi gør det sådan her jamen, så tror jeg man, skaber mere end troværdighed og mere loyalitet fra forbrugerens side af som, måske gør at, man i sidste ende ender med at bruge flere sine penge der.

Participant B: Fuldstændig ja man, at den der, firmaet får, brugernes tillid til at tænke Nå gemmer, jo ikke noget, vi kan godt stole på dem. Det er det jeg, tænker at, de får ud af det.

Interviewer: Så det er meget loyalitet og troværdigt at snakke om men der ikke rigtig nogen af jer der, nævner profit?

Participant C: Nej vi, skulle til at sige men Men netop tilliden kan også føre til mere salg ikke, Altså? Jeg, henviser så netop har tillid sig så, køber jeg en ekstra bluse ikke. Jamen det, er fint forhold, Så vil gerne støtte deres brand. Eller, jeg køber en lille ekstra.

Participant A: Men, den er også sammen med loyalitet fordi, jo mere loyal du er til brandet jo, flere penge vil du investere i det brand eller i det produkt. Fremfor Hvor Jamen? Hvis, jeg ikke har Hvis jeg ikke er loyal over for det her produkt jeg har her henne jamen, så så kommer Så bruger jeg bare pengene Måske lidt hist og her, fordi, det er lige hvad, jeg kommer forbi på gaden. Men hvis jeg ved det her det, er noget jeg, ligesom står inde for. Det er noget jeg, godt kan lide. Deres produkter jamen, så, bliver jeg ved med at købe derfra så, jeg synes lidt det, har en sammenhæng.

Participant D: Jeg tror også vi, også tror også for mig at indrømme at vi er blevet et samfund der, stiller mange flere, Altså, spørgsmål til rigtig mange ting især, også som forbruger. Og vi forventer også at, der bliver svaret på alt det der, bliver spurgt om, ikke firmaerne skal jo ligesom, også, virksomhederne de skal følge med i forhold til hvad, forbrugerne spørger om og, hvis det er altså mere transparency, i deres i hvordan de producerer deres produkter.

Interviewer: Det er nemlig også fordi der har er blevet udviklet de her attributter som man tillægger de motiver man har. Det er på et helt psykologisk niveau. Hvad bliver man tiltrukket af og, hvad kan motiverne for en brand der? Er også en af de sætter strategier ud her da, Det er nemlig for at lave noget loyalitet vil gerne tiltrække kunder de, vil gerne have vores bevarer hvem, er ikke man har Er det der vi det der hedder customer retention at, de bliver ved med at komme igen det der er mange Consumer der, går ud Så køber I en ting så kommer de slet ikke tilbage tilbage fordi, når jeg når I får et produkt og vi som opfyldt dig fordi, den ene gang og og der er faktisk en masse forskellige motiver for sådan virksomhed at gøre det og det er meget altså det, er selvfølgelig profit baseret meget af det men, der er også mange af dem som, har de her interessenter. Dem der, sidder i bestyrelsen de, hører at deres forbrug og gerne vil have nogle flere ting. Og det er sjovt fordi, der er faktisk ikke nogen der, har snakket om det her bagland, Der er en virksomhed med deres Hvad siger man ud over forbrugerne måske? Deres motiv og kunne komme fra. Og der er faktisk mange tilfælde De her interessenter som, sidder for forskellige virksomheder.

Participant C: Men igen Jeg tror at, årsagen til at, vi heller ikke tænker over det er, fordi vi forbruger. Vi ser produktet derude. Altså så det ekstra lag med at skulle søge transparent skulle finde ud af hvordan, den firmaet er etableret ved, man altså det, bliver meget for mig Som forbruger. Og der er ikke i tvivl om at, der sidder nogen netop som som du også siger ikke, vi som forbrugere bliver meget mere opmærksom på hvor, alt det her det virkelig her igen, normer værdier, og sådan noget. Jeg tænker ikke hvem CEO'en for H&M er. Er det en der, har måske godt CV og etablerede sådan noget. Har nogle gode værdier. Det tænker jeg sgu ikke over. Det burde jeg måske. Sådan man kan få den der forbruger skyld nu men, det er også meget arbejde igen og skulle ligge.

Interviewer: Ja i forhold til det her med brand transparency. Og. Nu har I jo snakket meget om bæredygtighed og økologi og sådan noget selvom det ikke er primær fokus, så er det et mindre fokus i vores speciale. Og. Det handler også meget om det her med at have grønne skepsis over for produkter og, det handler også om negative word of mouth. Altså når man fra venner familie, bekendte, hører den her negative holdning om et brand så, har man en tendens til at danne sig de samme associationer eller i hvert fald have sin perception ud fra hvad, de siger. Og så kan man jo selv beslutte sig for om, man er enig eller ej.

Og det er også det der med økologi hvis, det ikke engang hundrede procent økologisk kan man så stadigvæk stole på at, der står økologi på flasken for, eksempel på de der produkter fra H&M før vi, har snakket om før. Der fandt man ud af det der grønne mærke "organic". Ikke Det var det der ekstremt ikke bæredygtige bomuld der er blevet brugt. Og lige præcis H&M endte også, en kæmpe skandale for flere år siden fordi, de har det her super gode initiativ (GreenPeace, 2017). Du kan afleveres sko, tøj alt, muligt og så genanvender de fibre. Det, blev observeret i flere gange at alt tøj blev brændt, så har vi jo lige pludselig den her disconnection. De, fremstår transparente. De fremstår bæredygtige men, de er det ikke og, det endte i en decideret krise for H&M. Der er rigtig meget negative associationer til nemlig, H&M fordi de gør så meget og, så begynder mistillid jo dukke frem Hvorfor overfladen. Og altså det lyder som, om I er meget enige i at, den her transparens og greenwashing er meget forbundet. Det er en counter og en følgevirkning.

Participant B: Jeg synes altså den de virksomheder der, er mest transparente er, jo også den der, økologisk gør noget godt for miljøet fordi, de gerne vil fremstå jo at, de gør et godt input på verden mens, de andre der, prøver på at skjule lidt er, nok ikke den der, sælger mest økologi. Og arbejdsforholdene er nok ikke det bedste.

Interviewer: Man er også meget enig i at, økologi faktisk ikke er så ens som, man havde regnet med Fordi. Økologi der kan du stadigvæk for eksempel lægge dårligt foder eller ekstrem så meget plads så, var bæredygtigt Allie virkeligheden ikke Og. Friland Jamen det, får måske antibiotikaene taget når, de får dårligt foder Altså det, er jo ikke til at vide hvis det ikke står på pakken.

Participant C: Nej. Jeg, tænkte bare Altså der, for mig er det klart Altså nu, har jeg ikke hørt om den sag hvor, de kunne brænde det og, det er klart lige når du siger så, bliver jeg forarget. Og det er jo altså det når, det er en stor brand ikke, Altså? Sådan det, kan godt være det Ikke I Danmark men, der er jo samarbejde i hele brandet men, for mig. Hvis jeg så skulle

genetablere min tillid så, vil jeg gerne altså netop som der også blev sagt det her med. Man skal heller ikke altid skjule sine nedture så, netop sådan en sag her tror, jeg også vil for mig som forbruger vinde igen Indtil. Bliver tillid ved at, de viser det og siger Ja vi, har fundet ud af det men, vi er blevet klogere. Og lad os så gå ud og vise Okay vi, gør noget andet Altså. Sådan fordi der med at få dække over noget det, skal også være mere hvis, vi ved hvad for mig.

Interviewer: Men. Det er fedt for spændende indsigt Så du mener at, man skal gøre noget følge, skade, behandling, eller, hvad man siger Og? Hvis der så opstår sådan noget der?

Participant C: Ja, og, nu fordi netop når så vil vi hurtigt gå ud og brænde tøj Men. Hvis der ikke sker noget ved det så, er det jo lige meget for mig vil jeg gerne se den der ændring altså. Eller vise altså sådan eller gå ud og sige at, bygge står helt ved vi, er med på Vi. Kan sgu ikke ændrer det eller sådan noget ikke, Ja?

Participant A: Altså, jeg, fuldstændig enige fordi at vil. Det kan godt være at, de har været ude og lave noget rav i den og det særlig godt men, men, hvis vi ikke ved ja, hvad, der sker efterfølgende hvis, det ikke ligesom gøre noget bedre for og undgå at, man kommer ud i sådan noget igen. Jamen så, tror jeg også for at være fuldstændig ligeglad. Men jeg tror faktisk allerede være ligeglad hvis, jeg havde fundet ud af at, for eksempel eller hvis man vidste til det. Jeg vidste faktisk ikke til det her med brænde af fremlagde. Men hvis, jeg kendte til det og, det var noget hvor, jeg for eksempel Det? Har jeg ikke gjort Men. Hvis jeg for eksempel havde doneret rigtig meget tøj i H&M og, jeg så fandt ud af at, de bare havde brændt det. Så ville jeg faktisk boycutte dem og, så vil det kræve ekstremt meget for mig eller fra deres side af og få overvundet mig til at komme tilbage som en af deres kunder. Og der tror jeg det, vil hjælpe at, man ligesom sagde Vi har fundet ud af at det her er blevet brændt alt det her tøj som, som forbrugerne har doneret. Og vi har gjort de her tiltag for at det ikke sker igen. Og vi opvejer ved at gøre sådan her. Hvad det nu kunne være. Det, ville være en lille vægt på skålen så at sige til at kunne få mig med tilbage det. Vil det ikke gøre det hele Men det vil være en af de ting jeg aldrig har Okay. De, har rent faktisk tænkt over.

Interviewer: Ville du sige det til andre, det her?

Participant A: Ja, Hundrede procent. Og så ville jeg få den med at få min siden højst sandsynligt og sige at det var noget værre møg at de valgte at brænde mine ting.

Interviewer: Har det sådan noget at gøre med den eksterne instans der, har bragt den her nyhed at det var det de gjorde? Ville du have foretrukket at de selv helt inden det var kommet ud havde sagt at "Vi havde for meget så, derfor har vi brændt det?"

Participant A: Det ville ikke have gjort det bedre. Men. Jeg tror det ville have været mindre skadeligt.

Participant D: Det havde måske været bedre for brandet selv.

Interviewer: Meget af det her med brand transparency ud over det der authenticity fordi, det handler også om det der med at, man skal tage accountability, ansvar for hvad, man har gang i. Det gør de ofte ikke fordi, der er nemlig ikke nogen lovgivning for hvad, man skriver.

Participant D: Hvis man ved man, har rigtig mange kunder der, søger noget bestemt så, ville det være bedre for det brand i længden af dig selv og må udgive hvis, de ved de, gør noget der, ikke lever op til det som, kunderne forventer af dem.

Interviewer: Der er rigtig mange af de der brands som, tænker, vi vil gerne increase profit, hvordan kan vi gøre det? Vores forbrugere de vil gerne have bæredygtighed. Jamen det giver vi dem så. Men så vælger de simpelthen ikke at lave investeringer de bør og, så opstår der et gap. Og så er det der hvor, det er rigtig svært for brand at genopnå en markedsandel.

Participant A: Det er jo lidt ligesom alle andre Sådan. Forhold kan man sige sådant venskab og det ene det andet. Det er nogle det jo fuldstændig det samme hvis, du føler du, har loyalitet til eller du føler du er loyal over for et brand og de så, hvad hedder det ligesom sårer dig, eller altså det føles jo sådan det, altså du er jo nærmest venner med det her brand på en eller anden måde. Og hvis de så sårer dig ved at gøre dig fortræd så, at sige i gåseøjne, altså, de gør dig fortræd på en eller anden måde. Jamen, så, der klart så skal der ekstremt meget til for at genvinde min MAC til det her brand. Det. Er fuldstændig som et venskab eller en anden form for relation.

Participant C: Men igen så bliver jeg også bare sådan. Så laver man jo også altså nu lad os bare få det til at bore med at være venner så, laver man jo også nogle regler siger okay så vi tog vi skal være venner så, skal man her og, hvis man skal overføre det til modeindustrien som, om man måske også noget lovgivning på banen når, det netop er så slapt. Så, bliver vi nødt til at kommunikere den anden vej fordi, hvis firmaerne ikke kan, jeg selv finde ud af det. Hvilket var fair nok fordi der er penge involveret og penge er magt. Som du selv siger hvis, vi lige pludselig kan sige vi bæredygtige og få flere forbrugere altså cost/benefitter det her ikke. Altså sådan. Så gør vi det hvem gør ikke det for at tjene mere penge. Etik er sindssygt svært og, særligt når vi snakker store magtfulde, firmaer og store brancher i flere verdensdele og sådan noget. Og netop når Danmark måske har en politik og nogle andre har en anden politik, men, så må vi have noget EU på banen.

Interviewer: Sidste spørgsmål. Hvordan er jeres holdning i forhold til Brand transparency nu efter, vi har snakket om det? Er den ændret? Er den blevet forstærket? Er den blevet lidt mere defineret nu i forhold til den var før?

Participant D: Jeg tror måske mere det, har gjort at, der måske nogle mærker jeg, bruger eller, et eller andet som, jeg godt kunne finde på at undersøge lidt mere omkring for at se om det passer det de skriver.

Participant A: Jeg, tror på samme måde især nu, efter du nævnte den der kemi-lup. Det tror jeg også at, det er noget jeg, måske vil gøre mere i. Altså, at finde ud af om, det passer eller stemmer overens. Og. Jeg tror også bare at, min definition eller definition på hvad brand

transparency er, er blevet forstærket og, og hvad der skal til og, hvad der kan gøres også, også fra egen side af for at finde ud af hvad, der sker bag bag de lukkede døre.

Participant B: Ja. Jeg, har også fået en bedre forståelse for hvad, det er. Men jeg er nok ikke kommet til det at, jeg vil gøre en indsats med at undersøge tingene nu. Det vil jeg synes var for stor opgave for mig.

Participant A: Ja. Altså, det er også igen. Det er ikke fordi, jeg vil begynde at undersøge, for eksempel inden for tøjmærker fordi, det er ting jeg ikke går så meget op i men, lige men, med det som, jeg går op igen. Det kan godt være at, jeg skal tage nogle flere tiltag andre tiltag for at finde ud af om, om det passer bedre overens.

Participant C: Jeg tror ikke rigtig at jeg har rykket mig særlig meget. Ikke ud over endnu en gang blev bekræftet I at vi har nogle regler og nogle systemer som, er simpelthen så fiskenet-agtige. Så altså det er jo en jungle at finde ud af hvad der er og op ned og sådan noget. Og det lyder også en lille bitte smule sådan subjektivt. Og, det tror jeg at, det er jo altid. Ligesom gennem livet, ikke? Altså, sådan, man skal virkelig tage en mening indtil, man tager en ny. Altså. Det her med viden som, jeg hele tiden har sagt. Så. Nej jeg, ved sgu heller ikke om hvordan, men jeg ved ikke om det har rykket mig meget men, jeg tror måske en i periode hvor, det godt kunne få mig til at være opmærksom på det. Og når jeg så går over i min hverdag igen så, tror jeg at jeg kommer til at glemme det.

Participant D: Ja. Og, jeg kunne godt forestille mig at, der er noget der, kommer mere og mere på banen også bare generelt i samfundet.

Interviewer: Er begyndt at blive en meget integreret i samfundet både det her med bæredygtighed men, i hvert fald også med transparency i forhold til hvad man skal kommunikere hvordan, man skal kommunikere eller så ikke de her halv-kommunikationer.

Participant A: Det har meget at gøre med den her generation der, ligesom er her nu, tror jeg. Ja ja vi, går op i ting men, men generationen efter os går måske endnu mere op i det her med grøn omstilling gennemsigtighed, og meget mere opsyn på hvad der reelt set er i de produkter jeg køber. Ja. Det, kommer til at være noget der bliver mere og mere af. Det kan jeg da kun se. Så. Det er jo kun til gavn. Hvis firmaer og brands begynder at gøre lidt mere ud af det.

Interviewer: Okej, hej och välkomna. Detta är en gruppintervju som jag och min kollega Mie genomför för att få bättre kunskap om vad kunder tänker kring varumärkes transparens. Så vi kommer generellt diskutera varumärkestransparens. Innan vi börjar vill jag informera att ni kommer bli inspelade, är alla bekväma med det?

Participant E: Det är okej.

Participant F: Ja.

Participant G: Går bra.

Participant H: Det är okej.

Participant I: Ja.

Interviewer: Till att börja med kommer vi fokusera på autenticitet då det är ett viktigt begrepp i relation till varumärke. Så, var är autenticitet för er när det gäller just varumärken?

Participant E: Alltså, från mitt perspektiv så skulle jag säga att det är vad dem står för. Eller snarare vad dem visar utåt vad dem står för. Som när man påstår att man använder återvunnet material.

Participant F: Jag håller med men skulle också vilja tillägga att autenticitet inte bara kommer från vad varumärket själv påstår utan kan även komma från deras rykte.

Participant E: Det jag menar är att man liksom är ärlig i det man påstår. Så det liksom inte kommer fram senare att man har en gömd agenda typ.

Interviewer: När det kommer till detta och hur ni diskuterar, har ni någon specifik industri, varumärke eller annat ni tänker på i kontext till när vi nu pratar om autenticitet?

Participant I: Hmm, nej det står helt stilla för mig. Tror inte jag tänkt på det så mycket om jag ska vara ärlig.

Participant E: Ja, alltså jag tycker väl H&M är autentiska. De inkluderar ju oss kunder mer och mer i deras vad ska man säga, process eller vad som pågår innan kläderna hamnar i affären. Det är något som de också blivit bättre med, med tiden. Känns som det kanske också är extra viktigt för oss svenskar, då det är ett svenkst företag att dem representerar vår standard av ja äkthet och autenticitet. Tänker att det kan variera från land till land också, vad ens standard är på. Sedan är dem ju också internationella, men känns som vi är lite hårdare med det här att allt ska vara autentiskt.

Participant I: Det var ett bra exempel. Tänkte inte ens på dem.

Participant F: Jag tycker att svenska märken kan vara ganska bra på denna punkt. Sådana små typ organiska eller miljöorienterade varumärken. Nu tänker jag på till exempel Jordklok.

Participant H: Om jag får välja precis vad som, så har jag nog bättre koll på hund varumärken. Det är mestadels för att jag vill ge min hund endast det bästa. Köper enbart färskfoder från Sverige. De kan vara svårt att hitta återförsäljare. Pondus är ett varumärke som jag känner är väldigt autentiska.

Participant G: Ni alla har bra exempel. Jag kan verkligen inte komma och tänka på ett specifikt varumärke. Tänker mer att man oftast hör om när dem misslyckat stort. Det känns även om de större varumärkena tillåts vara mer stängda för ja deras rykte typ. Medan de nya små företagen behöver lägga fram allt. Speciellt lokala, det känns som de är riktigt autentiska nu när jag tänker efter.

Interviewer: Intressanta exempel. Det är väldigt individuellt vara äkta och autentiska är från person till person som ni kanske insett på era olika exempel.

Participant H: Ja, att vara äkta känns som det är väldigt individuellt. Men på något plan tror jag ändå det har att göra med vilken information eller hur mycket information man som person får.

Interviewer: Jag tänker mig att vi går vidare till nästa fråga som tar oss in på transparens. Har ni några exempel på varumärken som säger att de är transparenta med sina kunder?

Participant G: Det är en djungel på så vis att behöva tänka på någon specifik. Jag har liksom samma varumärken jag köper ifrån sedan år tillbaka och har helt ärligt inte så bra koll på detta. Men jag tycker nog H&M påstår att dem är transparenta, så det är väl i så fall det.

Participant E: Jo men jag kan nog hålla med. Jag har faktiskt handlat från deras hemsida med och inte bara liksom i butik och det känns som man får en känsla av deras transparenta anda där. Man kan liksom se på ett annat sätt vilka produkter som är hållbara och så.

Participant H: Jag tänker mer på alla märken nu som faktiskt börjat bli mer veganska. Att liksom de flesta har i produkt beskrivningar att det är konstgjort läder och så, eller när det står att det är läder. Jag tycker i alla fall det är bra att mer varumärkent implementerar en mer transparent vegansk framförhållning.

Participant F: Jag tycker det kan vara svårt att lita på den informationen man får från varumärket eller ja företaget i sig. Känns som dem bara vill representera sig själva så bra som möjligt. Men ska jag var helt ärligt så är inte jag den som heller söker info från annat håll heller.

Interviewer: Skulle du säga att du är dig skeptisk mot den informationen dem ger ut?

Participant F: Jo men det är väll rätt ord. Jag tänker på smink eller hudvårds industrin till exempel. Många påstår liksom nu att dem inte är testad på djur men hur vet man?

Participant E: Ja, det är faktiskt något som jag bara litar på och inte tänker så mycket på.

Participant F: Exakt! Då måste jag som kund liksom inte bara läsa på produktens baksida utan då måste jag göra extra research på internet som jag sa tidigare med att leta på deras hemsida eller typ googla. Sedan om det är lokala affärer som vi också prata om tidigare kanske inte det har någon hemsida och då blir det genast svårare.

Participant I: Tror de flesta idag har en egen hemsida men förstår din poäng.

Participant F: Ja men de som kanske bara finns i en stad kan man förmodligen inte googla i alla fall och lista ut om de är transparenta på samma sätt som ett stort varumärke.

Participant H: Det stämer. Däremot om man verkligen vill veta borde det finnas listor på interent där man kan kolla upp sådanhär som att dem inte testat på djur. Kan såklart vara svårare om det är mindre varumärken.

Participant E: Jag har alltid tänkt att det varit hyfsat säkert att köpa skandinaviska märken som vi prata om tidigare.

Interviewer: Nu kom vi in på den kosmetiska industrin som har mycket kontroverser. Finns vissa kemikalier som inte är 100% som till exempel det ni var inne på, skandinaviska kosmetiskamärken tenderar att välja bort. Så kosmetiskaindustrin är en väldigt tung industri när det kommer till transparens.

Participant H: Eftersom jag nämde hundmat innan så kan jag väl också passa på att nämna matindurtin. Det kan vara svårt att läsa på alla ingredienser, samt det är svårare att lita på dem. Tänker även på veganska produkter här, att man måste lita på att de inte är spår av icke veganskt om man nu är extrem vegan. Sendan känner jag också större misstroende nu när allt höjs och känner ännu större krav att de är transparenta.

Participant E: Ja, priserna är galna men jag vet inte om jag skulle säga det påverkar mitt förtroende för dem. Kanske att jag förväntar mig bättre kvalite på maten jag köper.

Interviewer: Livsmedel är väldigt hett idag, speciellt nu när priser och allt höjs med tanke på inflationen. Levnadstandarden överlag just nu är påverkad av inflationen.

Participant G: Jag tror verkligen det är svårt oavsett industri att vara 100% transparent. Tror kanske större företag har mer att förlora om dem skulle vara såpass transparenta. De nya företagen har ändå lite försprång med att idag kunna börja vara transparenta.

Participant F: Ja, men det är ju just det här som vi prata om att man själv måste söka upp. Det är väldigt ansträngade och ta så stort ansvar själv för att ta reda på vad som finns i produkten eller vad vissa namnbeteckningar står för och innehåller.

Participant H: Ja, men om man inte anstränger sig heller så är det inte transparansen som styr. Jag gör det inte så mycket men jag värdesätter verkligen veganska produkter, så inom det ämnet läser jag på en hel del. Det må vara dyrare och mer svår tillgängligt men det är värt det.

Participant E: Jag orkar inte direkt göra det. Jag borde nog göra det för ja, både min egna men också för att medverka till var företag producerar. Jag tänker med på priset, tillgänglighet och så.

Participant G: Jag tycker det är skönt att handla via internet, så man inte behöver gå i affärer. Samt att det kommer direkt till dörren. Nu förtiden kan du handla från i stort sätt alla större varumärkens hemsida.

Participant F: Det finns ju också de sidor som samlar på samma ställe, som Nelly och Chiquelle. Dem har både billigare och dyrare val.

Interviewer: Som jag förstår er är det olika hur myckter ni söker upp information.

Participant I: Nej, jag tror jag inte riktigt brytt mig eller tänkt det är så allvalrigt om det inte tas upp för allmänheten.

Participant F: Jo men lite på hudvård och smink produkten kanske.

Participant H: Jag söker upp alla produkter jag köper när det gäller om de är veganska. Just nu har jag däremot mina ställen som jag är lojal mot för jag har granskat dem. Det jobbigaste är när det gäller att hålla koll på mat. Jag vill ju veta vad jag stoppar i mig då jag vill vara väldigt hälsosam och inte få i mig okända ämnen.

Participant E: Nej inte direkt.

Participant G: Det är väl som Participant H sa, mat produkter men inte till den graden. Jag kollar väl mer så jag väljer lokalt eller liksom typ svensk kyckling. Samt när det kommer till ägg att jag kollar så att dem inte har haft ett dåligt liv och att dem har fri tillgång till natur och

så. Hemskt att tänka vissa lever inomhus hela livet. Det må kanske kosta lite mer, men det är det värt.

Participant E: Det är ju många produkter som har sådana här markeringar inte bara inom mat. Jag känner själv bara att jag inte har så bra koll på dem eller vad dem exakt står för.

Participant G: Ja, jag skulle nog säga att jag har stort förtroende för sådana markeringar. Likväl som jag verkligen litar på om det står att något är ekologiskt. Sedan är ju alla etiketter bra att ha, men det kan också bli för mycket olika etiketter som står för minimalt olika grejer känner jag. Jag vet inte alltid skillnaden. Men jag läser alltid på äggförpackningar angående det här om dem är frigående i alla fall.

Participant H: Ja det blir ju lite dyrare, men jag står själv mycket för ekologiskt. Det är ju lite bättre att äta än alternativet, speciellt när man vill stoppa så naturliga ämnen i kroppen som möjligt. Det spelar ingen roll för mig heller att det är lite dyrare.

Interviewer: Så skulle ni säga att ni värderar kvalitet mer än priset?

Participant H: Ja jag värderar kvalitet mer.

Participant I: Nja, jag tänker nog mer på vart jag kan få bäst pris. Alltså mer mat för pengarna.

Participant G: Ja men i vissa fall. Kanske inte i alla saker jag köper men när det kommer till hur man behandlar djur som vi äter. För dem ska behandlas med respekt.

Interviewer: Om vi går vidare härifrån så kan jag börja med att förklara att varumärkes transparens till deras kunder är en växande trend, som vi varit inne på. Definitionen av att vara transparent är att vara ärlig, öppen och villig att avslöja information och beslut inom olika fält i deras organisation. Man skulle kunna säga det har med deras öppenhet att göra. Med tanke på vad ni delat med er, skulle ni hålla med om denna definitionen? Eller lägga till något?

Participant F: Ja det skulle jag definitivt säga. Det är ju det man vill av alla företag och att såklart det ska vara lättillgänglig information. Det är toppen att vi som kunder bara kan gå in och se exakt vad de lägger i sina produkter nu. Vi har kommit långt, men har också långt kvar.

Participant G: Jag håller med om det är med öppenhet. Tror definitivt att det alla skulle tjäna på att lägga alla kort på bordet. Hade önskat jag kunde säga ett varumärke som jag känner stod överens med att berätta allt och vara ärliga och öppna. Tyvärr känner jag inte så. De flesta har något som dem inte säger som det är. Som tur är finns det andra, inte jag då, som ifrågasätter dessa och om dem hittar något gör dem det känt för allmänheten. Då måste företaget vara beredd att stå till svars. Det tycker jag om med denna treden att företag inte kommer undan med vad som helst.

Interviewer: Kan ni tänka er en upplevelse som var viktig för er när det gäller varumärkestranparans? Positivt eller negativt.

Participant H: Jag skulle säga att en positiv upplevelse är till exempel när jag unna mig själv att köpa något speciellt till mig själv i en märkesaffär som jag sparat ihop till. De var så omhändertagna och trevliga, så jag fick verkligen en positiv upplevelse där. De var uppvaktande samt att man fick något och dricka och allmänt excellent service. Kvalitén var också fantastiska och värt varenda krona.

Participant F: Ja jag kommer inte ihåg vilket märke det var men köpte ett par skor från Nillsons skor. De var väldigt snygga. Fick bra service och helt okej pris. Vi pratade en hel del om olika alternativ och så innan jag bestämde mig. Kände mig trygg i mitt beslut och hade en bra inställning mot dem när jag lämna. Det var inte ens från affären jag fick reda på det, men när jag använde dem så var det någon som fråga om det var äkta ormskinn. Så självklart, kollade jag upp det och tyvärr så stämde det. Kände mig lurad då hon som jobba där inte sa något.

Interviewer: Kommer ni nu associera varumärket med denna upplevelsen?

Participant F: Vill säga nej, men nu när jag tänker efter så har jag inte köpt skor där sedan dess. Känner mig lurad och att jag inte vet vad deras standard är.

Participant H: Jo men det är helt klart. Vill tillbaka och handla där igen någon gång, det var fantasiskt. Har till och med tipsat flera vänner om att göra det bara för upplevelsen.

Interviewer: När det kommer till transparens så handlar det om vad företaget aktivt kommunicerar till sin kund och det kan vara genom marknadsföring. Med det tänkte jag förmedla att detta är ett vis som företag kan kommunicera stimuli. Som tidigare när vi prata om att inte testa på djur. Med det så tänkte vi gå lite djupare in på vad transparens egentligen är. Ett företag kan ju fokusera på många grejer, vi vill höra från er vad transparens egentligen för ett sådant varumärke är. Vilken typ av steg tror du att de måste gå igenom?

Participant F: Vad för steg?

Interviewer: Steg som en produkt tar innan de når kunden. De stegen kan ha stor inverkan på deras transparens som de kommunicerar. Detta påverkar ju er som kunder i högsta grad också.

Participant I: Jag tänker väl först på stegen när det gäller mat. Alltså hur är renlighet, transport och ja omvårdnad såklart.

Participant F: Kläder har också en del frågetecken när det kommer till sina olika steg.

Interviewer: Det kan vara väldigt olika på hur man reagerar. När ni ändå kom in på kläder här så kan jag nämna att jag tänker mig till exempel hur deras supply chain transparens ser ut. Så vart dem får sina grejer ifrån. Har ni något ni kan tillägga där?

Participant G: Om vi fortsätter på klädspåret, så tänker jag ju på de som gör sina kläder i Kina, Bangladesh och Indien. Tänker man vet ju inte riktigt hur deras arbetsvillkor ser ut.

Participant H: Jo man har ju läst saker typ med Zara och så angående barnarbete. Man vet ju inte om det, när det framkom, var under slavarbete.

Interviewer: Intressant. När vi pratar om detta vill jag också påpeka att som vi diskuterat är det också många som aldrig döms även när bevisen är tydliga.

Participant H: Som att bry sig om vad man stoppar i sig, så är en av mina prioriteringar att inte använda saker som jag inte kan stoppa i munnen eller lägga på ansiktet. Så det är väl har väl också med deras supply chain transparens.

Interviewer: Tack. Utöver pris och supply chain transparens så har vi också värde transparens. Och då kan man ju tänka på företagets öppenhet angående värdet. Hur skulle ni reagera om ni skulle få reda på att värdet inte stämmer överens med det intrycket ni fått?

Participant F: Det beror väl på delvis hur nära man står märket men jag skulle säga att man borde sluta.

Participant G: Ja alltså jag har ju nyligen fått reda på att produkter som säljs i Kina får testas på djur så därav även om de säljs i EU så stämmer värdet inte överens med dera så kallade öppenhet. Så det är många sminkprodukter jag bytt ut. Liksom tänka sig, jag har katter hemma. Kan inte använda produkter som plågat andra djur.

Participant H: Värderingar är vansinnigt viktigt eftersom människans beteende är baserat på det. Sedan är ju det också relaterat till pris då som vi pratat om tidigare man associerar högre pris med bättre kvalitet. Eller jag gör i alla fall. Jag köper gärna få dyra grejer från bra ekologiska ställen än mer för samma pris.

Participant I: Jag tänker på det vi prata om tidigare med slavaförhållande. Det är ju inte så att jag inte varit medveten om det men jag har nog helt ärligt kanske inte brytt mig tillräckligt. För jag kan ju se att det står på kläderna vad det är gjort, men jag lägger ingen större energi på det. Nu låter jag säkert jättehemska. Men jag tänker att vi alla köper kläder från olika länder utan att veta. Eller kanske inte ni som är medvetna men majoriteten av oss gör det. Vill också bara tydliggöra att detta är inte något jag tror antingen jag eller någon annan gör detta om det varit lättare att vara medvetna om under vilka förhållande kläderna var tillverkats i. Vi som konsumenter har inte ansvaret egentligen att vi ska behöva jobba för att få veta sanningen, men det är vårt ansvar att aggera på det vi anser är fel. Tror bara inte alla har exakt samma information.

Participant F: Men arbetsmiljön kan väl vara dåliga i andra länder med tänker jag.

Participant E: Jo det kan dem men vi vet att det är dåligt i de länderna.

Participant F: Kan inte det också vara en fördom? Tänker finns säkert dem som jobbar mot denna seterotypen.

Participant E: Det är sant. Har bara svårt att se till exemplet ett skandinaviskt land ha lika dåliga arbetsvillkor.

Participant F: Det är väl nog för att det inte framkommit och för att vi har en bra arbetsmiljö och villkor.

Participant H: Håller med till viss del. Däremot har det ju varit TV-program angående kycklingar och kor till exempel som inte har det som företagen gör reklam för. Så har det kommit upp i uppdragsgranskning att det är arbetsvillkor som brutits och att de har gått under radarn. Det är inte heller okej.

Participant G: Det är svårt att bry sig om allt i dagsläget känns det som.

Interviewer: Jag kan se att ni har vissa industrier ni verkligen brinner för. Det är väldigt intressant att lyssna på.

Participant G: Jag tror man väljer vissa saker man bryr sig mer om och det syns mer när man sitter i grupp såhär och alla har olika hjärtefrågor. Det hade varit väldigt utmattande om vi hade varit medvetet om precis allt. Eller ja alla varor vi köper. Men man lär sig också mycket av att sitta och prata såhär såklart.

Interviewer: Som jag förstått dig bryr du dig väldigt mycket om vad du köper, och att du ser det som att ni kan lära er av varandra genom att ni alla inte har samma hjärtefrågor.

Participant G: Ja exakt.

Participant H: Vi glömmer att vi människor är starka ihop. Lär av varandras styrkor istället för att göra allt själva.

Participant E: Ja alltså, det tar ju mycket tid om man ska läsa på varenda grej man köper i mataffären. Man kanske måste det om man är allergisk på vissa saker och då har man såklart större kunskap. Men tycker ändå det skulle vara lättare att se för alla vad produktet innehåller så man inte behöver var expert eller ha extra kunskap. Gäller sminkprodukter med. Men det är en djungel i båda dessa områden.

Participant H: Därför fokuserar jag på mat. Sedan använder jag inte smink heller så jag slipper det, haha.

Participant I: Ja det är för mycket att ta sig igeom för att vara medveten. Därför inte jag bryr mig tillräckligt mycket vart jag köper mina kläder.

Participant G: Det är verkligen viktigt att prioritera tycker jag. Då jag är insatt i djurfrågor och hur dem har det har jag sett på dokumentärer angående detta. När liksom PETA och Djurens Rätt försöker se till så vi inte får fel information. Ibland så hamnar dem på dokumentärer på SVT och TV4, vilket är bra! Sedan ibland är det enbart deras ja sociala medier. Oavsett vad så hjälper det mig att hålla mig uppdaterad. För min del finns det till exempel ett smörvarumärke som jag slutat använda för deras ko-hantering var långt ifrån okej. Som tur är så det inte svårt att hitta. Jag har berättat om denna dokumentär till i stort sett alla som jag vet köper samma varumärke som jag. För jag tycker man borde byta. Vissa bytte och andra orkade inte bry sig för att dem inte trodde det skulle göra någon skillnad. Sorgligt att dem tänker så men tyvärr så är det nog fler som tänker så än vad vi är medvetna om.

Participant I: Jag skulle nog säga jag lutar åt det hållet. Liksom vad gör det att jag sätter ner foten med att byta varumärke. Det är så lite att företaget kommer inte ens märka det.

Participant G: Jo men om tillräckligt många gör det måste dem uppmärksamma.

Participant I: Tror ändå det gör mer att dem hamnar i negativt ljus på tv än att jag ändrar varumärke.

Participant G: Det är klart men vi som kunder kan ändå säga att det inte är okej.

Participant F: Det jag kan komma på om man ska vara brutal, är väl det här med regnskogen. Jag är inte så insatt i det mer än det här med toalettpapper och att det finns alternativ som är bättre men ingen prata om det direkt. Samt att det inte finns ute i butikerna än.

Participant E: Detta är nytt för mig. Toalettpapper som inte är gjort av trä?

Participant F: Ja exakt. Det är gjort på bambu istället, för det kräver inga miljöfarliga kemiska blekmedel som ja vanligt toalettpapper behöver. Plus att det kräver mindre vatten att odla bambu och i tillverkningsprocessen. Tänk själva, det är lättodlat och växer snabbare än trä. Det ska också vara mycket lättare att bryta ned.

Participant E: Detta är intressant.

Interviewer: Bra att du tar upp detta. Hur kan vi koppla det till transparens?

Participant F: Ja alltså, det som jag tycker gör att företag eller varumärken som håller på med bambu är öppna och ärliga, är väl då de som har FSC-certifiering.

Interviewer: Tänker mig att alla kanske inte riktigt vet vad det innebär här. Skulle du kunna förklara?

Participant I: Gärna, certifieringar finns det många av och att hålla koll på dem är för mig omöjligt.

Participant F: Jo men det visar att produkten uppfyller krav både gällande miljö och arbetarnas rättigheter då.

Interviewer: Kan du ge oss ett exempel på varumärke som säljer detta?

Participant F: Hmm. Det finns en hel del, svårt att komma på såhär. Jo vänta! Cheeky Panda eller något liknande är ett varumärke. De är lätta att komma ihåg för deras namn, haha! Har faktiskt använt det själv men jag ska inte ljuga det är dyrt. Men som vi pratar om innan är det mesta hållbara grejer dyra.

Interviewer: Uppfyller varumärket dina standarder med öppenhet?

Participant F: Ja men de är FSC certifierade och på deras hemsida har dem väldigt bra information och fakta. Jag tycker om att de har info om vad som gör det hållbart och så, som jag precis berättat. Det som jag tycker är negativt med det är väl att det kostar så pass mycket och att jag behöver beställa det från USA. Det blir en del kostnad om man ska använda det i samma utsträckning som ja vanligt toalettpapper då.

Participant E: Hade ingen aning om detta, att det ens var en möjlighet. Känner mig mer lurad att det inte blivit större eller att stora varumärken inte tagit upp frågan.

Participant G: Jag håller med! Kan liksom livsmedel butiker ha alternativ för allt annat. Kan dem inte framhäva detta med känner jag.

Interviewer: Skulle ni andra också se det som en hållbar produkt?

Participant E: Jo men det tycker jag.

Participant G: Jag håller med.

Participant H: Hmm. Jag känner att vi kanske inte än vet i det långa loppet om detta är så mycket bättre än toalettpapper. Men med den infon jag har just nu så skulle jag säga att det är det bättre alternativet.

Participant I: Ja men det är det. Vet däremot inte om jag skulle lägga ner energin för att hitta och ersätta det lättillgängliga vanliga toalettpappret.

Interviewer: Både detta med bambu och tidigare med etiken av att skapa smör har tagit oss in på det här lite med att få information från andra. Känner ni att ni påverkas av och gjorde det att ni bildat er en ny uppfattning utifrån vad andra har berättat för er. Alltså har ni ändrat uppfattning till något av varumärkena som diskuteras? Kan det påverka era köpvanor framöver?

Participant H: Jo men det har det. Jag ska hitta bambu toalettpapper nu.

Participant I: Alltså jag har ju fått mer information, och det kommer påverka hur jag tänker innan jag handlar. Sedan vet jag inte hur mycket. Kommer ju inte gå ut och leta överdrivet mycket.

Participant G: Ja men det har ändrats lite.

Participant E: Jo men det skulle jag påstå.

Participant F: Ja kommer ha mer uppsikt i alla fall, när det kommer till ja kläder och arbetsvillkor.

Interviewer: Om vi håller kvar vid kläder som du precis nämnde. Som ett exempel, om ni har en negativ inställning till H&M angående det dåliga ryktet om arbetsvillkor, om dem nu har vänt utvecklingen och någon av era vänner har fått ett riktigt bra intryck av deras förändring. De skulle dela den positiva information de fått med dig, skulle de påverka din tidigare negativa inställning till något positivt?

Participant H: För min del skulle det vara svårt. För min del räcker det liksom inte med något lite, utan det krävs en hel del bevis för att jag ska kunna ändra min negativa upplevelse av ett varumärke. Jag har lätt att bojkotta eftersom man alltid kan hitta alternativ. Oftast billigare alternativ som är bättre och mer öppna. Så det skulle krävas mer än att dem säger de har en bra upplevelse. Kanske lite mer bevis på att dem faktiskt förändrats.

Participant F: Jag skulle nog säga att om det är en riktig bra upplevelse och att dem verkligen är engagerande när dem berättar så skulle jag kunna ändra uppfattning. Men det beror också på hur negativ min upplevelse är såklart.

Interviewer: Anledningen till att jag tog H&M som ett exempel är förr att utav resten utav tiden kommer vi fokusera på modebranschen. Detta är för att de är väldigt kontroversiella och detta gäller då deras förhållande till deras inköp, logistik och såklart deras produkter. Det är många varumärken här som inte är så hållbara som de påstår. Har ni några exempel på modemärken som är transparenta?

Participant E: Ja men det är väl som jag sa i början, H&M. De har förbättrat sin kommunikation till hållbarhet, då det står på de kläder som är ekologiska eller inte. Samt att på deras hemsida att man kan följa hela processen.

Participant H: Jo men Jack & Jones är öppna med deras tillverkare. De har en fabrik lista. Dem vill också utöka sin transparens inom detta ännu mer. Jag som är väldigt medveten läser ju också på om sånt här. Har gått igenom deras hemsida och det står väldigt mycket om hur material, tillverkning går till. Samt att det tar upp det här med att djuren ska må bra.

Participant I: Sedan har vi ju Zalando. Jag orkar liksom inte ta mig till affärer och sitter ändå mest hemma. Då jag heller inte läser på så mycket tycker jag det är bra att man kan se där om kläder är hållbara.

Participant F: Jag letar inte eller går enbart till affärer som har hållbar framförhållning. Jag blir mer bara positivt överraskad om något jag köper skulle vara hållbart.

Interviewer: Kul att ni nämner H&M för det är ett av exemplen vi har. Det jag har här är heter Fashion Transparency Index och görs varje år. Detta gäller då alla märken, allt från lyxmärken och de snabbamärkena. Den ger oss ett resultat på hur transparenta de faktiskt är. Ni nämnde också Jack & Jones. Vad tror ni dem ligger i relation till H&M? Högre eller lägre?

Participant H: Jag tror att Jack & Jones är högre. H&M har haft mer bekymmer.

Participant I: Ingen aning.

Participant F: Jo men Jack & Jones. Det känns i alla fall som det.

Participant E: Jag tror nog H&M kan vara högre. Dem har verkligen jobbat för att vara transparenta.

Interviewer: Kan ni komma med en uppskattning?

Participant H: Ja men H&M kanske 30% och Jack & Jones typ 60%.

Participant F: Jag tror inte det är så stor skillnad. Kanske mer H&M 40% och Jack & Jones 50%.

Participant I: Eftersom jag inte har någon aning skulle jag säga både ligger på typ 30%

Participant E: Jag skulle säga H&M ligger på 50% och Jack & Jones på 30% kanske.

Interviewer: Det är faktiskt så att H&M ligger på 68% medan Jack & Jones ligger på 25%. Sedan vet jag att inte nämnt Vero Moda, men det är ett danskt varumärke så för att ha en preferens till Skandinavien så kan jag berätta att dem ligger på 25% också.

Participant H: Oj. Det trodde jag verkligen inte! Jag skulle väl säga att egentligen är det väl bra för oss i Sverige att vårt märke är mer transparent. Det säger mycket om att vi har bra arbetsvillkor, produktion och så. Sedan kanske vi som svenskar inte borde vara lika skeptiska och lite mer godtrogna.

Interviewer: Vi har som sagt två uppgifter till er nu. Den första innehåller 3 exempel som har att göra med att vara transparent. Det första exemplet gäller en hel del anställda i Asien som blev felaktigt avskedade för att det inte fanns någon anledning för dem att bli avskedade eller dåliga förhållanden. Det var någon som fick reda på att dem hade ett fackligt kontrakt, de fick inte göra som de gjorde. Då kunde de avskedade återinföras samt att de kunde få lite pengar som kompensation. Den andra, hade inte berättat var deras fabrik låg så när de publicerade sina rapporter kunde ingen stoppa dem eftersom adressen var vad de sa att den var. Då blir det svårt att göra dem ansvariga för någonting. Det slutade med att de hittades och sedan fick dem betala en massa böter eftersom det dem gjorde var totalt skadligt för miljön och de behandlade sina anställda extremt dåligt. Så ett extremt stort antal regler spelar in här. Det sista exemplet är att det fanns ett varumärke som hade associationen till någon produkt där det fanns folkläger, arbetsläger men där de fick reda på att de anställda faktiskt inte hade något val. De jobbade där för att dem var tvungna. Det som hände efteråt var förstår att dessa personer befriades av olika insatser, men det publicerades också en kampanj för att alla som har med detta märke att göra verkligen skulle fundera på vad dem ska göra nu. Om de vill fortsätta med varumärket som blev förknippat med detta. Vad tänker ni när ni hör att alla dessa exempel beror på transparens?

Participant E: Det är hemskt att människor är på så kallade läger och det är viktigt att det får ett slut. Så det måste finnas säkerhetsnätverk och att vi som konsument har varit med att

påvera det och vill lyfta fram dessa förhållanden som inte okej. Sedan lever vi ju i två olika världar man vet ju inte deras perspektiv heller. De kanske inte kan få något annat jobb så det lilla dem får kanske vi också berövar dem på. Men det är ändå tryggt att veta det har åtgärdats och hoppas det inte upprepas.

Participant G: Ja det är hemskt!

Participant I: Känns som det är mycker information man hade behövt läsa för att se om eller vart detta fortfarande händer.

Participant F: Det måste bara stoppas. Även om det är deras enda inkomstkälla, det är inte mänskligt rätt. Är det som Participant E säger, att dem inte kan få andra jobb, då är det fel på landet.

Participant H: Ja alltså det är ju bra att skaffa sig mer kunskap om en produkt. Det är väl så det funkar ju mer jag vet detso mer litar jag på varumärket och har förtroende på produkten. Däremot vet jag lite så kan jag ju inte lita på de. Sedan är det ju en fråga i sig hur man förmedlar allt på ett trovärdigt sätt så att det inte låter som att alla varumärken helt plötsligt smörar för en. Det skulle vara extremt jobbigt. Så kanske sammanställning från varje industri. Så kan det också vara någon som inte är kopplad till varumärkena i fråga.

Interviewer: Den andra uppgiften är i förhållande till pristransparens och vad ni reagerar bäst på? När du ser en produkt skulle du föredra att det verkliga priset skrevs och då talar om var varan kostar. Som att ni till exempel ska köpa ett par byxor. Man får veta att dessa kostade 10 dollar att producera, men priset är satt till 100 dollar på grund av marknaden. Skulle du reagera på ett varumärke som säger kostnad för produktion, kostnad för logistik, kostnad för arbetsförhållande? Med andra ord hela leveranskedjan kartlagd precis som priset.

Participant I: Jag tror ärligt talat det skulle bli alldeles för omfattande. I alla fall för mig. Samtidigt så får jag väl stå fast vid det jag sa innan om att jag inte söker efter information heller, så det är väl egentligen bra för personer som jag. Så det skulle nog gynna alla konsumenter.

Participant E: Jag är lite osäker men jag tror inte jag skulle vilja det. Känns omfattande och sedan också, skulle man ha skuldkänslor eller inte kunna köpa saker man tidigare köpt då. Tänker om man verkligen ser på varje vara vad som går till vad.

Participant F: Nej alltså, det är säkert bra men jag skulle få alldeles för mycket skuldkänslor och för modligen lurad.

Participant H: Ja alltså jag försöker ju med detta. Så jag tror jag skulle må bra om jag visste vad pengarna går till. Då kan jag må bra av de produkter jag köper även om det skulle innebära att mina produkter kostar mer i slutändan, då är det i alla fall kanske rättvist.

Participant E: Varför skulle du känna dig lurad?

Participant F: Jo men känner man sig inte lurad om något kostar 10 dollar att producera blir 100 dollar i affären. Liksom varför ska man betala 90 dollar mer.

Participant E: Jo men företag tar alltid ut mer. Delvis kanske för konkurens men ja också för vinst.

Participant F: Ja jo, men jag hade tyckt det var för mycket och ifrågasatt deras tillit.

Participant H: Jag kan nog tycka det är bra att företag har det tillgängligt så att kunder har möjlighet att gå in och se vad pengarna har gått till. Däremot kan jag väl hålla med om att det inte borde finnas på etiketter för då skulle i alla fall jag bara tänka att det för mycket information.

Participant E: Man har ju en medvetenhet om det. Alltså att en produkt är dyrare än vad den produceras för och det är väl mestadels för konkurens. Sedan är ju också märket viktigt. Mer väl-kända märken har också en tendens till att kosta mer, speciellt om man tänker på väskor. Så då vet i alla fall jag att jag betalar mer för märket på väskan än vad jag kanske betalar för själva produktionen.

Participant G: Vi verkar återkomma till ja kommunikationen ett varumärke har med sina kunder. Så tycker ändå det ska vara enkelt att hitta informationen om jag så önskar, men

inte att det behöver vara så i alla butiker. Tillit och trovärdigheten hade ju ändå ökat om möjligheten finns att en sådan här syn finns på till exempel deras hemsida.

Interviewer: Jag tänker att vi går till den sista delen som handlar om motiv. Det är både ditt eget men i första hand varumärkets motiv i förhållande till de märkena vi har pratat om. Då vi fortfarande vill hålla oss till klädesindustrin så är det exempel H&M som vi kan diskutera här. Vad tror ni de får utav att vara transparenta?

Participant G: Jag tänker att H&M har med deras skandaler nog inte alltid varit så högt i den ranken du visade innan. Men jag tror dem inser att de fått många lojala kunder nu när dem städat upp och är mer trovärdiga. Dem har verkligen blivit bättre på att lägga alla kort på bordet, vilket ja då gör att kunder kommer vara mer lojala och köpa mer produkter, i detta fall kläder och smink, av dem. Man vet att dem gör något bra nuförtiden och satsar på hållbarhet. Det är viktigt för många idag att vara hållbara, hade dem inte haft fokus på det hade jag handlat på ett av alla andra hållbara varumärken.

Participant E: Företaget får ju kunden förtroende vilket för att man inte tänker på om de döljer något. De vill ju att vi ska lita på dem. De säljer ju mer om vi litar på dem och speciellt om man blir lojal på köpet och köper majoriteten av sina kläder då från samma varumärke.

Participant I: Där kom vi in på det lite som jag tror är anledningen. Allt detta går ju ut på att det är nyuppkommande och trendigt med att vara transparent. Jag tror inte alla vill vara det enbart för kundernas skull. Jag tror dem tänker på sina vinster. Visst det gynnar båda parter i slutändan. Men helt ärligt tror inte jag att dem tänker på oss så som vi tror. De vill bara ha sina pengar.

Participant F: Ja men det går som sagt ändå hand i hand lite. För vi skulle köpa kanske mer kläder än vad vi gick in för att köpa om vi känner vi vill stödja varumärket.

Participant E: Lojaliteten är ju kopplad till förtroende. Precis som med människor, har du förtroende för någon kommer du också vara lojal på någon nivå och förmodligen investera i relationen. Så om vi då har ett varumärke som vi känner lojalitet mot så kommer vi investera mer pengar i deras produkter. Vi vill ju det ska gå bra för dem, för ingen vill förlora sina favorit varumärken.

Participant H: Om vi pratar om oss som människor tror jag att vi är mer ifrågasättande nuförtiden. Vår generation kanske inte är det alltid, men dem som är yngre ställer verkligen frågor vilket är bra som kunder. Jag är imponerad. Inte bara att vi ställer frågor heller utan företagen måste svara, de som inte svarar blir ju typ outade. Så tidigare när företagen har styrt kunden har ändrats till att kunden är mer i kontroll och företagen måste följa vad vi vill. Så det är nog också därför företag idag är mer transparenta och hållbara i hur de producerar deras produkter.

Interviewer: Som ni kanske förstår är detta med motiv väldigt psykologiskt på den nivån med vad du som individ attraheras av och dina tankar kring vad som kan vara motiven för ett varumärke som delar med sig av sina strategier. Det gör dem för att skapa lojalitet och locka kunder samt behålla befintliga kunder. De vill ju att kunder kommer tillbaka.

Participant I: Vi som kunder ser enbart produkten där ute, vi tänker inte på ja deras strategier. Vi kan bara ta detta här, jag är inte insatt i transparent och det känns som jag måste göra det där lilla extra som att söka på det och ta reda på varenda företag, vilker bara gör mig trött av att tänka på. Sedan vet jag definitivt från idag att det även finns dem som inte allt tycker det verkar jobbigt. Så om vi pratar psykologi så är väl detta kopplat till normer och värderingar.

Interviewer: Vi har pratat mycket om hållbarhet, ekologiskt fokus och med det tänkte jag föra oss vidare till grön skepsism mot produkter. Det handlar också om det vi pratat om tidigare, negativ ord till mun. Kort så gäller detta när du hör en vän, familjemedlem eller bekant ha en negativ attityd mot ett varumärke, tenderar du att bilda samma associationer eller om din upptattning blir baserad på vad de säger. Detta är mycket av vad transparens handlar om, som när ett varumärke säger det är hållbart och inte är det så kallas det för greenwashing. Det finns inte mycket lagstiftning idag kring detta och der är också grejen med ekologiskt, om det inte är 100% kan du då fortfarande lita på dem? Ni nämnde tidigare att H&M hade skandaler, det stämmer. En av ägde rum för sex år sedan eftersom de gav kunderna möjlighet att lämna in alla kläder och skor för att återvinna de fibrer som gick. Det var obsarverat flera gånger att alla kläder var brända och då är man inte lika hållbar och transparenta som man säger. Med det kan vi säga att tranparens och greenwashing hänger ihop, det ger en effekt på varandra.

Participant F: Det känns som att de som är mest transparenta gör något bra för miljön eftersom de vill framstå som att de gör en bra insts för världen.

Participant E: Sedan har vi dem i samma kategori som försöker dölja lite, men de kanske inte säljer lika mycket ekologiskt samt att arbetsförhållandena kan vara sämre.

Participant H: Det jär gör mig upprörd och mitt förtroende hade inte varit där det skulle om jag var en lojal kund. Nu handlar jag inte så mycket där men det är fortfarande en svenskt märke som gjort ett stort fel steg. Sedan har dem ju uppenbarligen erkänt att de gjort fel och blivit klokare, annars skulle de inte blivit så transparenta som dem är. Så de har ju blivit klokare.

Participant I: Ja alltså jag är ganska likgiltig. Delvis för att jag inte visste om det men också för att jag aldrig lämnat in kläder.

Participant F: Nä men jag kan tänka mig att om man är en av de som lämnat in kläder för att dem ska återvinnas, så får man reda på att dem bränts upp. Då skulle inte jag vara glad.

Participant G: Det är en andledning att bojkotta dem. Dem skulle inte få tillbaka mig som kund i alla fall hur enkelt som helst. Men det är bra att det kom ut så de kan åtgärda det och se till så det aldrig händer igen. Förmodligen har andra varumärken lärt sig något av deras misstag också.

Interviewer: Om ni hade vetat detta, hade ni då berättat detta för era vänner, familj och bekanta?

Participant G: Ja det skulle jag verkligen. Önskar någon sagt till mig.

Participant I: Om någon frågat eller om man blev påmind om det.

Participant H: Ja, jag skulle 100% göra det.

Interviewer: Tror ni det hade varit bättre om de själva kom ut och berätta? För varumärkestransparens handlar inte bara om äkthet utan också ta ansvar för det man gör. Det görs inte ofta då det faktiskt inte finns någon lagstiftning för vad man skriver eller påstår.

Participant E: Jag tror inte det blivit så mycket bättre, alla som blev irriterade hade nog fortfarande blivit det. Men som ett varumärke hade det varit mindre skadligt.

Participant H: Ja, det hade varit bättre för dem att inte bli påkommna utan att säga det själv. Det känns som att det alltid är bättre att vara ärlig i längden.

Interviewer: Ni kan tänka er att det är många av de där varumärkena som vi prata om innan, vill öka sin vinst och går i tankarna hur dem kan göra det. Då trenden är hållbarhet för kunderna så är det självklart den riktningen dem vill gå, men dem kanske inte alltid gör de rätta investeringar. Vilket då gör att det blir en lucka mellan kunder och varumärket, då det kanske inte är riktigt genomtänkt. Om det är liknande det som händer H&M, så kan det vara svårt för varumärket att återta marknadsandelar.

Participant E: Det är lite som det jag nämnde innan om relationer. Är man lojal så har man säkert någon anknytning till märket. Säkert pratat mycket gott om det och så förstörs det helt plötsligt. Tänk er själva att du anser någon vara en nära vän och så ser du att dem sårar dig något vis. Då är det självklart det kommer ta tid att återvinna förtroendet. Detsamma gäller nog varumärken, är du lojal så kommer det ta tid och relationen kommer alltid vara förändrar och aldrig bli densamma.

Interviewer: Då har vi kommit fram till sista frågan. Vad är din inställning till varumäkers transparens nu när vi har pratat om det? Har det förändrats? Har den förstärkts? Har det blivit lite mer definierat nu än det var innan?

Participant F: Jo men jag kommer kolla upp vissa märken som jag använder. Kommer speciellt utvidga ja industirer. Det är kanske inte så svårt som man tänker sig att ta reda på om ett företag är traspararent eller inte. Man vill ju veta att saker stämmer överens.

Participant G: Jag tänker på samma sätt, när det kommer till det vi sa innan angående mat men jag det har förändrat min syn till klädesmärken en del. Ta reda på mer vad som stämmer och inte stämmer.

Participant E: Att få en definition på var varumärkestransparens är har varit bra för min del. Det har stärkt mitt intresse för det att ta reda på vad som behövs och vad jag kan göra. Lägga mer fokus på vad som faktiskt händer bakom stängda dörrar.

Participant I: Jag har också fått en bättre förståelse med var det faktiskt betyder och är. Däremot som ni kanske förstått har jag inte den där ambitionen eller orken att vilja anstränga mig för att undersöka saker. Det är en uppgift jag inte tycker är upp till mig. Visst kommer de upp framför mig på instagram, tidingen eller så kommer jag självklart hålla mig uppdaterad, men jag inte aktivt söka.

Participant H: Som jag sa tidigare tror jag det har mycket med generationer att göra. Vi gör lite men jag sa också innan att generationen efter oss är ännu mer pålästa om den gröna omställningen, transparensen och har framförallt mycket mer överblick över vad som faktiskt finns i produkterna man köper. Däremot har inte min förståelse påverkats så mycket då jag tycker jag är väldigt medveten. Så jag kommer fortsätta med mina veganska produktet och läsa på allt jag kan om ingredienser.

Participant I: Det känns verkligen som en djungel att ta reda på och sätta sig in vad som är vad. Så ni inte missförstår mig till varför jag inte kommer ändra mig. Det bara känns verkligen som något jag måste lägga tid och energi på om jag skulle börja.

Participant E: Ja men det kommer komma fram mer och mer i samhället, det ser man ju på sociala medier som du pratar om. Så det kommer nog bli lättare att komma in i det med tiden.

Appendix 9 - Interview 3 Transcript (J-M)

Interviewer: Okej, hej och välkomna. Detta är en gruppintervju som jag och min kollega Mie genomför för att få bättre kunskap om vad kunder tänker kring varumärkes transparens. Så vi kommer generellt diskutera varumärkestransparens. Innan vi börjar vill jag informera att ni kommer bli inspelade, är alla bekväma med det?

Participant J: Jepp.

Participant K: Aa.

Participant L: Ok.

Participant M: Ja.

Interviewer: Till att börja med kommer vi fokusera på autenticitet då det är ett viktigt begrepp i relation till varumärke. Så, vad är autenticitet för er när det gäller just varumärken?

Participant K: Jo men att man är äkta och liksom sig själv. Unik utifrån andra varumärken.

Participant L: Att ha en öppenhet i relationerna mot sina konsumenter. Så det inte kommer fram senare att man har hållit undan information. Man visar både de bra och dåliga sidorna, det känns som det är autentiskt.

Participant J: Det här med att vara sig själv har ju med att köra att ja varumärket då aggerar fårn sina egna värderingar och åsikter. Samt att dessa värderingar då är ja transparenta för konsumenten.

Participant M: Livets största uppdrag är att vara autentisk och ärlig för att göra världen till en bättre sätt. En del av mig litar inte på företag för det känns som det undanhåller viktig information, men en annan del litar blint på företag som till exempel påstår att dem är veganska. I grunden är jag skeptisk.

Interviewer: När det kommer till att vara autentisk och hur ni resonerar, har ni någon specifik industri, varumärke eller annat ni tänker på i kontext det?

Participant K: Då tänker jag ju direkt på svenska märken, som typ Dagmar. Deras hemsida har väldigt mycket information. Ska vara ärlig och säga att jag inte läst det noggrant utan mer skummat igenom. För mig är det viktigaste att dem har information om deras väg mot hållbarhet och så.

Participant J: Jag skulle säga MQ Marqet. När man ska köpa deras kläder online i alla fall, så står det till exempel att dem använder råmaterial som inte kommer från utrotningshotad skog. Vilket jag tycker är väldigt bra.

Participant M: Ett som jag tror på Urterum som är kosmetisk varumärke.

Participant L: Vi får väl inte glömma H&M hallå! Alltså, dem har ändå avancerat. På deras hemsida kan man välja filter som "conscious choice". Detta underlättar något enormt om man vill bidra och känna att man får rätt information. Dem är också ärliga med att skriva % på varje plagg vad det innehåller av det som är hållbart. Jag har tillit för dem.

Interviewer: Ni var många som valde inom modeindustrin här och eran syn på att vara autentisk verkar vara väldigt lika även om det är väldigt personlig från individ till individ. Jag tänker mig att vi går vidare till nästa fråga som tar oss in på transparens. Har ni några exempel på varumärken som säger att de är transparenta med sina konsumenter?

Participant L: H&M säger att de är transparenta, i alla fall när man läser om dem och tycker väl den energin dem lägger på att reklam visar det med.

Participant J: MQ vet jag att jag läst att dem tar upp att deras målsättning delvis är att vara transparenta.

Participant K: Dagmar har väl inte sagt det direkt, eller gjort sådär överdivet mycket reklam för det men jag tycker nog dem är det. För mig är det bättre att det liksom synd för de konsumenter som handlar än att liksom som då kanske H&M göra reklam för det. Eller att det liksom står på första sidan något med hållbarhet eller så, känns väldigt så där "in your face". För om man sedan går in på klädesplaggen kan man liksom kolla på klädvård och vad dem är producerade. Utöver det så har dem också en liten beskrivning till varför plagget är ett bra val på var plagg.

Participant M: Det känns som de flesta gör det, för att dem tvingas vara det. Det är ju trendigt att vara vegansk och miljövänligt. Så jag skulle säga att de miljövänliga märkena är mer verbala.

Interviewer: Har du någon erfarenhet eller exempel på vad det kan stå?

Participant K: Ja men jag leta efter en stickad kofta och såg en som var så snygg. Den var på rea, men ska inte ljuga och säga att priset är ju ganska så mycket mer än H&M och MQ. När jag då gick in för att kolla på den, precis som med tidigare plagg så kan jag läsa varför den är ett bra val att köpa. I dett fall var det då ull som var typ 70% eller 80%, kommer inte ihåg exakt, mindre kol om man jämförde med konventionell ull. Det stod massa annat med, men sådant kan verkligen få mig att tycka priset är värt det.

Interviewer: Skulle du säga att du är skeptisk mot den informationen dem ger ut?

Participant M: Jag tror att det finns företag som är ärliga, där grundarna genuit vill ge en bra produkt som inte målar upp en bild som inte stämmer. Där man då tar miljön i åtanke och alla anställda och invadrare. Sedan tror jag också det finns väldigt många företag som ljuger och undanhåller information. Eller att dem medvetet väljer något dåligt som dem valt. De kanske har 5 dåliga mörka hemligheter, men använder den som är minst sårbar för att visa att dem är öppna. Jag tror det är lätt att undanhålla saker, speciellt för stora företag.

Participant K: Nej det skulle jag inte säga. Dem ger ut väldigt mycket information.

Participant L: Lite kanske. Men det är nog inte för kläderna i sig hos H&M, men om jag får nämna en annan industri där jag kan känna mig skeptisk mot så är det hudvårdsindustrin. Dem är verkligen inte bra på att ge detaljerad information om vad alla ingredienser kommer ifrån.

Participant J: Jag skulle säga att jag är skeptisk på ett visst plan. Däremot så går ju ja in på deras hemsidor och kollar upp dem. Däremot kan jag väl hålla med om att jag inte är källkritisk och försöker söka från andra håll.

Participant K: Nä men det håller jag med om. Så kanske lite skeptisk är jag nog men som sagt jag litar på företagen men kanske inte industrin i sig. Därför läser jag på och litar på företagen även om jag vet industrin är ganska opålitlig.

Participant J: Jag kan ångra att jag inte är källkritisk när det väl kommer ut på dokumentärer att ett varumärke jag älskar inte är transparent. Kan bara ta kronfågel som exempel. Det kom ut på sociala medier hur dem hanterade sina kycklingar och här har jag gått i år och trott jag gör det rätta i världen och komer svensk kyckling. Och där visa det sig då att de inte alls var mycket bättre än ja våra grannländer. Blev verkligen besviken. Så det fick mig att misstro dem och kanske generellt i matindustrin.

Interviewer: Livsmedel har verkligen varit under strålkastaren nu ett tag. Dem har ett stort behov att visa sig transparenta, speciellt nu när priser och allt höjs med tanke på inflationen. Och som jag förtsått det ni precis berättat, så är det olika hur mycket min söker upp information.

Participant J: Ja exakt man kanske söker inom vissa ämnen men inte andra. Därav är certifieringar ibland guldvärda.

Participant K: Ja alltså jag kanske har mer koll på de märkena jag använder men inte på hela industrin i sig.

Participant L: Tycker ändå vi är ganska lika med att vi typ pratar om klädesmärken även om det är olika kläder. Sedan vet ingen av oss sådär värst mycket heller.

Participant M: Jag försöker jämföra och läsa. Inte bara från deras hemsida utan även recensioner. Jag vet vissa ämnen som inte är bra för kroppen, så jag letar efter produkter som utesluter vissa ingredienser. Men det är också för att jag är väldigt medveten vad jag stoppar i mig. Från hemsidan tar jag mer information om deras vision och så dem verkar professionella. Jag gillar när dem visar vad deras produkter kommer ifrån och vad de innehåller.

Interviewer: Skulle ni säga att ni värderar kvalitet mer än priset? Om har i åtanke skillanden i de märken ni mände.

Participant K: Jag betalar gärna mer för kvalitet än vad jag bryr mig om priset. Tänk er själva, att kunna gå och säga att den här koftan, den är gjord på ett miljövänligt sätt.

Participant L: Jag hamnar nog i mitten där. Jag vill ha bra kvalitet men priset är också viktigt för mig. Helst vill jag ju inte lägga en förmögenhet för att kunna köpa ett hållbart plagg.

Participant J: Håller med, jag kollar väl kanske mer på typ beteckningar som svanen markerat och sådant. Sedan tycker jag nog ändå att priset är viktigare, för min del i alla fall.

Participant M: När det gäller kläder nej. Men när det gäller hudvårdprodukter och så, då är kvalitet viktigare.

Interviewer: Om vi går vidare härifrån så kan jag börja med att förklara att varumärkes transparens till deras kunder är en växande trend, som vi varit inne på. Definitionen av att vara transparent är att vara ärlig, öppen och villig att avslöja information och beslut inom olika fält i deras organisation. Man skulle kunna säga det har med deras öppenhet att göra. Med tanke på vad ni delat med er, skulle ni hålla med om denna definitionen? Eller lägga till något?

Participant K: Jag tycker det stämmer bra överens med det vi prata om.

Participant J: Jo men det stämmer bra, sedan är det väl frågan hur bra detta följs. Men att vara öppen skulle gynna både stora och små företag. Det öka tilliten. Man kommer långt med att vara äligt så att lägga alla kort på bordet sänker ens skepsism och höjer tilliten.

Participant M: Det viktigt att man är villig. Jag tycker det borde finnas en lag så att stora företag inte kan undanhålla någonting. Som typ en inspektion för att avslöja större företag. Så man har personer bakom kulisserna. Det ska finnas ett system. Jag skiter i om de är villiga eller inte, det ska finnas organisationer som undersöker sådana här företag. Det ska vara svårt att komma undan med till exempel barn slaveri och så.

Interviewer: Kan ni tänka er en upplevelse som var viktig för er när det gäller varumärkestranparens? Positivt eller negativt.

Participant J: Jo men efter jag fick reda på det där med kronofågel så började jag kolla upp mer lokala affärer eller bondgårdar. Hittade en och det var en väldigt positiv upplevelse. Kändes väldigt transparent att få komma till en bondgård, se hur alla djur lever ett gott liv och så. Då kan jag med gott samvete veta att dem blivit bra behandlade även om det kostar lite mer.

Participant K: Om man fortsätter på djurspåret så är ju en av mina negativa upplevelser när jag fick reda på att min hudvårdsprodukt Biotherm fortfarande testas på djur. Det var en vän som berättade det för mig och jag blev helt chockad. Jag bojkotta dem. Hur ska jag kunna använda en produkt som gör något så hemskt.

Interviewer: Kommer ni nu associera varumärket med denna upplevelsen?

Participant K: Ja, därför jag bojkotta dem och jag kommer såklart berätta för alla jag lär känna som använder det varumärket.

Participant J: Självklart, jag tänker bara på hälsosamma djur och trevlig lokal service.

Interviewer: Ett företag kan ju fokusera på många grejer, vi vill höra från er vad transparens egentligen för ett sådant varumärke är. Detta påverkar ju er som kunder i högsta grad också. Till exempel som deras supply chain transparens. Hur skulle ni se er påverkas?

Participant J: Man vet ju inte så mycket om arbetsvillkoren. Speciellt inom då H&M och MQ, att kläders ofta görs typ i kina eller ja indien kanske.

Participant K: Slavarbete har ju stått lite överallt när det kommer till de lite större och billigare kjedjorna.

Participant L: Kommer ihåg att jag för några år sedan läste om textil industrin som nutidens slavarbete för billiga kläder. Detta kan ju såklart för min del göra det svårt att lita på då till exempel H&M. Fast jag litar med på dem än Zara.

Participant K: Tror det sker i alla, men jag vill tro om kläderna kostar mer får också dem mer. Känns hemskt att de får så lite som det tidigare kommit ut.

Participant M: Det påverka min syn på billiga klädkjedor på grund av barnarbete och så.

Interviewer: Man ju också tänka på företagets öppenhet angående värdet. Hur skulle ni reagera om ni skulle få reda på att värdet inte stämmer överens med det intrycket ni fått?

Participant M: Det var som jag sa innan, det kommer påverka. Jag kommer förmodligen sluta köpa.

Interviewer: Sedan det här med att få information från andra. Känner ni att ni påverkas av och gjorde det att ni bildat er en ny uppfattning utifrån vad andra har berättat för er. Alltså har ni ändrat uppfattning till något av varumärkena som diskuteras? Kan det påverka era köpvanor framöver?

Participant M: Jag har ju inte läst om till exempel barn arbete tidigare inom vissa klädes märken. Jag litar ju på vänner kanske inte bekanta men vänner och familj. Så kommer det

påverka mig att inte köpa därifrån eller vara mer försiktig. Beror också på om det är klädesmärke eller hudvårdsmärken.

Interviewer: Som ett exempel, om ni har en negativ inställning till H&M angående det dåliga ryktet om arbetsvillkor, om dem nu har vänt utvecklingen och någon av era vänner har fått ett riktigt bra intryck av deras förändring. De skulle dela den positiva information de fått med dig, skulle de påverka din tidigare negativa inställning till något positivt?

Participant M: Jag skulle söka upp ytterligare information först.

Participant K: Har jag bojkottat så är det inte stor chans.

Participant J: Om det är en nära vän eller familjemedlem så skulle jag vara öppen mot att ge dem en andra chans.

Interviewer: Det jag har här är heter Fashion Transparency Index och görs varje år. Detta gäller då alla märken, allt från lyxmärken och de snabbamärkena. Den ger oss ett resultat på hur transparenta de faktiskt är. Ni nämnde också Zara. Vad tror ni dem ligger i relation till H&M? Högre eller lägre?

Participant J: H&M, Litar inte på Zara.

Participant L: H&M är högre.

Interviewer: Det är faktiskt så att H&M ligger på 68% medan Zara ligger på 36%. Sedan vet jag att ni inte nämnt Vero Moda, men det är ett danskt varumärke så för att ha en preferens till Skandinavien så kan jag berätta att dem ligger på 25%.

Participant L: Jo men det skulle jag tro. Representerar Sverige.

Participant J: Dem har ju inte varit perfekta så trodde dem skulle vara lite längre ner med tanke på att dem inte varit felfria men ändå bra.

Interviewer: Vi har som sagt två uppgifter till er nu. Den första innehåller 3 exempel som har att göra med att vara transparent. Det första exemplet gäller en hel del anställda i Asien som blev felaktigt avskedade för att det inte fanns någon anledning för dem att bli avskedade eller dåliga förhållanden. Det var någon som fick reda på att dem hade ett fackligt kontrakt, de fick inte göra som de gjorde. Då kunde de avskedade återinföras samt att de kunde få lite pengar som kompensation. Den andra, hade inte berättat var deras fabrik låg så när de publicerade sina rapporter kunde ingen stoppa dem eftersom adressen var vad de sa att den var. Då blir det svårt att göra dem ansvariga för någonting. Det slutade med att de hittades och sedan fick dem betala en massa böter eftersom det dem gjorde var totalt skadligt för miljön och de behandlade sina anställda extremt dåligt. Så ett extremt stort antal regler spelar in här. Det sista exemplet är att det fanns ett varumärke som hade associationen till någon produkt där det fanns folkläger, arbetsläger men där de fick reda på att de anställda faktiskt inte hade något val. De jobbade där för att dem var tvungna. Det som hände efteråt var förstås att dessa personer befriades av olika insatser, men det publicerades också en kampanj för att alla som har med detta märke att göra verkligen skulle fundera på vad dem ska göra nu. Om de vill fortsätta med varumärket som blev förknippat med detta. Vad tänker ni när ni hör att alla dessa exempel beror på transparens?

Participant L: Det är fel att det var så enkelt att avskeda människor. Tänker verkligen att det kan ha att göra med deras öppenhet. Det måste ju göra att resterande medarbetare inte har någon tillit. Vilket kanske kan påverka lojaliteten och att folk slutar.

Participant L: Borde finnas regler för et där med fabriker. Man borde inte bara kunna säga ett ställe. Någon måste stå tillsvart. I sådana här lägen borde man kräva transparens. Att skada människor och miljö är hemskt!

Participant J: Det sista exemplet tar ju oss lite tillbaka med det vi pratar om tidigare mer slavarbete och så.

Participant L: Det är det värsta man kan tänka sig att detta händer än och att man inte har koll.

Participant J: Detta beror verkligen på att företag inte är tillräckligt transparenta.

Participant M: Man kan inte lita på företag överlag. Alla borde vara tvungna att visa att dem inte använder slavarbete.

Interviewer: Den andra uppgiften är i förhållande till pristransparens och vad ni reagerar bäst på? Om ni kollar på bilderna här, vad skulle ni som sagt reagera bäst på?

Participant L: Det känns lite jobbigt att se exakt allt, men hellre det så jag vet vad mina pengar går till.

Participant K: Alltså, kanske inte i affärer men det borde definitivt inför det på alla hemsidor där man kan handla.

Participant M: Jag vet att saker är mycket dyrare än vad det kostar att göra. Jag vill gärna se hela processen och alla detaljer när jag köper en produkt.

Interviewer: Jag tänker att vi går till den sista delen som handlar om motiv. Det är både ditt eget men i första hand varumärkets motiv i förhållande till de märkena vi har pratat om. Då vi fortfarande vill hålla oss till klädes industrin så är det exempel H&M som vi kan diskutera här. Vad tror ni de får utav att vara transparenta?

Participant M: Jag tror inte de vinner på att vara transparenta. Inget företag vinner på att vara fullt transparenta. Problemet är ju att det är bättre att komma ut själv än att någon annan gör det. Jag tror det är bättre att dölja både för deras värde och för deras investerare. Ju svårare det är att sopa något under mattan desto bättre är det att avslöja. Finns ingen andledning för stora företag att komma fram med det, för då kommer dem förlora på det.

Participant K: Vet inte om jag direkt tror så, företagen kommer ju få bättre värde hos kunden vilket ökar deras vinst och om det går bra med vinst så hjälper det ju deras investerare.

Participant L: Känns mer som om det är en trend just nu. Tror inte dem vet riktigt vad dem gör.

Participant J: Jag tror när vår generation är lite äldre och den yngre börjar komma in i arbetslivet att vi kommer komma mycket längre med att inte liksom vara lika vinstdrivande.

Interviewer: Som ni kanske förstår är detta med motiv väldigt psykologiskt på den nivån med vad du som individ attraheras av och dina tankar kring vad som kan vara motiven för ett varumärke som delar med sig av sina strategier. Det gör dem för att skapa lojalitet och locka kunder samt behålla befintliga kunder. De vill ju att kunder kommer tillbaka.

Participant L: Klart det är strategiskt. Strategin är ju att hela tiden vinna över sina motståndare. Sedan betyder inte det att dem vet vad dem gör.

Participant M: Därför man inte kan lita på stora företag speciellt.

Interviewer: Vi har pratat mycket om hållbarhet och med det tänkte jag föra oss vidare till grön skepsism mot produkter. Det handlar också om det vi pratat om tidigare, negativ ord till mun. Kort så gäller detta när du hör en vän, familjemedlem eller bekant ha en negativ attityd mot ett varumärke, tenderar du att bilda samma associationer eller om din upfattning blir baserad på vad de säger. Detta är mycket av vad transparens handlar om, som när ett varumärke säger det är hållbart och inte är det så kallas det för greenwashing. Det finns inte mycket lagstiftning idag kring detta och det är också grejen med ekologiskt, om det inte är 100% kan du då fortfarande lita på dem? Ni nämnde tidigare att H&M hade skandaler, det stämmer. En av ägde rum för sex år sedan eftersom de gav kunderna möjlighet att lämna in alla kläder och skor för att återvinna de fibrer som gick. Det var observerat flera gånger att alla kläder var brända och då är man inte lika hållbar och transparenta som man säger. Med det kan vi säga att transparens och greenwashing hänger ihop, det ger en effekt på varandra.

Participant M: Jag vill lita på dem men jag som vanlig människa vet inte om någon metod för att lista ut om jag kan lita på dem. Det som H&M har gjort är inte okej.

Participant K: Hade mina vänner berättat detta för mig hade jag blivit lika chockad då som nu. Nu handlar jag verkligen på Zara eller H&M så det påverkar inte mig.

Participant L: Det förvånar mig inte är skeptisk mot dem. Jag känner ingen lojalitet till dem, speciellt inte nu. De har ju visat att det inte är ärliga eller öppna tidigare, så varför skulle dem inte dölja något nu.

Interviewer: Om ni hade vetat detta, hade ni då berättat detta för era vänner, familj och bekanta?

Participant M: Jag hade berättat det. Sanningen ska ut.

Participant K: Självklart!

Participant L: Ja alla ska veta när varumärken missköter sig.

Interviewer: Tror ni det hade varit bättre om de själva kom ut och berätta? För varumärkestransparens handlar inte bara om äkthet utan också ta ansvar för det man gör. Det görs inte ofta då det faktiskt inte finns någon lagstiftning för vad man skriver eller påstår.

Participant J: Att vara ärlig lönar sig väl alltid i längden. Så slipper man vara dem som blev påkomna.

Participant M: Det är alltid bättre att berätta själv. Jag tror det finns massor med fler hemligheter än vad som kom ut. Företag är ju först och främst vinst drivande.

Interviewer: Ni kan tänka er att det är många av de där varumärkena som vi prata om innan, vill öka sin vinst och går i tankarna hur dem kan göra det. Då trenden är hållbarhet för kunderna så är det självklart den riktningen dem vill gå, men dem kanske inte alltid gör de rätta investeringar. Vilket då gör att det blir en lucka mellan kunder och varumärket, då det kanske inte är riktigt genomtänkt. Om det är liknande det som händer H&M, så kan det vara svårt för varumärket att återta marknadsandelar.

Participant L: Är man ett litet företag så är det nog ganska förödande. H&M kan i alla fall klara sig.

Participant K: Lojalitet blir ju påverkad hos konsumenten även om företaget har pengarna att rida ut stormen. Förtroendet kommer ju aldrig vara detsamma.

Interviewer: Då har vi kommit fram till sista frågan. Vad är din inställning till varumäkers transparens nu när vi har pratat om det? Har det förändrats? Har den förstärkts? Har det blivit lite mer definierat nu än det var innan?

Participant M: Jag har blivit mer paranoid och pesimistisk. Jag tror nu mer att de flesta företagen ljuger om minst en eller två grejer. De stora kompenserar med att göra det som är rätt för att gå i vinst. Människor är nog tyvärr ganska själviska. Så företag är väldigt egoistiska och vinst drivande.

Participant K: Jag har fått mer förståelse och känner väl lika att jag är mer skeptisk. Samtidigt tror jag det kommer stärka min lojalitet till de märken jag verkligen bryr mig om.

Participant L: Jag skulle säga att den är ungefär densamma. Jag hade lite koll innan, har kanske lite mer koll nu men jag kommer väl nog inte ändra min vardag. Kanske mer att sluta tro att alla är coärliga.

Participant J: Jo men jag har förstått bättre. Även om jag inte tidigare brydde mig så mycket har åsikterna här lärt mig en hel del. Jag borde ta mer ansvar i vissa fall.