

SUSTAINABLE CLOTHING

Report

ABSTRACT

The fashion industry has undergone a profound transformation in recent years as society increasingly recognizes the environmental and social impacts associated with traditional apparel production and consumption. This abstract provides an overview of the concept of sustainable clothing, which represents a pivotal shift toward more responsible and ethical practices in the fashion world.

Sustainable clothing encompasses a holistic approach to the design, manufacturing, distribution, and consumption of apparel that minimizes harm to the environment, promotes fair labor practices, and ensures long-term viability. This abstract highlights key aspects of sustainable clothing, including eco-friendly materials, ethical production processes, and conscious consumer behavior.

Eco-friendly materials involve the use of organic, recycled, and low-impact textiles to reduce the fashion industry's carbon footprint and waste generation. Additionally, sustainable clothing promotes ethical production practices, such as fair wages, safe working conditions, and the reduction of harmful chemicals in garment manufacturing.

Sustainable clothing also emphasizes conscious consumer behavior by encouraging people to buy fewer, higher-quality items, extend the life of their clothing through repair and upcycling, and participate in clothing recycling initiatives.

Overall, sustainable clothing represents a promising avenue for reducing the environmental and social costs associated with the fashion industry. By embracing this concept, the fashion industry and consumers alike can work together to create a more environmentally friendly and socially responsible future.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The first chapter introduces the background and problem of the study, introducing generation Z and the significance of fashion and sustainability to the cohort. This is followed by the research purpose and the two research questions aimed to be answered in the study. The chapter ends with a list of definitions.

1.1. Background

In a constantly and rapidly evolving society, digitalisation enables globalisation in many contexts and aspects of people's daily lives. Scientists along with climate activists have been increasingly successful in raising global awareness of the current human-made climate crisis that negatively affects the world; a crisis that partly is caused by overconsumption and unsustainable lifestyles (Hess, 2021). The increased awareness of the climate crisis leads to sustainability becoming more important to many people (Parzonko et al., 2021), and the societal challenge that has emerged from the climate crisis today will have a large impact on future generations.

Generations are often grouped and characterised by various factors and based on different societal challenges they are facing (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). Generation Z (Gen Z) can be defined as the first global generation that was born digital and that is technologydependent (Johnston, 2018). The cohort consists of people born between 1995 and 2010 (Ismail et al., 2021) and is soon to be the largest consumer group globally, where most people are interested in implementing sustainable lifestyles (Dabija & Bejan, 2017).

The generation, which is characterised by technology dependence and technology confidence (Johnston, 2018), has a large presence on social media platforms, where people are presenting their social identities, styles, and personalities through visual content, as well as being influenced by other people's visual content (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). Fashion is often seen as an important part of defining a person's personality, creating a social image, helping the person identify with a specific social group, as well as working as a means of self-expression (Khare, 2014).

Fashion, and especially fast fashion, is a ground for debate

in regard to the ongoing climate crisis. The fast-fashion apparel industry produces garments of low quality made from unsustainable materials, in low-wage countries with potentially unethical practices; the fast fashion is then offered to the mass market at a low cost to consumers (Abrahamson, 2011; Magnuson et al., 2017). The business model, which is based on a high consumption and short product life cycle, works as a great source of revenue and profit for brands due to the idea of frequently replenishing inventory and introducing various new styles to encourage customers to buy new garments often, but it has a negative impact on the climate and environment (Long & Nasiry, 2022).

1.2 . PROBLEM

The negative impact that fast fashion has on the environment has become widely recognised among Gen Z, as the generational cohort shows strong values regarding environmental issues and a concern for the challenges that future generations and the planet will have to endure due to the consequences of their own and older generations' consumption (Djafarova & Foots, 2022).

Gen Z represents the largest generation of today (Spitznagel, 2020) and the people of the cohort will soon hold a powerful position as fashion consumers and thus have the ability to drive positive changes for societies globally (Hess, 2021); therefore, it is relevant to study this generational cohort. Furthermore, the global awareness and recognition of the need for sustainable fashion among Gen Z has a large impact on decision-making and consumer behavior (Parzonko et al., 2021).

Hence, this study aims at exploring the group's attitudes and consumer behavior in regard to sustainable fashion in the Swedish market, through the lens of planned behavior. Sweden as a market is relevant to study as it is often depicted as one of the world's most sustainable countries (Robeco, 2021).

For example, non-profit organisation Håll Sverige Rent (n.d.) collaborates with schools, companies, and municipalities in Sweden to raise awareness about littering and fight the problem in society. In addition, Swedish children are taught about sustainability and sustainable development in school from a young age (SoVerNet, 2022).

Sustainability is also an important factor for higher level education in Sweden. Jönköping University (n.d.) offers the bachelor's program Sustainable Enterprise Development, which focuses on environmental and social sustainability. In addition, the university actively works with sustainability through its sustainability network (Jönköping University, 2021).

According to the United Nation's Development Program (UNDP, 2021) "Agenda 2030", Sweden is one of the top countries in reaching the global objectives for sustainable development. Naturally, there are more studies on older generations' attitudes and consumer behavior toward sustainable fashion, for example, Gen Z's predecessor - generation Y, also known as millennials (e.g., Ivanova et al., 2019; Cesarina Mason et al., 2022; Johnstone & 7 Lindh, 2018).

Nonetheless, existing research on the attitudes and behaviors of Gen Z is scarce and needs to be developed (Lundblad & Davies, 2016), hence a research gap of Gen Z consumers in Sweden was identified. There are no known studies on Sweden as a consumer group in this context, and the country's prominent consciousness regarding sustainability creates the possibility for an empirical study to provide valuable contributions to the field by presenting implications for marketing managers and creating opportunities for future research.

The upcoming parts will present the research purpose and research question, followed by the literature review and methodology. Next, the findings of the research will be displayed, thereafter the analysis and conclusion. Finally, the theoretical implications, managerial implications, limitations to the study, and suggestions for future research will be explained.

1.3. Research Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this research is to study consumer attitudes and behavior towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market. The group aimed to be studied includes people over the age of 18 in Sweden that belong to generational cohort Z. The authors aim to explore this topic through two research questions:

- RQ1: What is the attitude of generation Z towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market?
- RQ2: How does generation Z behave towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market?

1.4.DEFINITIONS

This list presents definitions that are central to the research.

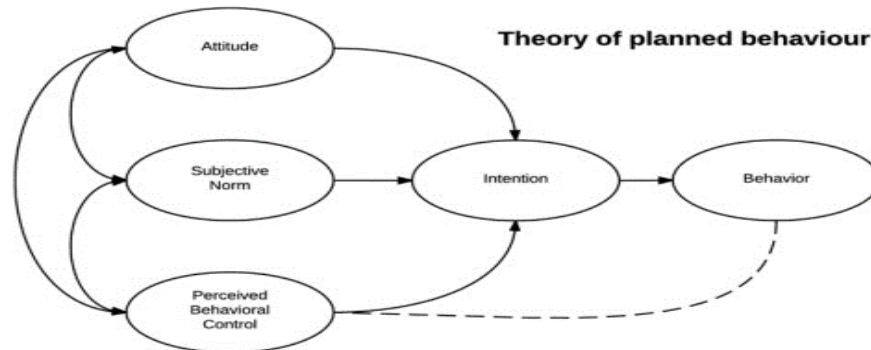
DEFINITIONS	
<input type="checkbox"/> ATTITUDE “The way you feel about something or someone, or a particular feeling or opinion.” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.a)	<input type="checkbox"/> GENERATION Z (GEN Z) People born between years 1995 and 2010 (Ismail et al., 2021) (see p.10)
<input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINABLE ATTITUDE “[...] feelings towards the issues related to environment, society, or economy.” (Kalsoom, 2018)	<input type="checkbox"/> FASHION “A style that is popular at a particular time, especially in clothes, hair, make-up, etc.” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.c.)
<input type="checkbox"/> BEHAVIOUR “The way that a person behaves in a particular situation or under particular conditions.” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.b)	<input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINABLE FASHION Products causing, or made in a way that causes, little or no damage to the environment and therefore are able to continue for a long time. (Cambridge University Press, n.d.d.)
<input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOUR “[...] The set of actions aimed at protecting the socio-physical environment.” (Jakubowicz et al., 2021)	<input type="checkbox"/> FAST FASHION Short-life-cycled products with affordable prices that are based on seasonal trends (Bruce & Daly, 2006) (see p.13)
<input type="checkbox"/> GENERATIONAL COHORT Categorising people into age groups, based on formative experiences like technology and socioeconomic trends (Dimock, 2019; Ismail et al., 2021) (see p.10)	<input type="checkbox"/> BRAND LOYALTY Customers' cognitive processes of favouring a brand over another (Berkowitz et al., 1978) (see p.13)

Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behaviors

TPB can be described as the cognitive accounting of beliefs and valuations (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB model can be divided into three components of beliefs that can control and explain future behavioral intentions. First, subjective norms are the beliefs of approval by others that are considered important to an individual or a social group. Second is attitude, which refers to positive or negative experiences of certain behavior. Third is the perceived behavioral control, which is the impact of external factors like knowledge and ability (Ajzen, 1985). Thus, these types of valuations can influence differently towards beliefs of sustainability concepts (Valari & Nik Hashemi, 2017).

This model improves in explaining the concept of perceived behavioral control and when discussing sustainability and other green solutions, individuals may have strong attitudes and subjective norms towards purchasing sustainable fashion (Hwang & Ok, 2013). The theory is favorable when analyzing consumer's pro-environmental behaviors and sustainable consumption in general (Sarica & Okur, 2018).

Additionally, Tikir and Lehmann (2011) underline facts such as beliefs together with certain information about specific objects. They claim that a consequence from a behavior that is influenced by cultural and personal factors like the personality of the individual can be influential on the beliefs towards specific behavior regarding sustainability concepts.



2.ANALYSIS

The Second chapter consists of the analysis of the findings from the empirical data collected and presents the framework of sustainable choices.

2.1. Positive Attitude but Conflicting Behavior

Positive attitude but conflicting behavior is the first aggregated dimension presented in this research and it is influencing the other two dimensions Education of sustainable fashion and accessibility in the society, and The will to change for a better future. The reason for this influence is the participants' mindsets and values regarding sustainable possibilities and green solutions. Overall, the attitudes are positive toward environmental-friendly concepts, but sustainable behavior gets limited due to lack of knowledge and several factors that restrain the possibilities to purchase sustainable.

The participants express high interest but low efforts in making these actions occur. Existing literature has explained how fast fashion generally is being bought by consumers with high impulse decisions, who tend

to switch out garments frequently and who are controlled by trends (Weber et al., 2016; Jafarov & Bowes, 2021).

So, to apply the theory of planned behavior, the green options need to be prioritized among the consumers and thus make the impulse decisions become planned decisions on sustainable alternatives. Furthermore, the participants highlight the limited alternatives for sustainable options and therefore fall for other alternatives like fast fashion that offer a wider range of collections. The literature states that Gen Z values companies that priorities sustainable questions and can avoid fast fashion brands if the brand is unconcerned regarding sustainability (Vakia & Zsóka, 2020). This type of statement fits the participants' attitudes towards negative feelings regarding brands that do not consider sustainability as an important matter, but other factors negatively impact the interviewees' intentions to consume only sustainable fashion over fast fashion.

To further explain what type of factors that influence the purchase process, the outcome is divided into two categories. Firstly, is the Unison climate concern, where the participants share a common worry for climate and for supporting fast fashion companies that are damaging to the climate when producing their products. Secondly is Obstacle for sustainable purchasing decisions where obstacles like price, time, and effort are some of the main factors for the continued purchase of fast fashion. Sustainable garments tend to be sold for higher prices than 45 clothes from fast fashion brands, meaning that the purchase decision can be dependent on income (Guo et al., 2020). Also, the effort is more time-consuming to find sustainable options and more limited due to fast fashion having larger demand among the stores when shopping. Therefore, the participants are split on what actions are needed to be taken in order to be completely sustainable.

2.2. Education of Sustainable Fashion and Accessibility in the Society

The high degree of education within Gen Z (Fry & Parker, 2018) and a focus on implementing sustainability in the Swedish school environment have aided the creation of general awareness regarding sustainability and have resulted in raised concerns for the future health of the planet among the cohort in Sweden. The degree of education has enabled the cohort to develop strong values regarding environmental issues, such as fast fashion (Fry & Parker, 2018), which is also evident from the findings, where the main sources for the

developed awareness are social surroundings such as schools, friends, family, and social media.

Despite the strong values and consciousness regarding sustainability being expressed by the participants and confirmed by existing literature (Williams, 2015; Pronko et al., 2021; Fry & Parker, 2018), there is a gap between the values and concerns resulting in the positive attitudes towards purchasing sustainable fashion, and the less sustainable ways that Gen Z consumers behave when purchasing fashion. The cohort consists of people born between 1995 and 2010 (Ismail et al., 2021), i.e. between the age of 12 to 27, although this research included young adults; people between the age of 18 and 27. The reasons for the gap that were discovered from the findings were the perception of having low income, which contributes to price sensitivity, and the union opinion among participants that sustainable fashion is too expensive.

In situations where the consumer is choosing between two similar alternatives of fashion apparel, where one alternative is sustainable but costs more than the second alternative which is a cheaper fast fashion item, the majority of Gen Z choose the cheaper, less sustainable alternative. This behavior is in line with previous research claiming that, as sustainable products are often more expensive, Gen Z is likely to perceive a higher value from low costs and thus dismiss a sustainable product that has a high price for a cheaper, less sustainable option (Guo et al., 2020; Chen & Chai, 2010; Naderi & Van Steenburg, 2018; Lundblad & Davies, 2016; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018; Juergens, 2006), and that the accumulated value from 46 factors like price, product features, and style, is likely to be greater than solely the value from purchasing sustainably (Beard, 2008).

Price was not the only identified reason for the attitude-behavior gap; knowledge was also a stated cause among the participants. The impact of external factors, such as knowledge and ability affect the perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1985). The general knowledge within the field of sustainable fashion is perceived as low, which was presented by all participants. Gen Z is characterized by unsettledness (Williams, 2015), speed, and impulse (Jafarov and Bowes, 2021) and people do not feel as though they are educated enough to make fully sustainable choices.

In addition, there is not a will to do research on which brand, material, or fashion item is the most sustainable, but the cohort rather believes that the brands and stores they purchase from should provide better information, in order for them to become confident that the choices they make when purchasing fashion items are fully sustainable.

The speed and impulse can also be related to the lack of individual drive displayed by the participants, as there is little will to make a personal effort in becoming more knowledgeable about sustainable fashion, as well as spending time looking for sustainable options in stores and online. The cohort believes that the attitude-behavior gap could become smaller should the companies provide better facilitation of sustainable options by making them more available, and should the brands make it easier to understand which choice of fashion items is the most sustainable one. The high brand loyalty displayed in the findings further suggests that the brands and stores should take a leading role in turning consumers' positive attitudes toward sustainable fashion into sustainable consumer behavior.

Fashion is a way for people to develop and express their identity and uniqueness (Jafarov & Bowes, 2021; Vakia & Zsóka, 2020), and is also often used to adhere to a social image and fit in with social groups to ultimately become accepted in the society (Belk, 1985; Richins, 1994). Social image is influenced by fashion trends and symbolic consumption, which Gen Z has shown to be sensible towards (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). This was shown in the findings, as participants claimed that how they view, and purchase fashion is often impacted by their social image and influenced by trends from social media and/or the opinion of friends or social groups. What others might think of them has a big role in how they purchase fashion, which is confirmed by literature (Jafarov & Fouts, 2022).

In addition, while some people feel pressured to follow trends and choose fast fashion to keep up with the set trends, others feel pressured to express a concern for the climate through their consumer behavior, by choosing to buy second hand because it is considered socially admirable among their peers. Hence, the opinion of others and the desire to fit in exceeds the self-identity as a driver for self- 47 motivated consumer behavior, both in regards to purchasing fast fashion and sustainable fashion. The social image and its impact on consumer behavior is further acknowledged by Ajzen (1985), who described subjective norms as the beliefs of approval by others and claims their importance for an individual or a social group in the purchasing process.

Social image has a great impact on Gen Z, but self-identity as a factor for

sustainable consumer behavior is not shown to be as prominent among the interviewees. While moral reasons have been stated as the biggest impact on fast fashion avoidance among Gen Z (Vakia & Zsóka, 2020), it rather seems that, although Gen Z shows a great concern and positive attitude towards sustainable fashion, the moral is not always sufficient to conduct sustainable consumer behavior. The findings, however, display a wish to implement sustainability into one's self-identity in the future, which can be related to feeling obliged, or pressured, to care for the environment.

Due to their digital nature and large online presence, Gen Z gains global knowledge about issues in the world (Bencsik et al., 2016; Jafarov & Bowes, 2021; Hess, 2021), which could influence people to feel as though they should take personal responsibility for implementing sustainability in their lives, when they do not consider having a sustainable lifestyle today. The findings are scattered regarding the sense of obligation to care for the environment as some participants present a clear sense of obligation to be concerned about sustainability and the environment, while other participants do not feel any personal obligation to be concerned. The participants do, however, display a mutual wish to change into a more sustainable fashion consumer behavior in the future, and hence this can be connected to the cohort's perception that brands and companies producing and selling fashion should take a leading role in integrating sustainable fashion to a larger extent on the market and making it more accessible for the consumers.

2.3. The Will to Change for a Better Future

The last dimension The will to change for a better future is highly prioritized among the interviewees. From the existing literature, Gen Z is considered as a generation with strong values regarding environmental issues that result in consequences of their own consumption impact on the planet and for future generations to come (Jafarov & Fouts, 2022). Therefore, this generation is described as driven and willing to find solutions and create a sustainable future (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). Through the findings, the literature was extended by statements from all participants in a shared mindset and attitude towards wanting to help the planet and leave something positive for future generations. The findings led to further analysis for this dimension and were divided into two categories, firstly is the Wish to be guided towards sustainability. Secondly is Sustainability should be beneficial.

Moreover, the lack of information and creating awareness for sustainability from sustainable companies were discussed among the participants, who highlighted the poor supply and low support. However, factors like price and quality have a crucial impact on the purchase decisions (Jafarov & Fouts, 2022), which results in leaving the participants' ambitions for choosing sustainability to be challenged by fast fashion alternatives. In order to make sustainable fashion a top priority for gen Z, governmental legislation of some sort needs to be implemented (Jafarov & Fouts, 2022). This was frequently discussed among the participants and in order to make sustainability a top priority, they argued for some type of benefit or restrictions if the common goal is to achieve a huge impact on creating sustainability on this planet.

Furthermore, brand loyalty is explained from current literature how it indicates high satisfaction levels among consumers and can be used as a tool to gain competitive advantages. Strong brand loyalty could decrease any tendencies the consumer might have to switch from one brand to another (Rosenbaum-Elliott, et al., 2018). Brand loyalty was shown to be important for some of the interviewees, who argued that they show loyalty to the fast fashion brands claiming to provide sustainable collections, while other interviewees suspect greenwashing when such sustainability claims are made by fast fashion brands.

They shared both negative and positive attitudes where some negative aspect regarding greenwashing was brought up during multiple occasions. Some of the participants feel deceived and see fast fashion brands' sustainability collections simply as a marketing trick to gain more customers while in reality they are not at all sustainable. While on the other hand, some participants had strong beliefs in trusting their favorite brands to be sustainable if they are marketing it as such.

When understanding the attitudes and behavior toward choosing sustainable fashion over fast fashion, trends need to be taken into consideration, as they encourage people to purchase and dispose of apparel at a frequent pace. Fast fashion brands offer season-based collections of clothes based on what is trending at that time (Bruce & Daly, 2006).

Some of the participants struggle between wanting to keep up with trends,

meaning purchasing many items often which makes low prices more preferable, or buying fewer sustainable items that are more expensive but where the quality is often better so the item will last for several seasons.

2.4. Sustainable Choices

In order to make sustainable choices a top priority among the consumers in gen Z, existing literature and the empirical findings agree to applying some type of beneficial outcome, or introduce governmental regulations promoting sustainable behavior (Jafarov & Fouts, 2022).

Gen Z in Sweden shows a great concern regarding the climate crisis and what the consequences of today's action will be in the future. The findings and existing literature agreed that a high awareness regarding sustainability exists, but the cohort is unwilling to make necessary individual sustainable efforts, while practical alternatives for choosing entirely sustainable fashion are slim. Choosing sustainability should give more and contribute to changing the mindset among consumers in order to take the right path for sustainable fashion purchases.

This study provided three aggregate dimensions of Gen Z's attitudes and consumer behavior towards sustainable fashion. Figure 12 presents this framework and displays how these dimensions are interconnected.

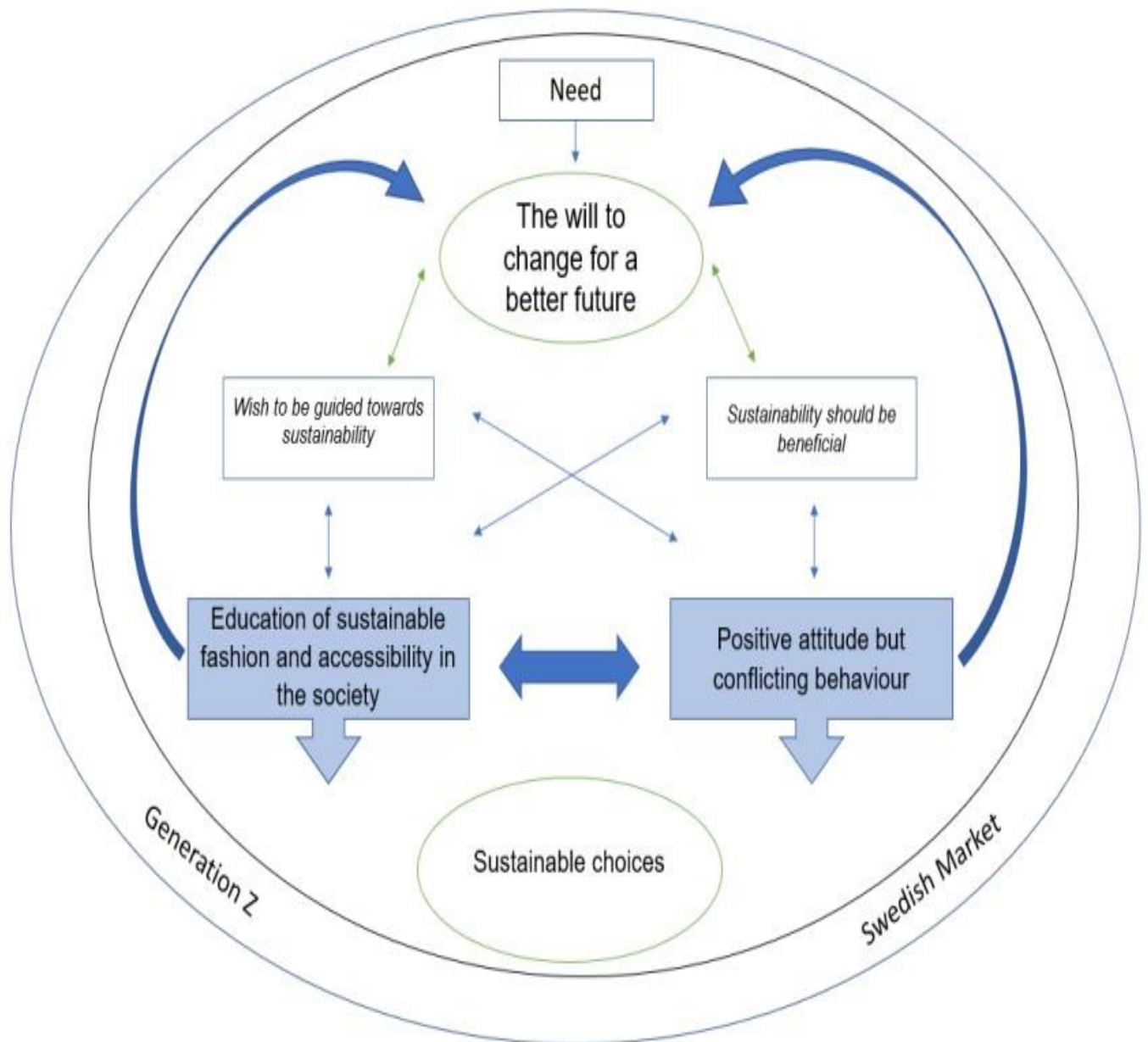


Figure 2: Framework of sustainable choices

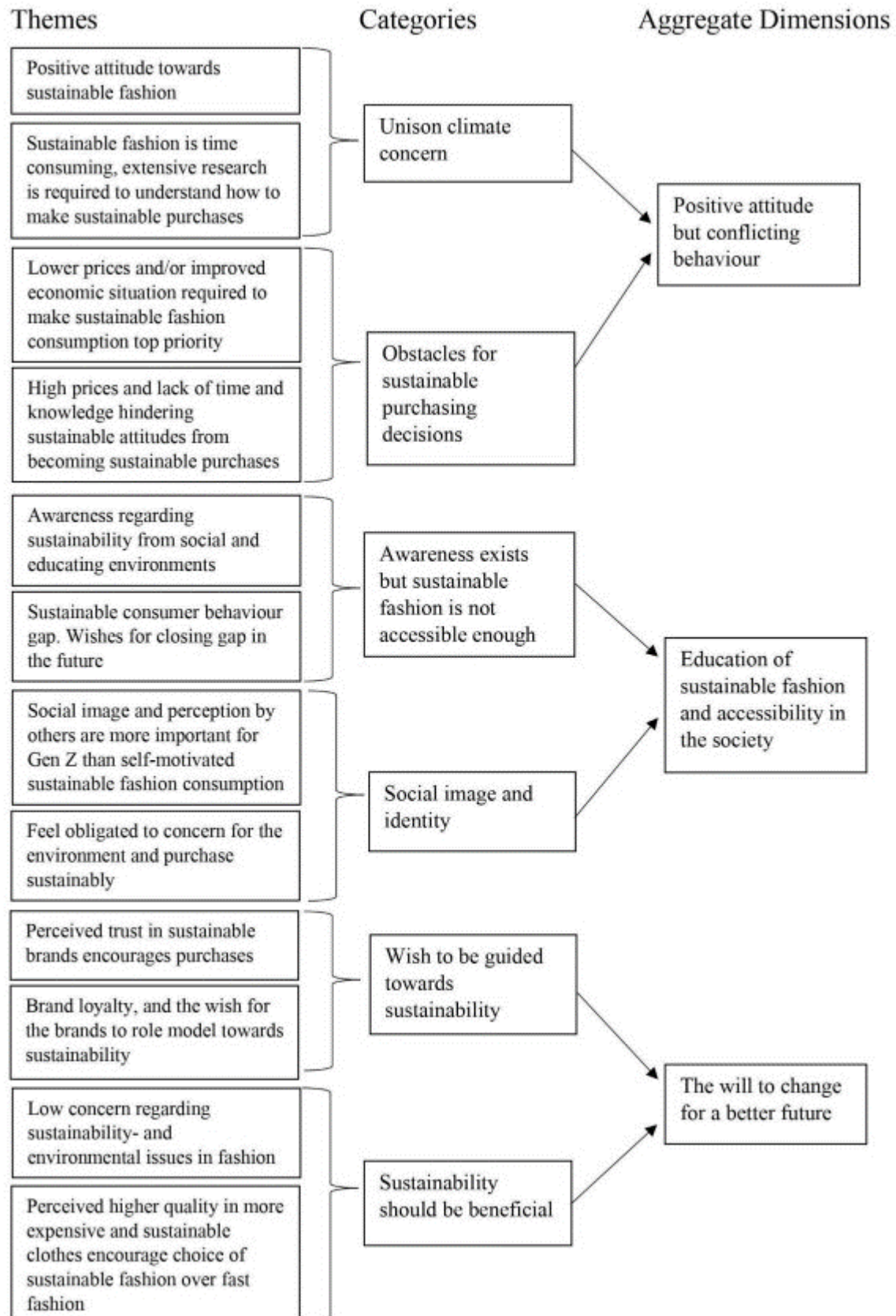
The cohort expresses a unison wish to become more sustainable in how they purchase fashion. However, to implement a more sustainable consumer behavior, there is a need for guidance from brands, companies providing fashion, as well as from sources influencing social norms in the

society.

In addition, sustainability needs to become beneficial for the individual to motivate a change in behavior, as the accumulated value from fast fashion today exceeds the value from sustainability alone, often resulting in unsustainable consumer behavior.

Furthermore, to make sustainable choices, the accessibility of sustainable fashion needs to be equal to, or exceed the availability of fast fashion, and it must be made easy for the cohort to gain knowledge about whether a product is sustainable or not, to ensure confidence in the sustainable choices made.

Figure 3: Themes, categories, and aggregate dimensions of data collection



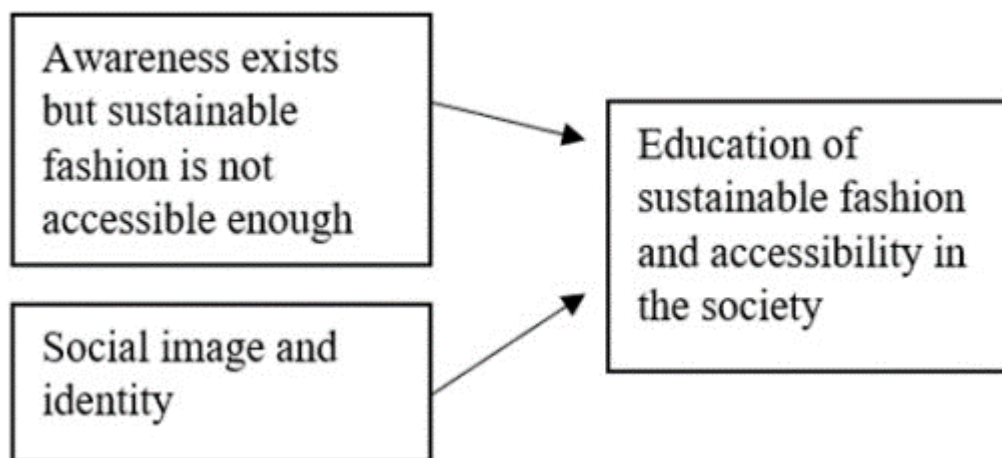
3. Discussion

The third chapter of this thesis presents theoretical implications, managerial implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research within the studied field.

3.1. Theoretical Implications

This research has developed valuable theoretical implications for providing an understanding of Gen Z's attitudes and behavior towards purchasing sustainable fashion. The gap in existing research that this study aimed at exploring in a field that is under-researched (Lundblad & Davies, 2016) has provided further perspectives of the cohort's values, factors influencing when shopping for fashion, and obstacles for turning a positive attitude towards purchasing sustainable fashion into sustainable consumer behavior, by application of the theory of planned behavior. While most findings contribute to an understanding towards the existing literature, a few of the findings debunk them, indicating that further research is required within the field of attitudes and behavior among Gen Z.

Figure 4: Education of sustainable fashion and accessibility in the society



3.2. Managerial Implications

The managerial implications that have developed from this study are mainly focusing on how existing fashion producers and brands can expand and adapt their business to adhere to an increasing, future need of sustainable fashion items. The positive attitude towards sustainability and the concern for the climate requires action from the fashion brands, in order for consumer behavior to become sustainable. Brand loyalty is an important factor influencing the choices made by Gen Z, and fashion brands should thus take a leading role in providing accessibility of sustainable options. Sustainable apparel typically costs more but is perceived as being of higher quality that lasts longer, as supported by the findings of this study. Therefore, angling marketing towards this benefit, in combination with offering sustainable fashion that is more timeless, unique, and durable, is vital.

Fashion brands and stores can also offer services that encourage a more sustainable lifestyle, such as clothes repair, recycling, or second-hand selling and buying. This could inspire customers to reduce their individual consumption and ultimately spend less money on new fashion items, while still engaging with, and supporting the brand. Furthermore, there is a need for education and support for consumers as a means to guide them towards conducting a more sustainable consumer behavior, hence decreasing the amount of time and energy spent on research needed to be made by the consumer and instead have brands providing educational marketing content to facilitate sustainable purchasing could deepen the customer-brand relationship, as well as position the brand in a leading role for sustainability, possibly resulting in increased revenue and bigger market shares.

3.3. Limitations

This study provides many valuable findings, but there are also some important limitations to consider. Firstly, the study was conducted using a small sample size. This still provides a clear understanding of the behaviors for Gen Z but does not apply for generalizations to be made to an entire population. Further research needs to consider a wider sample size in both numbers and age range, for example by including several generational cohorts. Furthermore, a larger sample size would be recommended due to the selection of a model that is mostly used for quantitative research, the theory of planned behavior. A larger sample size could also generate a deeper understanding of the investigated area. Also, the sample includes 6 women and 4 men, and the outcome could possibly have been different had the study had an equal division between the genders.

Moreover, as the majority of the sample contained students, the results could be impacted by the participants' existing knowledge in sustainability from educational environments and activity on the same social media platforms. Secondly, the method of transcribing and coding the raw data could result in similar findings among the researchers, due to the researchers having similar academic backgrounds.

Triangulation was applied to minimize the risk of investigator biases affecting the outcome, but unfortunately, this cannot be ignored. Also, the researchers' similar mindset regarding the sustainability question in general may affect the outcome of this study's findings. Thirdly, in order to better understand attitudes and purchase behavior regarding sustainability among gen Z, further research in a different context is needed to validate the research findings, for example by applying it to a different industry than fashion.

Figure 5: The will to change for a better future

Throughout the interviews, it was confirmed that the aggregated dimension of The will to change for a better future is one important aspect, and behaviors, according to the participants, are performed as acts of guilt because of the feeling that they need to leave something good behind for a better future. Two categories were discovered: Wish to be guided towards sustainability, Sustainability should be beneficial. See figure

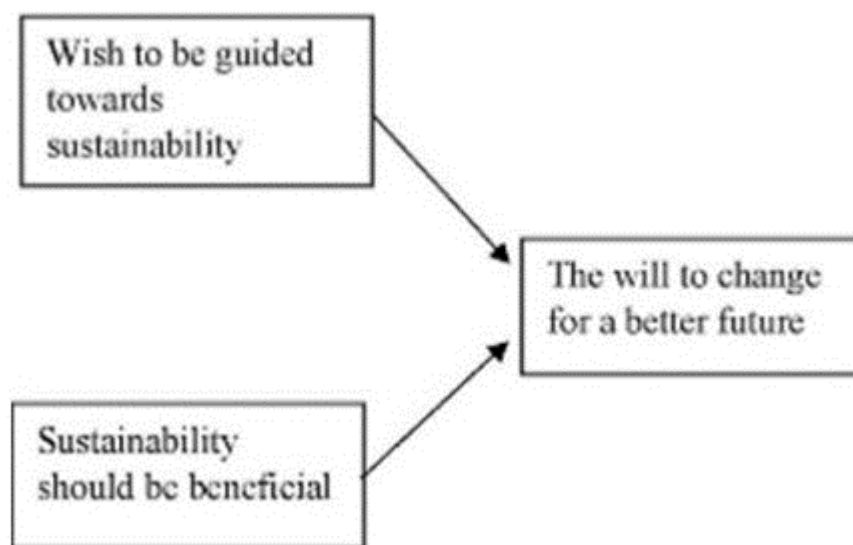
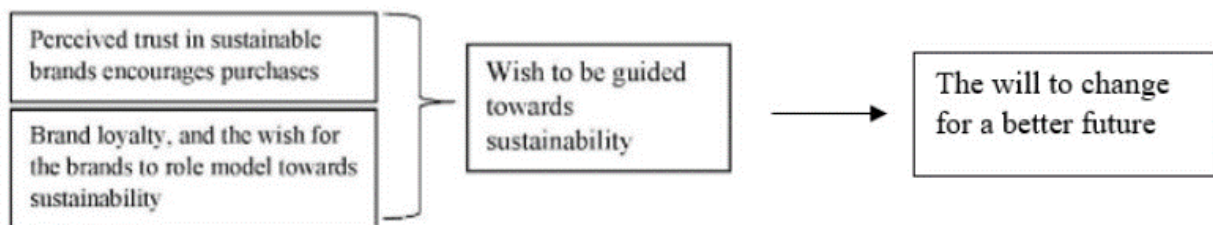


Figure 6: Wish to be guided towards

sustainability Wish to be guided towards sustainability (Figure 10) involves the interviewees' expression of how to maintain sustainability in their fashion consumption and the support needed to turn this into a conscious, repetitive behavior. Moreover, the participants indicate that the lack of support and information regarding sustainability options are motivators to choose fast fashion instead



3.4. Future Research

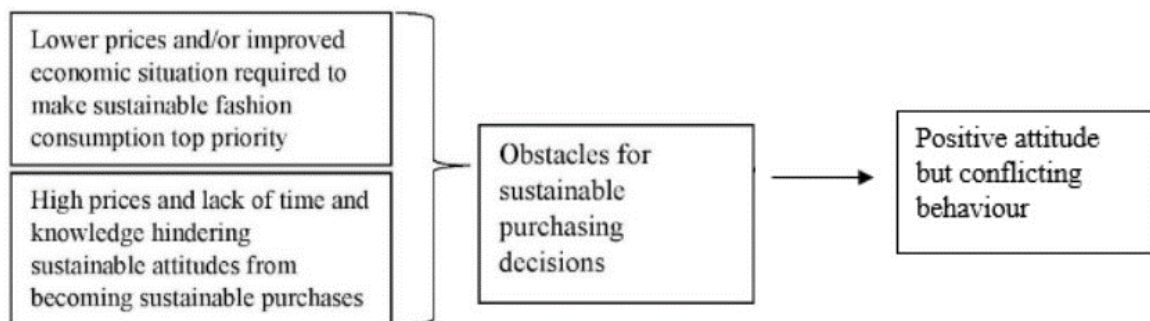
This study provides possibilities for future research. Firstly, since this study has investigated and built an interpretative understanding of Gen Z's behavior and attitudes toward sustainable fashion from the perspective of planned behavior, further research should be conducted in a quantitative method manner. Furthermore, the findings from this research show that perceived 55 low income and perceived high prices on sustainable fashion is a big reason for withstanding sustainable consumer behavior, and hence fast fashion that is offered at lower prices becomes attractive for the cohort (Bruce & Daly, 2006).

Thus, it is suggested to conduct similar research in the context of the luxury fashion industry, where customers usually tend to have higher incomes, to study if the attitudes and intentions of that consumer group have a similar impact on the consumer behavior. Furthermore,

future research should investigate other aspects of sustainability within fashion, such as upcycled- or circular fashion. Secondly, this study contains a relatively wide age range within Gen Z, but in order to collect a more precise understanding, it would be suggested to adapt the age range to a varied sample size with a wider age range, or include several generations and not limit to Gen Z.

Thirdly, it would be interesting to conduct similar research on Gen Z residents in Sweden in the future. The oldest people included in Gen Z are 27 years old in 2022, and thus results may become different some years in the future, as generational cohorts are continually evolving and the people of Gen Z in Sweden today are likely to study full- or part-time with a limited income and are thus less likely to have found their career fields. Lastly, it can be suggested to conduct comparative studies where Gen Z is compared to other generations. Moreover, Sweden is ranked one of the top countries in the world in regard to sustainability, and hence it would be interesting to take the research further to compare cultural aspects and explore similarities and differences among the generation in different parts of the world.

Figure 7: Obstacle for sustainable purchasing decisions



4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before conducting the interviews, all participants were informed about the confidentiality of the study and the possibility to withdraw at any time without the need to state a reason. This study assured total anonymity regarding names and statements made by the interviewees. In addition, before the first interview question was asked, permission to record was asked to the interviewee, for facilitation of the transcription process subsequent to the interviews.

4.1. Credibility

In order to establish trustworthiness, one of the key criteria is to ensure that the study measures or tests that the findings are true to reality. Credibility focuses on the research of the paper and how well the data is addressed (Merriam, 1998). Qualitative content analysis is often applied to verbal data such as interview transcripts, meaning that the researcher could use either descriptive or semi-structured questions (Schreier, 2012). To ensure credibility, twenty-five questions were formed and asked to ten different participants, generating approximately four hours of material. By taking both genders into the research, it gives the outcome a wider viewpoint and strengthens trustworthiness. In addition, several similar questions occurred during the interviews with the goal of strengthening the interviewees' responses (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

For example: "Could you explain the importance of sustainability and how that impacts you when you are shopping for fashion?" and "If you wanted to purchase a sustainable fashion product, could you tell me what factors would make that difficult or easy for you?" Furthermore, all participants were selected within the age gap of Gen Z which also is the observation group of this thesis. 27 To avoid researcher bias, the interviews were carried out with carefulness to ensure that the researchers did not steer the interviewees' answers (Yin, 1994)

4.2. Transferability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability focuses on the generalization of the study and how it can be applied to similar contexts. The research needs to be structured and documented sufficiently, to allow for comparison. In order to succeed, the sample, data collection, and findings have to be explicitly described in a structured manner. This was achieved by, for example, explaining the context in which the study was conducted, creating a guideline for the interviews, and describing each step in the process from the collected raw data to the end-result material. The researchers have taken all steps into consideration when conducting all the

data, making an effort to not dismiss any important information that may affect the study. To find out the level of transferability of this study, it is up to future researchers to transfer the findings into other contexts (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

4.3 Dependability

Dependability makes room for future studies that follow the same structure or overlook the data that will result in similar findings and conclusions. This means that the study should be explained in detail so future research can repeat it (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Here, the authors provide the research study with detailed information, so the chances of mistakes and flaws are minimal (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, both authors analyzed and categorized the data individually before comparing and discussing the outcome. The structure of the paper was ensured by precise, detailed documents and notes throughout the entire work.

5. ZENTIC

Zentic is our own little startup clothing brand ,in own clothing we mainly concentrate on The sustainable clothes which is not only premium but also eco-friendly in nature which is Very helpful to our community ,in zenzic we use not only the recycled clothes we also the Use the eco-friendly products like linen , alpaca wool and bamboo etc. .

5.1. BRAND LOGO :



5.2. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:

❖ **INSTAGRAM: Denticator**

https://instagram.com/zentic_attire?igshid=OGQ5ZDc2ODk2ZA=

❖ **FACEBOOK : Denticator**

<https://www.facebook.com/zentic.attire?mibextid=ZbWKwL>

❖ **EMAIL ID: Zenticattire@gmail.com**

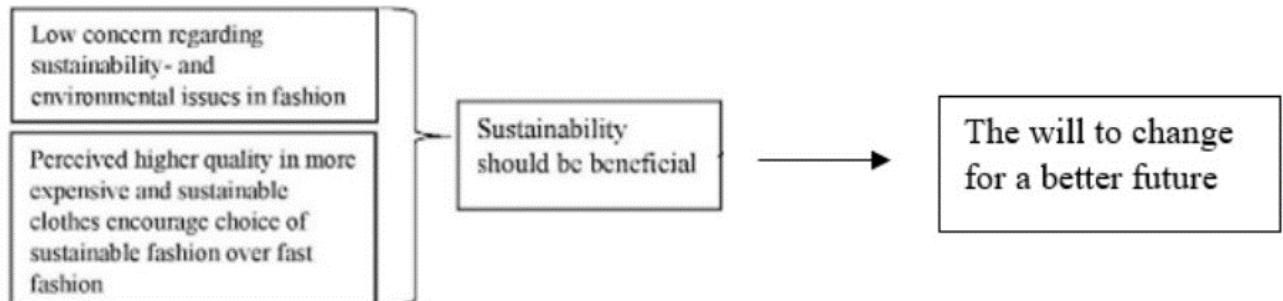
6. CONCLUSION

The sixth chapter presents a conclusion of the empirical data and seeks to answer the two research questions. It concludes that the attitudes towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market is positive, but the behaviors towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market is not in line with the attitudes.

The purpose of this research was to study consumer attitudes and behavior towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market. The research was conducted through 10 semi-structured interviews that provided data that emerged into the three aggregate dimensions Positive attitude but conflicting behavior, Education of sustainable fashion and accessibility, and The will to change for a better future.

A framework was developed from the aggregate dimensions, existing literature, and the theory of planned behavior model which was used as a theoretical Lense for the research. The research was concluded by synthesizing the analysis of the two research questions:

Figure 8: Sustainability should be beneficial



RQ1: What is the attitude of generation Z towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market?

The unison attitude among Gen Z towards purchasing sustainable fashion products is positive. The awareness that has been created during their upbringing and from social environments such as school and social media has had a big influence on the cohort's attitude towards sustainability in general, as well as sustainability in terms of fashion. Social settings and subjective norms also have an influence on the generation, which values the opinion of others.

There is a genuine concern for the climate and the future of the planet among the cohort, which also has an impact on the attitude and the belief that a change needs to be made to ensure the health of the planet's future generations to come.

Despite the positive attitude towards purchasing sustainable fashion products, there is an existing gap between the positive attitude and consumer behavior.

RQ2: How does generation Z behave towards purchasing sustainable fashion products on the Swedish market?

Gen Zs are not to a large extent purchasing sustainable fashion products. As presented in the findings and as supported by existing literature, the accumulated value from factors such as price, style, and availability is often higher than the sole value of an item's sustainability factor; Gen Z does not express a high enough concern for the unsustainable consequences of consuming fast fashion to turn their positive attitude towards sustainable fashion into sustainable consumer behavior.

Fashion is a major tool for self-expression within Gen Z, and the behavior is often influenced by social image. The responsibility of showing sustainable consumer behavior should, therefore, not be on an individual level, and to close the gap between how the cohort consumes today and how they wish they would consume, the biggest changes need to be made by the companies and brands producing, marketing, and selling fashion.

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