**Manual Coding Explanation**

The qualitative data analysis in this study was conducted entirely through manual coding, without the use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). This decision was based on the researcher's intent to remain closely engaged with the data and ensure a deep, interpretive understanding of participant narratives in relation to brand awareness, sales strategies, and social media influence in the fashion industry.

**Process Overview**

Following the completion of interviews, all audio recordings were transcribed **verbatim**. Each transcript was then printed and reviewed line by line. During initial readings, the researcher made margin notes and highlighted significant statements that aligned with the study’s critical research questions. These initial impressions were treated as open codes, which captured specific ideas or sentiments such as “influencer-driven decision-making,” “awareness via Instagram,” or “green purchase motivation.”

Subsequent readings were used to refine and group these codes into broader categories. For instance, codes related to influencer interactions, social commerce, and digital trends were grouped under the category "**Social Media Influence on Purchase Decisions**." Similarly, codes reflecting sustainability awareness and product origin were grouped under "**Green Consumer Behaviour**."

The final themes—such as Digital Sales Strategies, Green Marketing Influence, and Brand Co-Creation Engagement—were developed by collapsing related code clusters and aligning them with the research objectives. These themes were iteratively refined until theoretical saturation was observed.

**Justification for Manual Approach**

Manual coding was deliberately chosen to ensure contextual sensitivity and interpretive depth. The direct interaction with the text allowed the researcher to remain attuned to subtle linguistic cues, tone, and emphasis within participant narratives—an essential consideration in interpretive qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2021). While software tools can support data organization, the manual process enabled a more flexible and reflexive approach, suited to the inductive thematic development adopted in this study.

**Reliability Measures**

To enhance the **trustworthiness** of the analysis:

* Memo writing was maintained throughout the coding process to document emerging thoughts and analytical decisions.
* Codes were cross-checked across multiple transcripts to ensure consistency.
* Contradictory or deviant cases were noted and included to ensure analytical rigour and balance.

All codes and themes were then transferred into structured tables (see Sections 2 and 3 of this appendix) to clearly document the analytical trail from raw data to final thematic conclusions.

To **conclude,** this structured manually conducted coding process provided a robust foundation for the qualitative analysis in this study. It ensured that emerging themes were grounded in participants' own words and experiences, thus enhancing the credibility, authenticity, and richness of the research findings.