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Sustainable collections in the fast fashion industry: How consumers evaluate the fast fashion brands after revealing a Greenpeace campaign about sustainable collections

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This piece of work concludes my joint master`s degree in Marketing at LUISS Guido Carli University and BI Norwegian Business School. The path toward this point has been challenging, inspiring, and highly educational. I want to thank all my colleagues and professors throughout these two years. I especially express my gratitude to my supervisor, prof. Francisco Javier Villarroel Ordenes**,** who have helped me with the thesis from the beginning to the end.

When our class was presented to LUISS, some of the professors introduced us to the industries that Italy does better than anyone else; food, fashion, cars, and wine. Especially the fashion industry caught my attention and is one of the main reasons I chose to learn more about it. By combining the fashion industry with the worldwide issue of sustainability, I suddenly had a research topic to further investigate.

I started to explore previous research within the field of marketing, branding, and psychology. Throughout a lot of research papers, I found out that there is little research on consumers` reactions towards NGO campaigns and their effects on brand evaluations. Therefore, I am presenting you my research: Sustainable collections in the fast fashion industry: How consumers evaluate the fast fashion brands after revealing a Greenpeace campaign about sustainable collections.

Enjoy the reading.

Best regards,
Simen Djupesland

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Chapter I: Introduction

Phenomenon, managerial relevance, and problems:

We all know about the global climate change the world is facing. You read about it in newspapers, talk about it with your friends, and see changes in the environment around you. In the UN`s latest report about climate change, they state that pollution caused by humans already has led to an increase in extreme events such as tropical cyclones, heatwaves, and heavy precipitation (Kaplan & Ramanna, 2021). Our lifestyle includes habits that are widely known to cause environmental harm. The habits range from using your car when it is possible to walk, flying overseas for meetings instead of using videocalls, using disposable items because it is more convenient, or buying clothes you do not need.

Consumers worldwide are buying more clothes, and they are fully aware of the impact the over-consumption of clothes has on the environment. The fashion industry alone is responsible for up to 8 percent of the global carbon emissions (UN Environmental Program, 2021), which is more than international flights and maritime shipping combined (McFall-Johnsen, 2019). The problem with the industry is that they are producing too many clothes too often. From 2000 to 2014, people bought 60% more clothes and only kept them for half as long (Remy et al., 2016). There are also estimates that one garbage truck full of garments ends up in the dump every second (UN Environmental Program, 2021). This is a phenomenon called “fast fashion,” and it refers to the speed with which clothing products are manufactured and put on the market for the consumers. Companies such as ZARA, Mango, H&M, and ASOS are the big players in this industry and are continuously making new clothing collections (Smith, 2022).

In European Parliamentary Research Service`s report from 2019, they provide us with evidence that the fashion companies went from an average offering of two collections per year in 2000 to five in 2011. However, fast fashion brands are offering even more collections. H&M offers between 12 and 16, while ZARA puts out twenty-four collections per year (EPRS, 2019). Nevertheless, the companies know that the world is changing and that consumers increasingly expect and demand that their products need to be sustainable (Granskog et al., 2020). As an answer to the demand of the consumers, fast fashion brands have started to make eco-friendly and sustainable collections, to communicate that some of

their clothes are made in a better way. The collections consist of more recyclable material, are produced with less toxic chemicals, and are polluting less (Greenpeace, 2021). The problem is that these collections are not environmentally friendly enough, since sustainable collections are still made multiple times a year and the production of clothing is still on the rise (Greenpeace, 2021).

Previous research and gaps:

Grappi et al.(2017) investigated how consumers evaluate brands after an NGO campaign at reducing toxic chemicals in the fashion industry. They found evidence that consumers' evaluations of brand blame play a role towards their attitude to brands and their purchase intentions, which makes it easier to understand what reactions customers get after being provided insightful information about an industry. However, they have only used surveys and have not been able to verify if the results hold well across other models of data collection. Their research consisted of four luxury brands, which does not necessarily mean that they will get the same results for brands within the fast fashion industry or with other variables such as brand trust and brand attitude. Therefore, further research should evaluate what effect brand trust and brand attitude may have on consumers` responses to an NGO campaign.

Henninger et al.(2016) are addressing the increased interest in sustainable and ethical fashion. They argue that sustainability is emerging as a “megatrend,” which indicates that sustainable fashion is increasing in importance (Battaglia et al., 2014). Their findings show us that there is a gap between what manufacturers and consumers believe sustainability to be, and that sustainability potentially could lead to a competitive advantage that strengthens their brand image. However, this research is only looking at the slow fashion industry, which is the opposite of the fast fashion industry. It is also only looking at what competitive advantage the companies can obtain. Therefore, further research should investigate if the findings also can represent the fast fashion industry and if the brands can be affected by the gap between what manufacturers and what consumers believe sustainability to be.

Kim & Oh (2020) investigated consumer associations of fast fashion brands from a sustainability perspective. Fast fashion brands have the previous years had a higher effort towards sustainability, and this research is looking at how consumers increased interest in sustainability is affecting their associations with the brands. The research found evidence that the fast fashion brands` efforts of marketing their sustainability, have a significant influence

on consumers` associations with the brands. Therefore, they address that fast fashion brands are using this interest to launch sustainable clothing collections, by targeting the consumers that care about sustainability. However, this paper is looking at consumer`s brand associations with the fast fashion brands, and they are indicating that further research should investigate other aspects of sustainable fashion in the fast fashion industry, such as consumer perceptions of a specific sustainable activity.

Contribution:

Based on these considerations, this research will investigate the effect of perceiving information from a Greenpeace campaign on consumers` brand evaluation. The relevant campaign was Greenpeace (2021), which are telling us what effects the fast fashion brands have on the climate and that the industry needs regulations to become more sustainable. Therefore, this study will use information from the campaign to find out what effects it has on consumers` brand evaluations. By doing so, this research will investigate whether or not consumers` attitudes towards a brand will change and provide new insights into how a Greenpeace campaign can affect a brand`s sustainable effort. This research will also investigate what the brands are promoting and what they are causing of environmental problems. By investigating this, we can provide new insights about how the Greenpeace campaign possibly inflicts consumers` purchase intentions towards the brands. Moreover, both of these effects will be moderated by the mechanism of brand trust. We will investigate how a Greenpeace campaign will change the consumers brand trust toward a brand and find out what role it has in consumers` attitudes and intentions to purchase products from them.

From a business perspective, this study could offer suggestions for strategic directions for the companies within the fast fashion industry. By assessing the results of this research, company owners can change how they are promoting their brand, from being solely focused on sustainability over to becoming more neutral. This could potentially exclude the negative effects of this research and maintain the business`s brand image as positive but neutral. From a public perspective, this study will make more consumers conscious of the differences between what is promoted and what is reality. The study could also potentially reach political forces within countries and start the process of regulating the fast fashion industry. Hopefully, the more people that know about the fashion industry`s impact on the climate, the more action will be done to combat the worldwide problem of overconsumption.

Theoretical framework:

To find out how consumers evaluate fast fashion brands after being exposed to a Greenpeace campaign, we need to have a backbone on how to do it. Previous research on consumer-brand relationships (Aggarwal, 2004), investigated how the consumer-brand relationship influences the evaluations consumers make about the brand and its actions. The study made a conceptual model that proposed the role of relationship norms and its influence on consumer evaluations. In other words, this research is suggesting that when consumers form a particular relationship with a brand, the brand is addressed in the same manner as other members of the society - according to the norms of social behavior. That means that brands are evaluated as if they are members of a culture and need to conform to its norms. If the actions of the brand violate the norms of a relationship, the brand is evaluated negatively. On the other hand, if the actions conform to the norms, the brand is evaluated positively (Aggarwal, 2004).

Nevertheless, Aggarwal's model can be used to interpret the results obtained in our study. This study will look at the relationship between perceived Greenpeace information and consumers` attitude toward fast fashion brands. By manipulating a sustainable collection commercial toward consumers with the NGO campaign, there is a possibility that this will change the type of relationship there is between the consumer and the company. If there is a change in the type of relationship, there will also be a change in how the consumers evaluate the brand, from conformity to a violation. The reasoning behind this is that the consumers see that the type of norms and actions performed by the company are not matching their perception of what the company actually does.

Chapter II: Literature review

Sustainability in the fast fashion industry

The textile and apparel industry ranks among the world's most polluting sectors (Shen B, 2017), and the fashion industry has significantly evolved in the last decades (Djelic and Ainamo 1999). By increasing the number of fashion seasons, fading mass production, and modified structural characteristics that have forced retailers to desire low cost, flexibility in design, quality, delivery, and speed to market (Doyle, Moore, and Morgan, 2006). The development of the textile and apparel industry has resulted in a new industry called fast fashion. The phrase fast fashion is all about low-cost clothing collections that mimic current

luxury fashion trends (Joy et al., 2012). However, it is more widely defined as an approach to the design, creation, and marketing of clothing fashions that emphasizes making fashion trends quickly and cheaply available to consumers (Oxford Student, 2020).

Fast fashion helps state deeply held desires among consumers, where especially young consumers who are always looking up to the fashion trends that are emerging, even as it embodies unsustainability (Joy et al., 2012). From political discussions in recent years, sustainability has been a primary issue of the twenty-first century (Aguilera et al.,2007). The most polluting industries, such as the fast fashion industry, need to meet the consumer's sustainability demands to take more responsibility for what impact they have on the planet and society. As a response to these demands, the fast fashion industry has started to report about its CSR initiatives (Kozlowski et al., 2015), which are used in a search to become sustainable, and are defined as the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society (Garcia-Torres et al., 2017).

However, it is not only the consumers that are demanding a more sustainable fashion industry. The European Union points out that companies operating in industries such as the fast fashion industry must meet reporting standards of how they are enhancing sustainability (Stacchezzini et al., 2016). One of the most well-known reporting standards is the Global Reporting Initiative. This initiative has increased in usage worldwide, but it has also been criticized for its limitations. The criticism of the standards contains accusations of being "greenwashing" (Kim et al., 2017), based on the facts that clothing production doubled from 2000 to 2014, the number of garments is reaching a new record every year, and that fast fashion brands are producing up to fifty-two micro seasons a year (Greenpeace, 2021).

Moreover, the fashion industry has significantly evolved over the last twenty years, when the boundaries of the industry started to expand (Djelic and Ainamo, 1999). The changing dynamics of the fashion industry since then, such as the fading of mass production, increase in the number of fashion seasons, and modified structural characteristics in the supply chain have forced retailers to desire low cost and flexibility in design, quality, delivery and speed to market (Doyle, Moore, & Morgan 2006).

For this apparent problem, we can see that there is a lacking consistency between talk and action (Castello et al., 2011), where it seems like the sustainability standards within the fast fashion industry boils down to an annual "tick the box" ritual that fully ignores industry

conditions (Rasche, A. 2010). However, it is not all the industries` fault. The standards do not require firms to report concrete information about their actions, only vague assertions decoupled from business practices (Sethi et al., 2014).

Nevertheless, the fast fashion industry is not alone when it comes to a lack of consistency in what they say and do. Joy et al.(2012) found evidence that young consumers separate fashion from sustainability, even if they definitely support the idea of a more sustainable world. The young consumers do not apply their ethics when it comes to sustainable fashion, since they are demanding fresh design at a low cost. In order to keep the customers coming back, the high street retailers need to source the latest trends, by introducing the latest items weekly (Tokatli and Kizilgun, 2009). In the end, Garcia-Torres et al.(2017) conclude that one solution that could help the industry to reach its goals is to have a collaboration between suppliers, industries, and NGOs. This can help to increase the level of sustainable performance in the global marketplace. (Garcia-Torres et al., 2017).

Brand trust contribution to brand loyalty

In a challenging and complex world for marketers, there are several strategies that companies can use to create value for their brands. One of the most well-known strategies out there is the conceptual model of brand equity. The brand equity model consists of four main steps, where brand meaning is the second step of it. According to Keller (1993), brand meaning consists of identification and communication of what a brand means to its customers, and what it stands for (Keller, 1993).

Moreover, brand loyalty can be a direct effect of brand meaning, since it depends on how a customer perceives the brand. Kotler & Keller (2006) defined brand loyalty as the extent of consumer faithfulness towards a specific brand and this faithfulness is expressed through repeat purchases and other positive behaviors. Brand loyalty can also be seen as one of the ways in which the consumer expresses satisfaction with the performance of the product or service received (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). The effects of brand loyalty can be that the percentage of loyal customers goes up, and the market shares increase, which results in a more profitable brand. Therefore, the development and maintenance of consumers` brand loyalty is an important business marketing strategy and show us that brand loyalty is a great part of what meaning a brand can have to a consumer (Fournier and Yao, 1997).

However, other researchers have demonstrated that there is more to brand loyalty than its performance and how consumers perceive the brand. Garbarino and Johnson (1999), argued

that trust plays a vital role when it comes to the relationship between the brand and the consumer, and that it can help to predict the future intentions of low and high relational customers. The phrase trust has several definitions, but most of them are based on the same idea of a feeling of security that will guide and motivate the belief of the person's positive intentions toward welfare and interest in the other part (Delgado-Ballester, 2000). Brand trust can, therefore, represent the recognition that brand value can create and develop other aspects that goes beyond customer satisfaction (Aaker, 1996), such as customer commitment, which influences customer price tolerance, customer involvement, and the overall relationship between the customer and company (Delgado-Ballester, 2000).

By looking at how brand trust contributes to brand loyalty, Delgado-Ballester (2000) found evidence that overall satisfaction was an antecedent of brand trust, and that there exists a moderating effect of customer involvement on the overall satisfaction-brand trust relationship. Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) also argued that brand trust can determine purchase- and attitudinal -loyalty, which leads to greater market share and a higher relative price for the brand. Companies should use the brand trust gained from the consumers to obtain certain marketing advantages such as favorable word of mouth (Dick and Basu, 1994), which will be followed up with more new customers (Aaker, 1991), which in the end will gain outcomes such as relative price and market share that matches the associations with the brand (Keller, 1993).

Political consumption

Political and ethical consumption has received increased attention on all levels of society simultaneous with the increased attention for a more sustainable world (Jacobsen & Dulsrud, 2007). Consumption can be done in numerous ways, but in particular, the act of shopping has been made into a subject of moral judgment. As a result, the academic world has shifted focus from consumer rights to consumer duties (Sassatelli, 2006), where the consumers have gone from weak and manipulated to morally responsible for their actions (Harrison et al., 2005).

According to Jacobsen & Dulsrud (2007), the phenomenon of political consumption is a combination of multiple different terms such as ethical consumption, shopping, and behavior. It is defined as the actions by people who make choices among producers and products with the goal of changing objectionable institutional or market practices (Jacobsen & Dulsrud, 2007). What makes political consumption interesting is that it occurs in different forms, such

as boycotts and buycotts. People boycott and buycott companies and brands by withholding or utilizing their purchasing power and are often identified with an individual action form that could jeopardize political movements (Balsiger, 2014). There are several examples in the last decades, where consumers have boycotted products that have been produced in an unsustainable way, to make the companies change the way they produce products.

Kjaernes et al.(2007) found out that one-third of European adults have engaged in boycotting or buycotting to support a cause, while Klein (2000) argued that individual choices and actions have the potential to form political movements that challenge political and economic powers. However, other researchers have evidence that consumers want to act virtuously, but their behavior tells us that they do not (Swan, 2002). One explanation of why consumers are behaving as they do is that the role of collective actors incites consumers to become ethical consumers (Forno & Ceccarini, 2006), or there is a form of information problem such as lack of options (Akerlof, 1970), or a problem of weak will or empathy (Elster, 1989).

The media and the internet have pushed companies' products to be seen as ethically virtuous in order to enforce their claims of being politically and ethically correct and to get a premium price for their products (Jacobsen & Dulsrud, 2007). By taking an ethical and political stand, the companies have framed their initiatives to be seen as a political act, where they make a meaning to individual purchases (Sassatelli, 2006). The act of these types of companies has been revealed by different movement actors fighting for ethical consumption. NGOs are an important counterpart to these companies, using their campaigns to spread the information that the consumers do not know (Jacobsen & Dulsrud, 2007), creation of ethical labels or rankings (Dubuission-Quelier, 2013), or as an orientation tool that direct customers purchases (Balsiger, 2014).

Chapter III: Hypothesis

Throughout the research so far, this study has explored previous research and shed light on theory on the topic. The basis of the two hypotheses presented below is to better understand how consumers` reactions to the Greenpeace campaign will affect how they evaluate the brands involved. By using previous research of brand trust on brand loyalty and political consumption combined with the research gaps discusses earlier, this research has predicted two hypotheses:

H1: Consumers that receive Greenpeace information about the sustainable collections, will negatively affect the overall attitude towards the fast fashion brands via the mediating role of brand trust. That is: the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers` brand trust, and accordingly, the greater the negative effect on attitudes towards the two fast fashion brands.

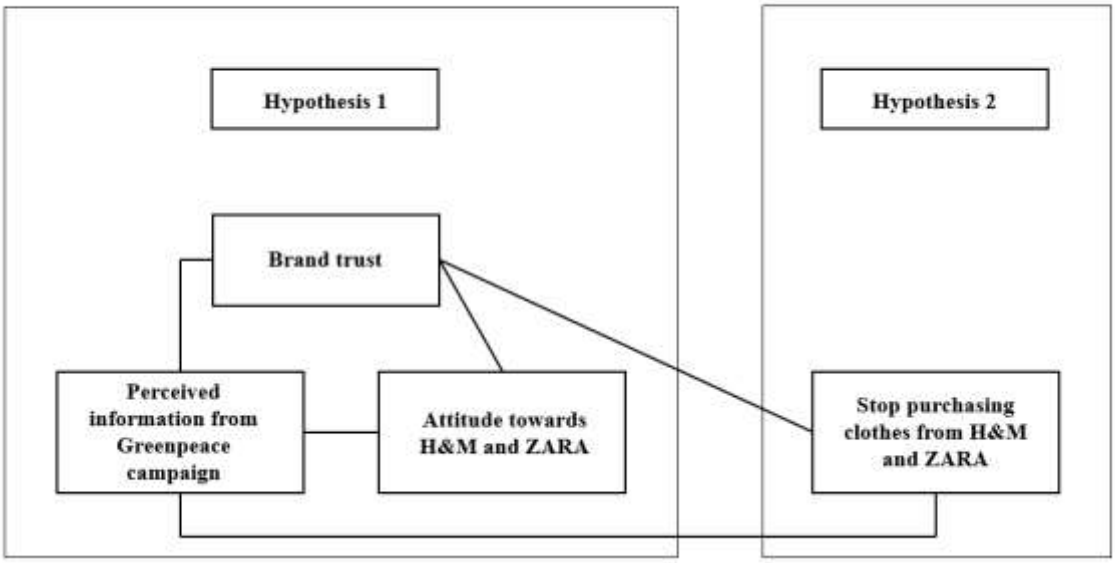
H2: Consumers that receive Greenpeace information about the sustainable collections, will negatively affect their intentions to purchase products(boycott) from the two brands, via the mediating role of brand trust. That is: the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers` brand trust, and accordingly, the greater negative effect on the consumers` intentions to purchase products from the two brands.

These two hypotheses together form the Conceptual framework model and is evaluated through the analysis in this study.

Conceptual framework:

In Figure 1, you will see the two hypotheses form the conceptual model that is assessed in the main study. Here the independent variable is *"Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign,"* and it consists of the two groups (experimental group and control group) of respondents from the main study. The first dependent variable is *"Attitude towards H&M and ZARA,"* and the variable consists of both groups` attitudes towards the two fast fashion brands. The second dependent variable is *"Stop purchasing clothes from H&M and ZARA,"* and the variable consists of both groups` intentions to stop purchasing clothes from the two fast fashion brands. The mediator variable is *"Brand trust"* and is used to analyze the mediating role of brand trust on the relationship between the independent variable and attitude towards H&M and ZARA (H1). The mediating role of brand trust is also assessed when looking at the relationship between the independent variable and stop purchasing clothes from H&M and ZARA (H2).

Figure 1
Conceptual model



Chapter IV: Method

Data Description

This research initially conducted an exploratory and quantitative data collection through a pretest, survey, and experiment. The data collection is done to be able to find out whether or not respondents' evaluations of two fast fashion brands are changing when revealing information from a Greenpeace campaign. The Greenpeace campaign exposes how manufacturers of clothes, such as H&M and ZARA, are polluting more than they did prior to the world`s focus on a sustainable world.

The target population of this research would ideally be all fast fashion consumers, but in order to be realistic, this research aims to describe Norwegian fast fashion consumers with a convenience sample. This from of sampling is a so-called non-probability technique, which has limited external validity. However, this research will conduct a pretest, which will increase the internal validity of this study. To be able to indicate whether the research was doable, and that the quality of the experiment was good, a pretest with 42 Norwegian respondents was conducted. The pretest is using many of the same aspects as the main study but is constructed more simply. In the main study, the respondents of the questionnaire and experiment are consisting of 153 Norwegian fast fashion consumers.

The experiment will made in Qualtrics and be exported and analyzed through IBM SPSS. In order to clean up the dataset, we removed the respondents that did not fully or partly complete the experiment. There was also a case of two duplicates in the dataset that was also removed. In total, 16 respondents were removed for these reasons.

Measurement development

In Table 1, the questions from the questionnaire and experiment are operationalized, to precisely show you how the questions will be defined, measured, and transformed into data.

Table 1
Operationalization of questions

Variable	Definition of variable	Measurement
Demographics	Sex, age, marital status, occupation, education.	Nominal and Ordinal scale
Frequency of purchases	How frequent do you purchase clothes?	Nominal scale
Bought clothes from ZARA or H&M	Have you ever bought clothes from the brands listed beneath?	Nominal scale
Importance of making sustainable clothes	How important is it that the clothes are made sustainable?	5-point Likert scale questions
Politically and ethically right	How important is it that the brand you buy products from, are politically and ethically right?	5-point Likert scale questions
Sustainable evaluation of H&M	How sustainable would you evaluate H&M as?	5-point Likert scale questions
Sustainable evaluation of ZARA	How sustainable would you evaluate ZARA as?	5-point Likert scale questions
Loyalty to H&M	How loyal would you say that you are to H&M?	5-point Likert scale questions
Loyalty to ZARA	How loyal would you say that you are to ZARA?	5-point Likert scale questions
Evaluation of H&M after experiment	How would you evaluate H&M after seeing the picture and reading the text?	5-point Likert scale questions
Evaluation of ZARA after experiment	How would you evaluate ZARA after seeing the picture and reading the text?	5-point Likert scale questions
Trust of H&M	Do you trust H&M as a brand?	5-point Likert scale questions
Trust of ZARA	Do you trust ZARA as a brand?	5-point Likert scale questions
Stop buying products from H&M and ZARA	Based on the pictures and text presented, will you stop buying clothes from H&M and ZARA?	5-point Likert scale questions

To measure the categorical questions, nominal, ordinal, and ratio scales have been used. The nominal scales are based on questions where we need to know which gender (male/female)

the respondents are, and whether or not the respondents have priorly bought products from H&M and ZARA (yes/no). The ordinal scale is used to rank the ordering of the respondents to be able to categorize them after age, marital status, education, and so on. Lastly, the questions that measure the respondents' opinions both prior and after the experiment, are measured with a 5-point Likert scale. The 5-point Likert scale collects the response of the respondents in a way where they specify their level of agreement on a certain topic or question. When collecting data, there are many advantages to use a Likert scale. It removes the difficulty of a more overwhelming scaling type, most respondents are familiar with the scale from before, and it is easy to draw results and conclusions from it.

Furthermore, to make you understand the concept of the questionnaire and experiment, the respondents are randomly divided into two groups; the control group and the experimental group. The two groups are made in order to have a group to manipulate, and another to measure the difference between them. Both of these groups are presented with a picture and a text from a sustainable collection from each of the two brands (H&M and ZARA). However, the experimental group is manipulated with information from the Greenpeace campaign.

The goal of the experiment is to compare the two groups' answers, to investigate whether or not there are some changes in how the respondents evaluate the brand and if there are any changes from the questions asked prior and after the experiment. After the experiment, the respondents are questioned about how they evaluate the brands after what they have been exposed to, if they trust the two brands, and whether or not they will stop purchasing products from them (Appendix 9).

Explanation of Planned Hypothesis Testing

Before the hypothesis testing, a pretest was conducted in order to increase the internal validity of the study. In the pretest, there are important aspects to investigate, so the main study will consist of higher quality. The pretest looked after mistakes in the questionnaire, whether or not the questions were understandable, and if the respondents understood the experiment. Moreover, it is important to consider the reliability and validity of the main study, so a reliability analysis and a factor analysis are being conducted. The reliability analysis allows you to study the measurement scales and the quality of the research. While a factor analysis determines what correlations there are between the variable`s and interpret and explains the correlations based on the variables common underlying factors and components.

This analysis can be used to find out if we can rely on the results, and whether it is high or low factor loadings that indicate how reliable the experiment is.

Two independent sample t-tests were carried out to check out if the manipulation of the independent variable "Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign" have any relationship to the dependent variables in H1 and H2. The independent sample t-test compares the mean of the experimental group to the mean of the control group. If there is a relationship between X and Y1 in our hypotheses, we can continue to use Hayes Process Mediation analysis. The analysis investigates the effect of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable via a third variable called a mediator variable (Hayes & Scharkow, 2013).

Chapter V: Results

Pretest

The participants of the pretest were primarily from a convenience sample with a total of respondents of 42. Based on a one-sample t-test the results indicated that the mean score of how they evaluate brands prior to the manipulation, was lower than after the manipulation (M = 2,67, SD = 1,069; M = 2,83, SD = 1,082). The results of the pretest also indicated that the main study needed to randomize the manipulation, in order to have a control group to compare the results. Otherwise, the questions were understandable, and the respondents understood the experiment (Appendix 8).

Main study

Reliability and Validity:

In appendix 3, you can see the results of the reliability analysis. Four of the questions regarding brand trust and evaluation of the brand were analyzed to find out how reliable the questions are. In this analysis, we are looking for the Cronbach`s alpha scores that are associated with the focal constructs. The Cronbach`s Alpha score should be over 0,7 to be seen as reliable, and as we see from the analyses, we have values of Cronbach Alpha at (Evaluate = 0,977, and Trust = 0,964), indicating that the variables used are reliable.

Moreover, a factor analysis was conducted in appendix 3. The factor loadings absolute value should be higher than 0,30, in order to interpret it as a correlation between a variable and a

factor. In the analysis, we have found six factor loadings that have an Eigenvalue over 1. The six factor loadings explain 70,264 % of the total variance in values. In the figure, you can see a simplified factor loading matrix, where the largest values are marked in bold, in order for you to see what the numbers show. Moreover, a KMO and Bartlett's test was also assessed, and it shows us the overall significance for all correlations within the correlation matrix. The results indicate that all correlations were significant (Chi-Square = 1231,072, $p < .001$), while the results from the KMO test, were within what is called "the good range" at 0.643. Values that are over 0,5 is acceptable, which indicates that there are strong relationships between variables in this study.

Descriptive statistics:

In the total sample of 153 participants, there is a good distribution of genders with 76 males and 77 females (male = 49,7%; female = 50,3%), and 75,2% of the participants are between the age of 18-35 years old. The distribution in age reflects to a greater extent that the study is based on a convenience sample. The participants are more equally distributed among the different marital statuses, where 20,3% are married, 32,7% are single, and 43% are in a partnership. The majority of the participants are either employed (49,7%) or students (36,6%). This is also reflected around their education level, where most of them have completed high school up to master`s degree (High school graduates = 19%; Professional degree = 11,8%; Bachelor's degree = 35,9%; Master's degree = 30,1%). Some other interesting descriptive statistics are that the participants frequently purchase clothes with a range from weekly to twice a year (Weekly = 22,9%; Once a month = 47,1%; Twice a year = 24,8%). Lastly, most of the respondents have previously bought clothes from H&M and ZARA (Bought clothes from H&M = 96,1%; Bought clothes from ZARA = 88,24%) (Appendix 1).

Furthermore, to verify whether the respondents' answers in the experiment are normally distributed and if the data are heavy- or light-tailed, we use the Skewness and Kurtosis analysis. The numbers from this analysis will be normally distributed if the interval is between -2 and 2, while the optimal normal distribution is at 0. As Appendix 2 shows us, we see that there are some deviations. On the one hand, Skewness analysis shows us that all questions besides "Bought clothes from H&M" (Skewness = 4,795) are normally distributed. The reason this question is not normally distributed is that H&M is a globally known company, with a lot of customers, where most people actually have bought clothes from

them. On the other hand, the Kurtosis analysis shows us that there is one question that is answered differently, the question "Bought clothes from H&M" (Kurtosis = 21,268). We can interpret it as a highly positive answer, showing us that the participant responds in the same way.

Manipulation checks

In the first independent sample t-test, the comparison is between the experimental group and control group on the mean score of "attitude towards the brands". The regression showed us that the 78 participants who received the Greenpeace information (M = 2,0128, SD = 0,86405) compared to the 75 participants in the control group (M = 3,7333, SD = 0,8595) demonstrated significantly negative "Attitude towards the brands" scores (t(151) = 12,344; *p* = <0,001). The experimental group had a mean score of "Somewhat worse", while the control group had a mean score of between "About the same" and "Somewhat better". Therefore, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups when it comes to how their attitude toward the brand is (Appendix 4).

In the second independent sample t-test, the comparison is between the experimental group and control group on the mean score of "stop buying clothes from H&M and ZARA". The regression showed us that the 78 participants who received the Greenpeace information (M = 3,06, SD = 1,177), compared to the 75 participants in the control group (M = 2,05, SD = 0,957) demonstrated a significantly negative "Stop buying clothes from H&M and ZARA" scores (t(151) = 5,815, *p* = <0,001). The experimental group had a mean score of "probably not", while the control group had a mean score of "might or might not". Therefore, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups when it comes to the mean score of "Stop buying clothes from H&M and ZARA (Appendix 5).

Testing H1

The analysis assessed the mediating role of M (Brand Trust) on the relationship between X (Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign) and Y (Attitude towards the brands). The results revealed a significant indirect effect of impact of X on Y (*b* = 0,8963, t = 7,0574), with a . Furthermore, the direct effect of X on Y in presence of the mediator was also found significant (*b* = 0,8243, *p* = 0,000). The total effect was (*b* = 1,7205, *p* = 0,000), with an increase in performance of 50,23% (*R2* = 0,5023) . Hence, M partially mediated the

relationship between X and Y. Mediation analysis summary is presented in Table 2 and Appendix 6.

Table 2
Mediation analysis summary

Relationship	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence	Interval	t-statistics	Conclusion
Exposed to Greenpeace information → Brand Trust → Attitude towards the brands	1,7205 (0,000)	0,8243 (0,000)	0,8963	Lower Bound 0,6576	Upper Bound 1,1563	7,0574	Partial Mediation

Testing H2

We proved that there is also a relationship in H2, so we conduct the same mediation analysis for this hypothesis. The analysis assessed the mediating role of M (Brand Trust) on the relationship between X (Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign) and Y (Stop Purchasing clothes from H&M and ZARA). The results revealed a significant indirect effect of impact of X on Y (b = -1,0184, t = -6,7399). Furthermore, the direct effect of X on Y in presence of the mediator was not found significant (b = 0,0076, p = 0,9646). The total effect was (b = -1,0108, p = 0,000), with an increase in performance of 18,29% ($R2$ = 0,1829). Since the indirect effect is negative and significant, we have a competitive effect which tells us that the worse "brand trust" is, the higher possibility of "stop buying clothes". Hence, the direct effect is insignificant, meaning that M fully mediated the relationship between X and Y. Mediation analysis summary is presented in Table 3 and Appendix 7.

Table 3
Mediation analysis summary

Relationship	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence	Interval	t-statistics	Conclusion
Exposed to Greenpeace information → Brand Trust → Stop purchasing clothes	-1,0108 (0,000)	0,0076 (0,9646)	-1,0184	Lower Bound -1,3325	Upper Bound -0,7425	-6,7399	Full mediation

Chapter VI: Discussion

Contributions

This study investigates and demonstrates the role of the Greenpeace campaign and how it changes the consumers' evaluation of the fast fashion brands, such as the attitude towards the brands. It has also looked at how the Greenpeace campaign affects the consumers` intuition to purchase products from the two brands. Specifically, this study develops a conceptual framework of consumers perceiving information from Greenpeace campaign and looks at what relationship it has to attitude towards the brand, and intuition to purchase clothes from the two brands. The mediator of brand trust helps us to see if the Greenpeace campaign negatively affects brand trust, and if a negatively affected brand trust affects the consumers` attitude or intuition of purchasing products.

The results show that if the consumers have perceived information regarding how the two fast fashion brands are operating, we see that it harms how they evaluate their attitude towards the brands. Moreover, the results also show that brand trust either partly or fully moderates the negative effect of being exposed to the Greenpeace information, whereas it is more likely that the consumers get a lower attitude towards the brands and increases the possibility of the consumers to stop purchasing clothes from the two brands.

Furthermore, the results of this study can relate to Aggarwal (2004) consumer-brand relationship study, where which type of relationship between the consumer and brand, will determine which evaluations consumers make about the brand. By assessing the results from this study, and comparing it to Aggarwal`s conceptual model, we can see connections between how the attitudes and intentions to purchase clothes are affected by whether or not the consumers perceive Greenpeace information. The participants from this study might have felt that the Greenpeace information was making the actions of the two fast fashion brands violate norms of social behavior and that they felt undermined. Since the actions of the brands are in violation with the norms of a relationship, the consumers have evaluated the brand more negatively.

Managerial Implications

The findings in this research provide several managerial implications. Firstly, consumers will be slightly more conscious around the phenomenon of sustainable collections within the two

brands in the fast fashion industry. From the results of this research, one of the major actions that can damage or hurt H&M and ZARA, is that their consumers` attitude towards them falls, with the negative effects that follow from a worse reputation. Another major action is the fact that the results in this research initiate that some of the consumers will stop purchasing clothes from the two brands, based on their actions.

Greenpeace will still investigate and publish new campaigns against the fashion industry, to show the world how the companies really operate. But are these campaigns enough? Previous Greenpeace campaigns, such as the Greenpeace Detox campaign, managed to mobilize thousands of people around the world, and made several companies across the industry to eliminate hazardous chemicals in their production (Grappi et al., 2017). Our findings in this research confirm that companies need to do some strategic decisions based on the results presented, to be able to minimize the negative effects of the Greenpeace campaign on their brand attitude, brand trust, and intentions to purchase clothes. One of the strategic decisions is to change their marketing direction, by actually telling the truth about what they produce and sell. Another direction will be to become more sustainable and make the necessary steps to become a sustainable industry.

In general, the findings also imply that a sustainable world is not only the fast fashion industry's fault. Based on the experimental results, we see that several of the consumers still are reluctant to stop purchasing products even though they know the backside of the coin. The results found in this research must be used in a wider collaboration between countries, companies, suppliers, and retailers, to be able to change the environmental impact of the fashion industry. Finally, Greenpeace and other NGO`s can also have an interest in the findings. The results show us that the campaign has a significant effect on consumers, and the NGO`s can use this as an opportunity to direct their efforts toward more people.

Limitations and further research

Before any conclusions are made, it is important to consider the limitations of the research and what opportunities there are for further research. Firstly, the use of a questionnaire and experiment allows for a partial assessment of consumers` reactions and beliefs about a specific research issue. However, future research could verify or extend the results from this research, by assessing other data collection methods. An example could be in-depth interviews, which can help capture more precise data on how the consumers react to NGO

campaigns. Secondly, this study used and analyzed the results of one specific Greenpeace campaign and considered the reactions towards two fast fashion brands. Future studies could investigate if the results in this research to examine if the effect would have the same results in other empirical contexts.

Thirdly, the results in this research do not examine other communication tools than the experiment with two sustainable collections and the Greenpeace information. The effect of the consumers` reactions could be positively or negatively different if it were communicated by for example an influencer, through an article in a newspaper, or by the news. Future studies could identify which communication tool that is the most effective, in order to create a more specific strategy for the NGO`s campaigns. This will help them to maximize their promotion of the campaign and could help to change people's sustainable behavior. Finally, the variables chosen in this study do not cover all aspects of consumers` brand evaluations. Moreover, future research should also include or expand what variables they analyze. The reason behind this is that other variables could better examine the greater depth around the role the potential variables play on consumer responses to NGO campaigns.

Conclusion

The main objective of the study has been to investigate and further understand the relationship between consumers, NGO`s and the fast fashion industry. Does the Greenpeace campaign, aimed at "telling the truth of the fast fashion industry," affect customers` evaluations and attitudes toward the fast fashion brands? By examining the phenomenon with an experiment, the results from the research can conclude that there is an effect of the Greenpeace information on the consumers` overall attitude towards the fashion brands via the mediating role of brand trust. Yes, there is statistically significant evidence that the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers` brand trust, and accordingly, the greater the negative effect on attitudes towards the two fast fashion brands.

Moreover, the results also tell us that there is an effect of the Greenpeace information, via the mediating role of brand trust, on consumers` intentions to purchase products. Yes, there is statistically significant evidence that the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers` brand trust, and accordingly, the greater negative effect on the consumers` intentions to purchase products from the two brands.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Descriptive statistics

Sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	76	49,7	49,7	49,7
	Female	77	50,3	50,3	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25 years	65	42,5	42,5	42,5
	26-35 years	50	32,7	32,7	75,2
	36-45 years	14	9,2	9,2	84,3
	46-55 years	11	7,2	7,2	91,5
	56-70 years	9	5,9	5,9	97,4
	70 and above	4	2,6	2,6	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Marital status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	31	20,3	20,3	20,3
	Single	50	32,7	32,7	52,9
	Divorced	5	3,3	3,3	56,2
	Separated	1	,7	,7	56,9
	In a partnership	66	43,1	43,1	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Occupation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employed	76	49,7	49,7	49,7
	Unemployed	13	8,5	8,5	58,2
	Student	56	36,6	36,6	94,8
	Retired	8	5,2	5,2	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than high school	4	2,6	2,6	2,6
	High school graduate	29	19,0	19,0	21,6
	Professional degree	18	11,8	11,8	33,3
	Bachelor`s degree	55	35,9	35,9	69,3
	Master`s Degree	46	30,1	30,1	99,3
	Doctorate	1	,7	,7	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Frequency of purchasing clothes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	1	,7	,7	,7
	Every week	35	22,9	22,9	23,5
	Once a month	72	47,1	47,1	70,6
	Twice a year	38	24,8	24,8	95,4
	Once a year	7	4,6	4,6	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Bought clothes from H&M

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	147	96,1	96,1	96,1
	No	6	3,9	3,9	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Bought clothes from ZARA

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	126	82,4	82,4	82,4
	No	27	17,6	17,6	100,0
	Total	153	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 2: Skewness and Kurtosis

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Sex	153	1,50	,502	-,013	,196	-2,026	,390
Age	153	2,09	1,325	1,327	,196	,997	,390
Marital status	153	3,14	1,694	,070	,196	-1,792	,390
Occupation	153	1,97	1,038	,339	,196	-1,499	,390
Education	153	3,74	1,174	-,564	,196	-,762	,390
Frequency of purchasing clothes	153	3,10	,825	,242	,196	-,301	,390
Bought clothes from H&M	153	1,04	,195	4,795	,196	21,268	,390
Bought clothes from ZARA	153	1,18	,382	1,714	,196	,951	,390
Importance of sustainable clothes	153	2,64	1,133	,360	,196	-,545	,390
Importance of politically and ethically brands	153	2,62	1,175	,161	,196	-,826	,390
Sustainable H&M	153	2,31	,935	,213	,196	-,383	,390
Sustainable ZARA	153	2,33	1,005	,249	,196	-,675	,390
Loyal H&M	153	2,53	1,192	,224	,196	-,979	,390
Loyal ZARA	152	2,45	1,255	,412	,197	-,922	,391
Evaluate H&M after	153	2,80	1,214	-,041	,196	-,902	,390
Evaluate ZARA after	153	2,91	1,248	-,113	,196	-,966	,390
Trust H&M	153	2,63	1,185	,144	,196	-1,131	,390
Trust ZARA	153	2,70	1,241	,068	,196	-1,229	,390
Stop buying clothes H&M and ZARA	153	2,57	1,185	,459	,196	-,632	,390
Valid N (listwise)	152						

Appendix 3: Factor loadings, KMO and Bartlett's test' and Cronbach`s Alpha

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3,867	21,483	21,483	3,867	21,483	21,483
2	2,667	14,817	36,300	2,667	14,817	36,300
3	1,896	10,532	46,833	1,896	10,532	46,833
4	1,821	10,117	56,950	1,821	10,117	56,950
5	1,342	7,456	64,405	1,342	7,456	64,405
6	1,055	5,859	70,264	1,055	5,859	70,264
7	,964	5,357	75,621			
8	,837	4,652	80,273			
9	,716	3,980	84,253			
10	,596	3,309	87,561			
11	,499	2,775	90,336			
12	,439	2,437	92,774			
13	,343	1,903	94,677			
14	,297	1,652	96,329			
15	,268	1,488	97,817			
16	,190	1,055	98,872			
17	,121	,673	99,545			
18	,082	,455	100,000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,643
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1231,072
	df	153
	Sig.	<,001

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,977	,978	2

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,964	,964	2

Appendix 4: Independent Samples t-test n1

Group Statistics

	Block Randomizer	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MAttitud	1	75	3,7333	,85950	,09925
	0	78	2,0128	,86405	,09783

Independent Samples Test

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
						Significance				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MAttitud	Equal variances assumed	,590	,444	12,344	151	<,001	<,001	1,72051	,13938	1,44513	1,99589
	Equal variances not assumed			12,346	150,824	<,001	<,001	1,72051	,13936	1,44516	1,99586

Appendix 5: Independent samples t-test n2

Group Statistics

	Block Randomizer	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Stop buying clothes H&M and ZARA	0	78	3,06	1,177	,133
	1	75	2,05	,957	,111

Independent Samples Test

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
						Significance				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Stop buying clothes H&M and ZARA	Equal variances assumed	5,786	,017	5,815	151	<,001	<,001	1,011	,174	,667	1,354
	Equal variances not assumed			5,838	146,986	<,001	<,001	1,011	,173	,669	1,353

Appendix 6: MEDIATION ANALYSIS PROCESS BY HAYES nr1

```
Model  : 4
    Y  : MAttitud
    X  : Experime
    M  : MTrust

Sample
Size:  153

**************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 MTrust

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      ,6052      ,3663      ,9065    87,2737     1,0000   151,0000      ,0000

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant     1,9615      ,1078    18,1951      ,0000     1,7485     2,1745
Experime     1,4385      ,1540     9,3420      ,0000     1,1342     1,7427

Standardized coefficients
              coeff
Experime     1,2067
```

```
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 MAttitud

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      ,8591      ,7381      ,3934   211,3802     2,0000   150,0000      ,0000

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant      ,7906      ,1269     6,2307      ,0000      ,5399     1,0414
Experime      ,8243      ,1274     6,4687      ,0000      ,5725     1,0760
MTrust        ,6231      ,0536    11,6221      ,0000      ,5171      ,7290

Standardized coefficients
              coeff
Experime      ,6770
MTrust        ,6100

************************** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL ****************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 MAttitud

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      ,7087      ,5023      ,7427   152,3853     1,0000   151,0000      ,0000

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant     2,0128      ,0976    20,6269      ,0000     1,8200     2,2056
Experime     1,7205      ,1394    12,3444      ,0000     1,4451     1,9959

Standardized coefficients
              coeff
Experime     1,4131
```

```
************** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y **************

Total effect of X on Y
     Effect         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI       c_ps
     1,7205      ,1394    12,3444      ,0000     1,4451     1,9959     1,4131

Direct effect of X on Y
     Effect         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI      c'_ps
      ,8243      ,1274     6,4687      ,0000      ,5725     1,0760      ,6770

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
           Effect     BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
MTrust      ,8963      ,1270      ,6576     1,1563

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
           Effect     BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
MTrust      ,7361      ,0877      ,5741      ,9160

************************ ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS ************************

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

NOTE: Standardized coefficients for dichotomous or multicategorical X are in
      partially standardized form.

------ END MATRIX -----
```

Appendix 7: MEDIATION ANALYSIS PROCESS BY HAYES nr2

```
**************************************************************************
Model  : 4
    Y  : Stpbuy
    X  : Experime
    M  : MTrust

Sample
Size:  153

**************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 MTrust

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      ,6052      ,3663      ,9065    87,2737     1,0000   151,0000      ,0000

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant     1,9615      ,1078    18,1951      ,0000     1,7485     2,1745
Experime     1,4385      ,1540     9,3420      ,0000     1,1342     1,7427

Standardized coefficients
              coeff
Experime     1,2067
```

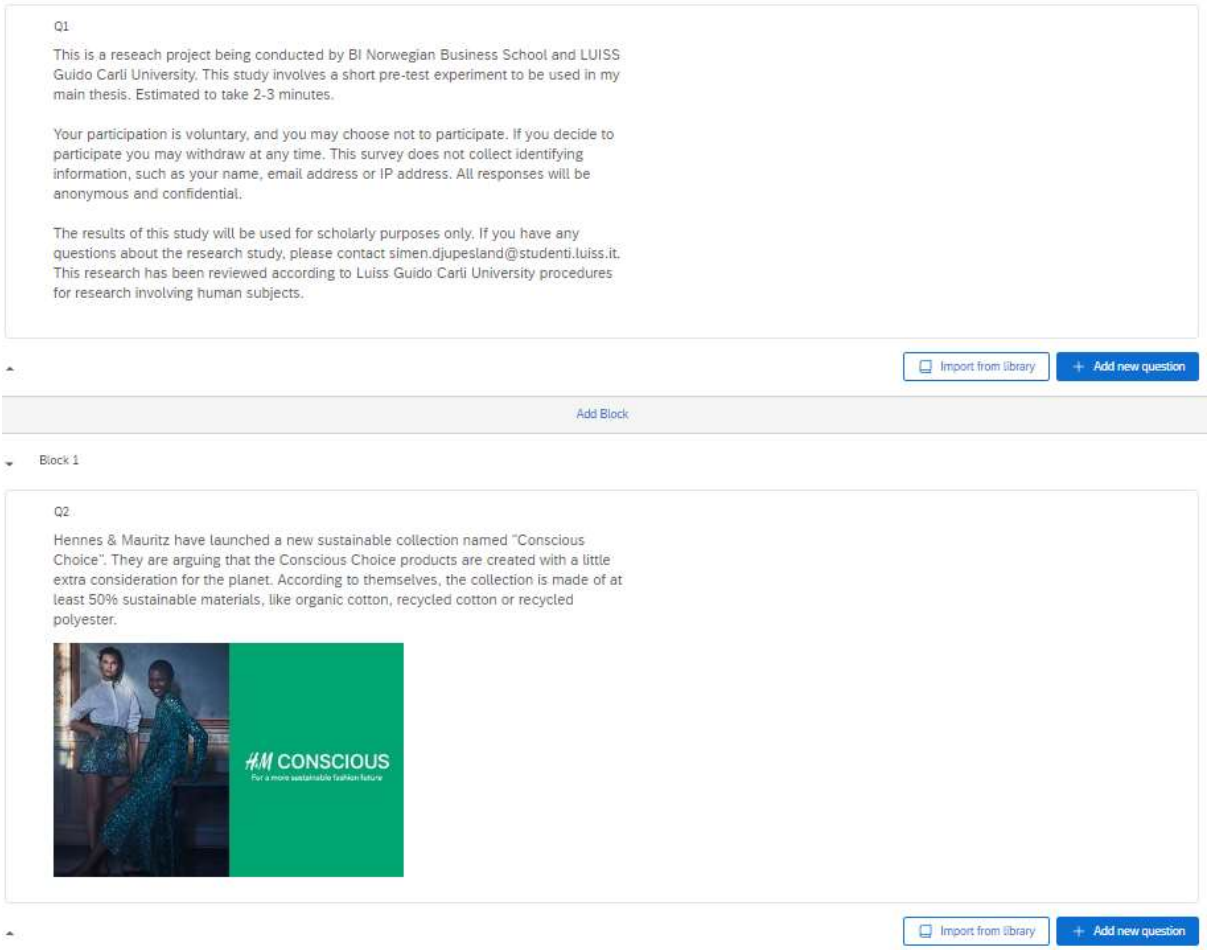
```
**************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 Stpbuy

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      ,7101      ,5042      ,7057    76,2817     2,0000   150,0000      ,0000

Model
             coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant     4,4528      ,1700    26,1996      ,0000     4,1170     4,7886
Experime      ,0076      ,1707      ,0445      ,9646     -,3296      ,3448
MTrust       -,7080      ,0718    -9,8596      ,0000     -,8498     -,5661

Standardized coefficients
             coeff
Experime      ,0064
MTrust       -,7120

*************************** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL ****************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 Stpbuy

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      ,4277      ,1829     1,1554    33,8091     1,0000   151,0000      ,0000

Model
             coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant     3,0641      ,1217    25,1758      ,0000     2,8236     3,3046
Experime    -1,0108      ,1738    -5,8146      ,0000    -1,3542     -,6673

Standardized coefficients
             coeff
Experime     -,8528
```

```
************** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y **************

Total effect of X on Y
     Effect         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI       c_ps
    -1,0108      ,1738    -5,8146      ,0000    -1,3542     -,6673     -,8528

Direct effect of X on Y
     Effect         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI      c'_ps
      ,0076      ,1707      ,0445      ,9646     -,3296      ,3448      ,0064

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
           Effect     BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
MTrust    -1,0184      ,1511    -1,3325     -,7425

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
           Effect     BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
MTrust     -,8592      ,1062    -1,0778     -,6628

************************ ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS ************************

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

NOTE: Standardized coefficients for dichotomous or multicategorical X are in
      partially standardized form.

------ END MATRIX -----
```

Appendix 8: Pretest Qualtrics

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
You evaluate brands based on how sustainable they are	36	2,67	1,069	,178
You evaluate brands based on how sustainable they are	36	2,83	1,082	,180



Q3

Based on the description and picture of H&M´s sustainable collection, please indicate your opinion on the following statements:

Q4

Sustainability is important for you

1 = Not at all important	2	3	4	5 = Extremely important
○	○	○	○	○

Q5

You evaluate brands based on how sustainable they are

1 = Completely Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Completely Agree
○	○	○	○	○

Q6

H&M is a sustainable brand

1 = Completly Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Completely Agree
○	○	○	○	○

Q7

Hennes & Mauritz have launched a new sustainable collection named "Conscious Choice". They are arguing that the Conscious Choice products are created with a little extra consideration for the planet. According to themselves, the collection is made of at least 50% sustainable materials, like organic cotton, recycled cotton or recycled polyester.

However, Greenpeace have recently published evidence that H&M are polluting more than before. H&M is using marketing to be perceived as a sustainable brand, but their sustainable collections are actually not helping to reduce their impact on the planet. With up to 52 different "micro-collections" each year, H&M´s clothing production and carbon footprint is skyrocketing (Greenpeace, 2021).

Q8

Based on the description, picture, and the new information from Greenpeace of H&M´s sustainable collection, please indicate your opinion on the following statements:

Q9

Sustainability is important for you

1 = Not at all important	2	3	4	5 = Extremely important
○	○	○	○	○

Q10

You evaluate brands based on how sustainable they are

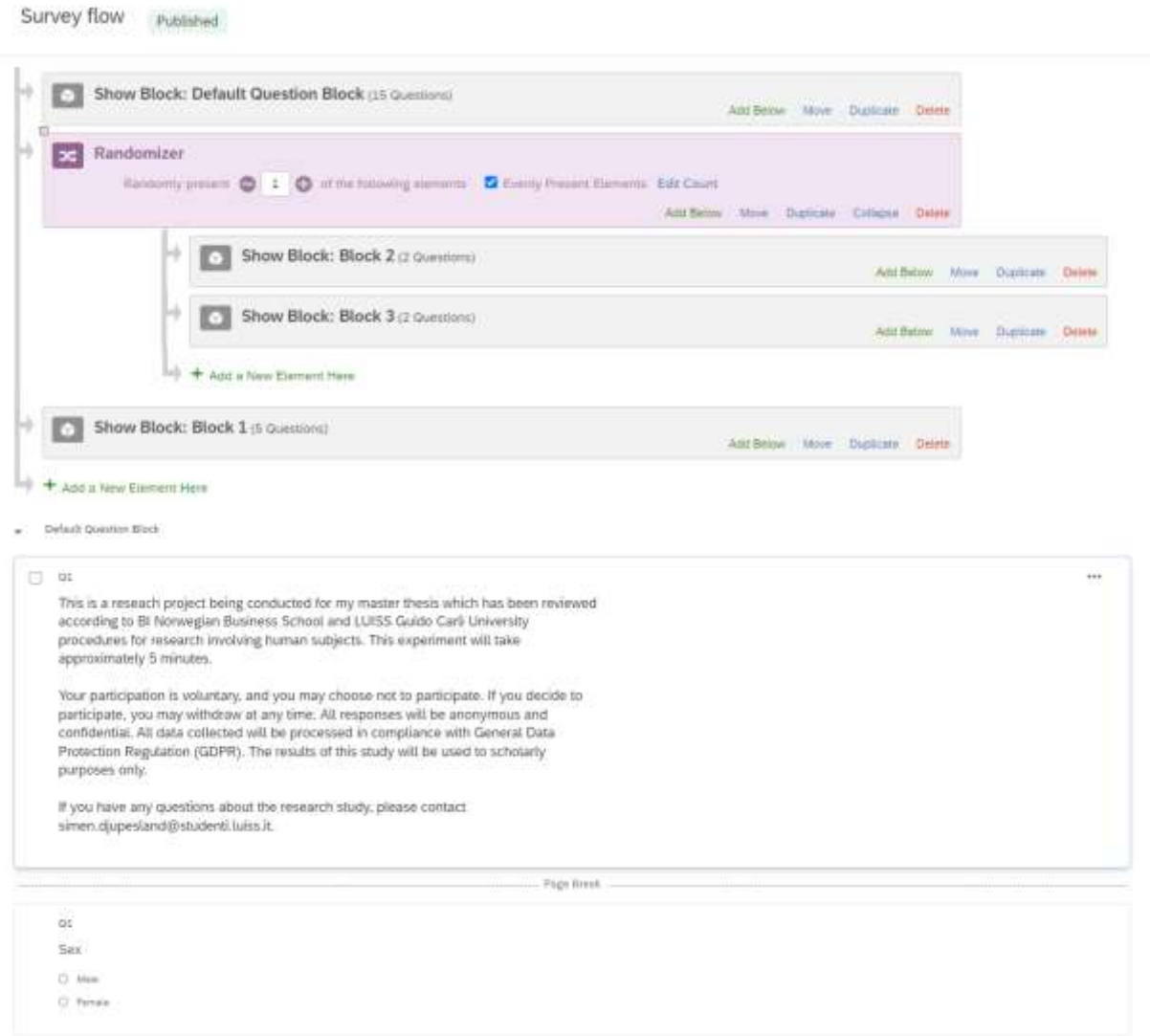
1 = Completely Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Completely Agree
○	○	○	○	○

Q11

H&M is a sustainable brand

1 = Completely Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Completely Agree
○	○	○	○	○

Appendix 9: Questionnaire/Experiment Qualtrics



Q2

Age

- 18-25 years
- 26-35 years
- 36-45 years
- 46-55 years
- 56-70 years
- 70 and above

Q3

Martial status

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Separated
- In a partnership

Q4

Current occupation?

- Employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Retired
- Disabled

Q5

Level of education

- Less than high school
- High school graduate
- Professional degree
- Bachelor`s degree
- Master`s Degree
- Doctorate

Page Break

Q6

How frequent do you purchase clothes?

- Daily
- Every week
- Once a month
- Twice a year
- Once a year
- Never

Q7

Have you ever bought clothes from the brands listed beneath?

	Yes	No
H&M	○	○
ZARA	○	○

Q8

How important is it that the clothes are made sustainable?

Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
○	○	○	○	○

Q9

How important is it that the brand you buy products from, are politically and ethically right?

Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
○	○	○	○	○

Q10

How sustainable would you evaluate H&M as?

Not sustainable at all	Slightly sustainable	Moderately sustainable	Very sustainable	Extremely sustainable
○	○	○	○	○

Q11

How sustainable would you evaluate ZARA as?

Not sustainable at all	Slightly sustainable	Moderately sustainable	Very sustainable	Extremely sustainable
○	○	○	○	○

Q12

How loyal would you say that you are to H&M?

Far below average	Somewhat below average	Average	Somewhat above average	Far above average
○	○	○	○	○

Q13

How loyal would you say that you are to ZARA?

Far below average	Somewhat below average	Average	Somewhat above average	Far above average
○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Q24

You will now be presented two pictures and some text from H&M and ZARA. Please read through carefully and take a look at the picture.

Q14

H&M have launched a new sustainable collection named "Conscious Choice". They are arguing that the Conscious Choice products are created with a little extra consideration for the planet. According to themselves, the collection is made of at least 50% sustainable materials, like organic cotton, recycled cotton or recycled polyester.

Q15

ZARA has launched a new sustainable collection named "Join Life". The collection is supposed to change ZARA´s supply chain and to reduce their impact on the planet. According to themselves, this collection is made of raw materials like cotton and linen, and are made by the use of 100% renewable electric energy.

Q16

H&M have launched a new sustainable collection named "Conscious Choice". They are arguing that the Conscious Choice products are created with a little extra consideration for the planet. According to themselves, the collection is made of at least 50% sustainable materials, like organic cotton, recycled cotton or recycled polyester.

However, Greenpeace have recently published evidence that H&M are polluting more than before. H&M is using marketing to be perceived as a sustainable brand, but their sustainable collections are actually not helping to reduce their impact on the planet. With up to 52 different "micro-collections" each year, H&M´s clothing production and carbon footprint is skyrocketing (Greenpeace, 2021).

Q17

ZARA has launched a new sustainable collection named "Join Life". The collection is supposed to change ZARA´s supply chain and to reduce their impact on the planet. According to themselves, this collection is made of raw materials like cotton and linen, and are made by the use of 100% renewable electric energy.

However, Greenpeace have recently published evidence that ZARA only makes a halfhearted attempt to reduce their impact on the planet with their change in the supply chain, and focus on extending product durability with more sustainable raw materials. Even though they are making more sustainable clothes with renewable energy, they are still expanding their production to higher levels - releasing more greenhouse gases and polluting more (Greenpeace, 2021).

Q18

How do you evaluate H&M after seeing the picture and reading the text?

Much worse	Somewhat worse	About the same	Somewhat better	Much better
○	○	○	○	○

Q19

How do you evaluate ZARA after seeing the picture and reading the text?

Much worse	Somewhat worse	About the same	Somewhat better	Much better
○	○	○	○	○

Q20

Do you trust H&M as brand?

Definitely not	Probably not	Might or might not	Probably yes	Definitely yes
○	○	○	○	○

Q21

Do you trust ZARA as a brand?

Definitely not	Probably not	Might or might not	Probably yes	Definitely yes
○	○	○	○	○

Q22

Based on the pictures and text presented, will you stop to buying clothes from H&M and ZARA?

Definitely not	Probably not	Might or might not	Probably yes	Definitely yes
○	○	○	○	○

Summary of thesis

Chapter 1: Introduction

Phenomenon, managerial relevance, and problems:

We all know about the global climate change the world is facing. You read about it in newspapers, talk about it with your friends, and see changes in the environment around you. In the UN`s latest report about climate change, they state that pollution caused by humans already has led to an increase in extreme events such as tropical cyclones, heatwaves, and heavy precipitation (Kaplan & Ramanna, 2021). Our lifestyle includes habits that are widely known to cause environmental harm. The habits range from using your car when it is possible to walk, flying overseas for meetings instead of using videocalls, using disposable items because it is more convenient, or buying clothes you do not need.

Consumers worldwide are buying more clothes, and they are fully aware of the impact the over-consumption of clothes has on the environment. The fashion industry alone is responsible for up to 8 percent of the global carbon emissions (UN Environmental Program, 2021), which is more than international flights and maritime shipping combined (McFall-Johnsen, 2019). The problem with the industry is that they are producing too many clothes too often. From 2000 to 2014, people bought 60% more clothes and only kept them for half as long (Remy et al., 2016). There are also estimates that one garbage truck full of garments ends up in the dump every second (UN Environmental Program, 2021). This is a phenomenon called “fast fashion,” and it refers to the speed with which clothing products are manufactured and put on the market for the consumers. Companies such as ZARA, Mango, H&M, and ASOS are the big players in this industry and are continuously making new clothing collections (Smith, 2022).

In European Parliamentary Research Service`s report from 2019, they provide us with evidence that the fashion companies went from an average offering of two collections per year in 2000 to five in 2011. However, fast fashion brands are offering even more collections. H&M offers between 12 and 16, while ZARA puts out twenty-four collections per year (EPRS, 2019). Nevertheless, the companies know that the world is changing and that consumers increasingly expect and demand that their products need to be sustainable (Granskog et al., 2020). As an answer to the demand of the consumers, fast fashion brands

have started to make eco-friendly and sustainable collections, to communicate that some of their clothes are made in a better way. The collections consist of more recyclable material, are produced with less toxic chemicals, and are polluting less (Greenpeace, 2021). The problem is that these collections are not environmentally friendly enough, since sustainable collections are still made multiple times a year and the production of clothing is still on the rise (Greenpeace, 2021).

Previous research and gaps:

Grappi et al.(2017) investigated how consumers evaluate brands after an NGO campaign at reducing toxic chemicals in the fashion industry. They found evidence that consumers' evaluations of brand blame play a role towards their attitude to brands and their purchase intentions, which makes it easier to understand what reactions customers get after being provided insightful information about an industry. However, they have only used surveys and have not been able to verify if the results hold well across other models of data collection. Their research consisted of four luxury brands, which does not necessarily mean that they will get the same results for brands within the fast fashion industry or with other variables such as brand trust and brand attitude. Therefore, further research should evaluate what effect brand trust and brand attitude may have on consumers` responses to an NGO campaign.

Henninger et al.(2016) are addressing the increased interest in sustainable and ethical fashion. They argue that sustainability is emerging as a "megatrend," which indicates that sustainable fashion is increasing in importance (Battaglia et al., 2014). Their findings show us that there is a gap between what manufacturers and consumers believe sustainability to be, and that sustainability potentially could lead to a competitive advantage that strengthens their brand image. However, this research is only looking at the slow fashion industry, which is the opposite of the fast fashion industry. It is also only looking at what competitive advantage the companies can obtain. Therefore, further research should investigate if the findings also can represent the fast fashion industry and if the brands can be affected by the gap between what manufacturers and what consumers believe sustainability to be.

Kim & Oh (2020) investigated consumer associations of fast fashion brands from a sustainability perspective. Fast fashion brands have the previous years had a higher effort towards sustainability, and this research is looking at how consumers increased interest in sustainability is affecting their associations with the brands. The research found evidence that the fast fashion brands` efforts of marketing their sustainability, have a significant influence

on consumers` associations with the brands. Therefore, they address that fast fashion brands are using this interest to launch sustainable clothing collections, by targeting the consumers that care about sustainability. However, this paper is looking at consumer`s brand associations with the fast fashion brands, and they are indicating that further research should investigate other aspects of sustainable fashion in the fast fashion industry, such as consumer perceptions of a specific sustainable activity.

Contribution:

Based on these considerations, this research will investigate the effect of perceiving information from a Greenpeace campaign on consumers` brand evaluation. The relevant campaign was Greenpeace (2021), which are telling us what effects the fast fashion brands have on the climate and that the industry needs regulations to become more sustainable. Therefore, this study will use information from the campaign to find out what effects it has on consumers` brand evaluations. By doing so, this research will investigate whether or not consumers` attitudes towards a brand will change and provide new insights into how a Greenpeace campaign can affect a brand`s sustainable effort. This research will also investigate what the brands are promoting and what they are causing of environmental problems. By investigating this, we can provide new insights about how the Greenpeace campaign possibly inflicts consumers` purchase intentions towards the brands. Moreover, both of these effects will be moderated by the mechanism of brand trust. We will investigate how a Greenpeace campaign will change the consumers brand trust toward a brand and find out what role it has in consumers` attitudes and intentions to purchase products from them.

From a business perspective, this study could offer suggestions for strategic directions for the companies within the fast fashion industry. By assessing the results of this research, company owners can change how they are promoting their brand, from being solely focused on sustainability over to becoming more neutral. This could potentially exclude the negative effects of this research and maintain the business`s brand image as positive but neutral. From a public perspective, this study will make more consumers conscious of the differences between what is promoted and what is reality. The study could also potentially reach political forces within countries and start the process of regulating the fast fashion industry. Hopefully, the more people that know about the fashion industry`s impact on the climate, the more action will be done to combat the worldwide problem of overconsumption.

Theoretical framework:

To find out how consumers evaluate fast fashion brands after being exposed to a Greenpeace campaign, we need to have a backbone on how to do it. Previous research on consumer-brand relationships (Aggarwal, 2004), investigated how the consumer-brand relationship influences the evaluations consumers make about the brand and its actions. The study made a conceptual model that proposed the role of relationship norms and its influence on consumer evaluations. In other words, this research is suggesting that when consumers form a particular relationship with a brand, the brand is addressed in the same manner as other members of the society - according to the norms of social behavior. That means that brands are evaluated as if they are members of a culture and need to conform to its norms. If the actions of the brand violate the norms of a relationship, the brand is evaluated negatively. On the other hand, if the actions conform to the norms, the brand is evaluated positively (Aggarwal, 2004).

Nevertheless, Aggarwal's model can be used to interpret the results obtained in our study. This study will look at the relationship between perceived Greenpeace information and consumers` attitude toward fast fashion brands. By manipulating a sustainable collection commercial toward consumers with the NGO campaign, there is a possibility that this will change the type of relationship there is between the consumer and the company. If there is a change in the type of relationship, there will also be a change in how the consumers evaluate the brand, from conformity to a violation. The reasoning behind this is that the consumers see that the type of norms and actions performed by the company are not matching their perception of what the company actually does.

Chapter II: Literature review

Sustainability in the fast fashion industry

The textile and apparel industry ranks among the world's most polluting sectors (Shen B, 2017), and the fashion industry has significantly evolved in the last decades (Djelic and Ainamo 1999). By increasing the number of fashion seasons, fading mass production, and modified structural characteristics that have forced retailers to desire low cost, flexibility in design, quality, delivery, and speed to market (Doyle, Moore, and Morgan, 2006). The development of the textile and apparel industry has resulted in a new industry called fast fashion. The phrase fast fashion is all about low-cost clothing collections that mimic current luxury fashion trends (Joy et al., 2012). However, it is more widely defined as an approach to

the design, creation, and marketing of clothing fashions that emphasizes making fashion trends quickly and cheaply available to consumers (Oxford Student, 2020).

Brand trust contribution to brand loyalty

In a challenging and complex world for marketers, there are several strategies that companies can use to create value for their brands. One of the most well-known strategies out there is the conceptual model of brand equity. The brand equity model consists of four main steps, where brand meaning is the second step of it. According to Keller (1993), brand meaning consists of identification and communication of what a brand means to its customers, and what it stands for (Keller, 1993).

Moreover, brand loyalty can be a direct effect of brand meaning, since it depends on how a customer perceives the brand. Kotler & Keller (2006) defined brand loyalty as the extent of consumer faithfulness towards a specific brand and this faithfulness is expressed through repeat purchases and other positive behaviors. Brand loyalty can also be seen as one of the ways in which the consumer expresses satisfaction with the performance of the product or service received (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). The effects of brand loyalty can be that the percentage of loyal customers goes up, and the market shares increase, which results in a more profitable brand. Therefore, the development and maintenance of consumers` brand loyalty is an important business marketing strategy and show us that brand loyalty is a great part of what meaning a brand can have to a consumer (Fournier and Yao, 1997).

Political consumption

Political and ethical consumption has received increased attention on all levels of society simultaneous with the increased attention for a more sustainable world (Jacobsen & Dulsrud, 2007). Consumption can be done in numerous ways, but in particular, the act of shopping has been made into a subject of moral judgment. As a result, the academic world has shifted focus from consumer rights to consumer duties (Sassatelli, 2006), where the consumers have gone from weak and manipulated to morally responsible for their actions (Harrison et al., 2005).

According to Jacobsen & Dulsrud (2007), the phenomenon of political consumption is a combination of multiple different terms such as ethical consumption, shopping, and behavior. It is defined as the actions by people who make choices among producers and products with the goal of changing objectionable institutional or market practices (Jacobsen & Dulsrud,

2007). What makes political consumption interesting is that it occurs in different forms, such as boycotts and buycotts. People boycott and buycott companies and brands by withholding or utilizing their purchasing power and are often identified with an individual action form that could jeopardize political movements (Balsiger, 2014). There are several examples in the last decades, where consumers have boycotted products that have been produced in an unsustainable way, to make the companies change the way they produce products.

Chapter III: Hypothesis

Throughout the research so far, this study has explored previous research and shed light on theory on the topic. The basis of the two hypotheses presented below is to better understand how consumers` reactions to the Greenpeace campaign will affect how they evaluate the brands involved. By using previous research of brand trust on brand loyalty and political consumption combined with the research gaps discusses earlier, this research has predicted two hypotheses:

H1: Consumers that receive Greenpeace information about the sustainable collections, will negatively affect the overall attitude towards the fast fashion brands via the mediating role of brand trust. That is: the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers` brand trust, and accordingly, the greater the negative effect on attitudes towards the two fast fashion brands.

H2: Consumers that receive Greenpeace information about the sustainable collections, will negatively affect their intentions to purchase products(boycott) from the two brands, via the mediating role of brand trust. That is: the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers` brand trust, and accordingly, the greater negative effect on the consumers` intentions to purchase products from the two brands.

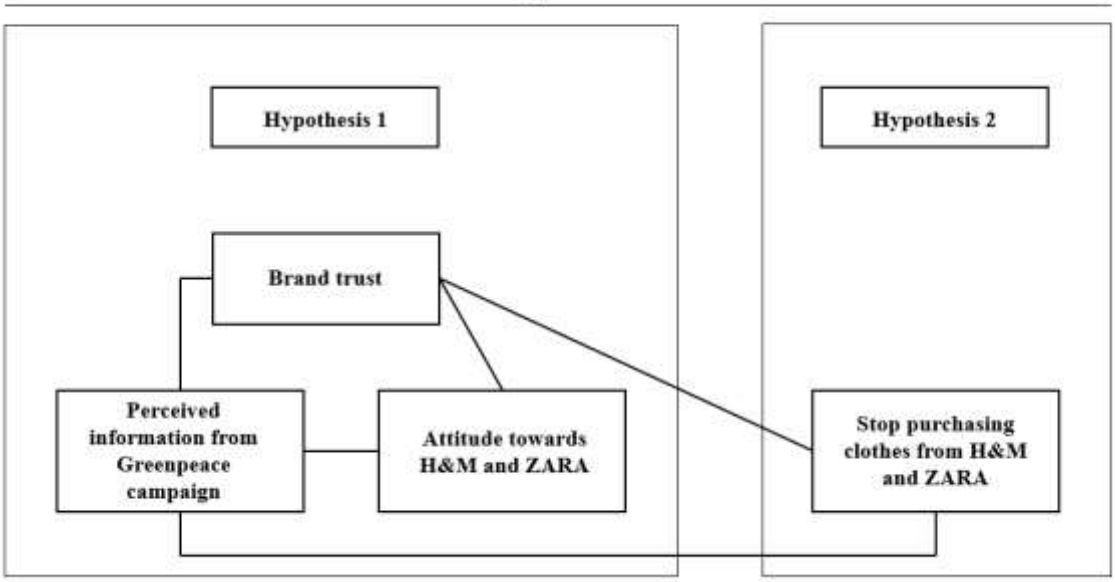
These two hypotheses together form the Conceptual framework model and is evaluated through the analysis in this study.

Conceptual framework

In Figure 1, you will see the two hypotheses form the conceptual model that is assessed in the main study. Here the independent variable is *"Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign,"* and it consists of the two groups (experimental group and control group) of respondents from the main study. The first dependent variable is *"Attitude towards H&M and ZARA,"* and the variable consists of both groups` attitudes towards the two fast fashion

brands. The second dependent variable is *"Stop purchasing clothes from H&M and ZARA,"* and the variable consists of both groups` intentions to stop purchasing clothes from the two fast fashion brands. The mediator variable is *"Brand trust"* and is used to analyze the mediating role of brand trust on the relationship between the independent variable and attitude towards H&M and ZARA (H1). The mediating role of brand trust is also assessed when looking at the relationship between the independent variable and stop purchasing clothes from H&M and ZARA (H2).

Figure 1
Conceptual model



Chapter IV: Method

Data Description

This research initially conducted an exploratory and quantitative data collection through a pretest, survey, and experiment. The data collection is done to be able to find out whether or not respondents' evaluations of two fast fashion brands are changing when revealing information from a Greenpeace campaign. The Greenpeace campaign exposes how manufacturers of clothes, such as H&M and ZARA, are polluting more than they did prior to the world`s focus on a sustainable world.

The target population of this research would ideally be all fast fashion consumers, but in order to be realistic, this research aims to describe Norwegian fast fashion consumers with a convenience sample. This from of sampling is a so-called non-probability technique, which has limited external validity. However, this research will conduct a pretest, which will

increase the internal validity of this study. To be able to indicate whether the research was doable, and that the quality of the experiment was good, a pretest with 42 Norwegian respondents was conducted. The pretest is using many of the same aspects as the main study but is constructed more simply. In the main study, the respondents of the questionnaire and experiment are consisting of 153 Norwegian fast fashion consumers.

Explanation of Planned Hypothesis Testing

Before the hypothesis testing, a pretest was conducted in order to increase the internal validity of the study. In the pretest, there are important aspects to investigate, so the main study will consist of higher quality. The pretest looked after mistakes in the questionnaire, whether or not the questions were understandable, and if the respondents understood the experiment. Moreover, it is important to consider the reliability and validity of the main study, so a reliability analysis and a factor analysis are being conducted. The reliability analysis allows you to study the measurement scales and the quality of the research. While a factor analysis determines what correlations there are between the variable`s and interpret and explains the correlations based on the variables common underlying factors and components. This analysis can be used to find out if we can rely on the results, and whether it is high or low factor loadings that indicate how reliable the experiment is.

Two independent sample t-tests were carried out to check out if the manipulation of the independent variable “Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign” have any relationship to the dependent variables in H1 and H2. The independent sample t-test compares the mean of the experimental group to the mean of the control group. If there is a relationship between X and Y1 in our hypotheses, we can continue to use Hayes Process Mediation analysis. The analysis investigates the effect of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable via a third variable called a mediator variable (Hayes & Scharkow, 2013).

Chapter V: Results

Manipulation checks

In the first independent sample t-test, the comparison is between the experimental group and control group on the mean score of “attitude towards the brands”. The regression showed us that the 78 participants who received the Greenpeace information (M = 2,0128, SD = 0,86405) compared to the 75 participants in the control group (M = 3,7333, SD = 0,8595)

demonstrated significantly negative "Attitude towards the brands" scores (t(151) = 12,344; *p* = <0,001). The experimental group had a mean score of "Somewhat worse", while the control group had a mean score of between "About the same" and "Somewhat better". Therefore, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups when it comes to how their attitude toward the brand is (Appendix 4).

In the second independent sample t-test, the comparison is between the experimental group and control group on the mean score of "stop buying clothes from H&M and ZARA". The regression showed us that the 78 participants who received the Greenpeace information (M = 3,06, SD = 1,177), compared to the 75 participants in the control group (M = 2,05, SD = 0,957) demonstrated a significantly negative "Stop buying clothes from H&M and ZARA" scores (t(151) = 5,815, *p* = <0,001). The experimental group had a mean score of "probably not", while the control group had a mean score of "might or might not". Therefore, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups when it comes to the mean score of "Stop buying clothes from H&M and ZARA (Appendix 5).

Testing H1

The analysis assessed the mediating role of M (Brand Trust) on the relationship between X (Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign) and Y (Attitude towards the brands). The results revealed a significant indirect effect of impact of X on Y (*b* = 0,8963, t = 7,0574), with a . Furthermore, the direct effect of X on Y in presence of the mediator was also found significant (*b* = 0,8243, *p* = 0,000). The total effect was (*b* = 1,7205, *p* = 0,000), with an increase in performance of 50,23% (*R2* = 0,5023) . Hence, M partially mediated the relationship between X and Y. Mediation analysis summary is presented in Table 2 and Appendix 6.

Testing H2

We proved that there is also a relationship in H2, so we conduct the same mediation analysis for this hypothesis. The analysis assessed the mediating role of M (Brand Trust) on the relationship between X (Perceived information from Greenpeace campaign) and Y (Stop Purchasing clothes from H&M and ZARA). The results revealed a significant indirect effect of impact of X on Y (*b* = -1,0184, *t* = -6,7399). Furthermore, the direct effect of X on Y in presence of the mediator was not found significant (*b* = 0,0076, *p* = 0,9646). The total effect was (*b* = -1,0108, *p* = 0,000), with an increase in performance of 18,29% (*R2* = 0,1829).

Since the indirect effect is negative and significant, we have a competitive effect which tells us that the worse “brand trust” is, the higher possibility of “stop buying clothes”. Hence, the direct effect is insignificant, meaning that M fully mediated the relationship between X and Y. Mediation analysis summary is presented in Table 3 and Appendix 7.

Chapter VI: Discussion

Contributions

This study investigates and demonstrates the role of the Greenpeace campaign and how it changes the consumers’ evaluation of the fast fashion brands, such as the attitude towards the brands. It has also looked at how the Greenpeace campaign affects the consumers` intuition to purchase products from the two brands. Specifically, this study develops a conceptual framework of consumers perceiving information from Greenpeace campaign and looks at what relationship it has to attitude towards the brand, and intuition to purchase clothes from the two brands. The mediator of brand trust helps us to see if the Greenpeace campaign negatively affects brand trust, and if a negatively affected brand trust affects the consumers` attitude or intuition of purchasing products.

The results show that if the consumers have perceived information regarding how the two fast fashion brands are operating, we see that it harms how they evaluate their attitude towards the brands. Moreover, the results also show that brand trust either partly or fully moderates the negative effect of being exposed to the Greenpeace information, whereas it is more likely that the consumers get a lower attitude towards the brands and increases the possibility of the consumers to stop purchasing clothes from the two brands.

Furthermore, the results of this study can relate to Aggarwal (2004) consumer-brand relationship study, where which type of relationship between the consumer and brand, will determine which evaluations consumers make about the brand. By assessing the results from this study, and comparing it to Aggarwal`s conceptual model, we can see connections between how the attitudes and intentions to purchase clothes are affected by whether or not the consumers perceive Greenpeace information. The participants from this study might have felt that the Greenpeace information was making the actions of the two fast fashion brands violate norms of social behavior and that they felt undermined. Since the actions of the

brands are in violation with the norms of a relationship, the consumers have evaluated the brand more negatively.

Managerial Implications

The findings in this research provide several managerial implications. Firstly, consumers will be slightly more conscious around the phenomenon of sustainable collections within the two brands in the fast fashion industry. From the results of this research, one of the major actions that can damage or hurt H&M and ZARA, is that their consumers` attitude towards them falls, with the negative effects that follow from a worse reputation. Another major action is the fact that the results in this research initiate that some of the consumers will stop purchasing clothes from the two brands, based on their actions.

Greenpeace will still investigate and publish new campaigns against the fashion industry, to show the world how the companies really operate. But are these campaigns enough? Previous Greenpeace campaigns, such as the Greenpeace Detox campaign, managed to mobilize thousands of people around the world, and made several companies across the industry to eliminate hazardous chemicals in their production (Grappi et al., 2017). Our findings in this research confirm that companies need to do some strategic decisions based on the results presented, to be able to minimize the negative effects of the Greenpeace campaign on their brand attitude, brand trust, and intentions to purchase clothes. One of the strategic decisions is to change their marketing direction, by actually telling the truth about what they produce and sell. Another direction will be to become more sustainable and make the necessary steps to become a sustainable industry.

In general, the findings also imply that a sustainable world is not only the fast fashion industry’s fault. Based on the experimental results, we see that several of the consumers still are reluctant to stop purchasing products even though they know the backside of the coin. The results found in this research must be used in a wider collaboration between countries, companies, suppliers, and retailers, to be able to change the environmental impact of the fashion industry. Finally, Greenpeace and other NGO`s can also have an interest in the findings. The results show us that the campaign has a significant effect on consumers, and the NGO`s can use this as an opportunity to direct their efforts toward more people.

Limitations and further research

Before any conclusions are made, it is important to consider the limitations of the research and what opportunities there are for further research. Firstly, the use of a questionnaire and experiment allows for a partial assessment of consumers` reactions and beliefs about a specific research issue. However, future research could verify or extend the results from this research, by assessing other data collection methods. An example could be in-depth interviews, which can help capture more precise data on how the consumers react to NGO campaigns. Secondly, this study used and analyzed the results of one specific Greenpeace campaign and considered the reactions towards two fast fashion brands. Future studies could investigate if the results in this research to examine if the effect would have the same results in other empirical contexts.

Thirdly, the results in this research do not examine other communication tools than the experiment with two sustainable collections and the Greenpeace information. The effect of the consumers` reactions could be positively or negatively different if it were communicated by for example an influencer, through an article in a newspaper, or by the news. Future studies could identify which communication tool that is the most effective, in order to create a more specific strategy for the NGO`s campaigns. This will help them to maximize their promotion of the campaign and could help to change people's sustainable behavior. Finally, the variables chosen in this study do not cover all aspects of consumers` brand evaluations. Moreover, future research should also include or expand what variables they analyze. The reason behind this is that other variables could better examine the greater depth around the role the potential variables play on consumer responses to NGO campaigns.

Conclusion

The main objective of the study has been to investigate and further understand the relationship between consumers, NGO`s and the fast fashion industry. Does the Greenpeace campaign, aimed at "telling the truth of the fast fashion industry," affect customers` evaluations and attitudes toward the fast fashion brands? By examining the phenomenon with an experiment, the results from the research can conclude that there is an effect of the Greenpeace information on the consumers` overall attitude towards the fashion brands via the mediating role of brand trust. Yes, there is statistically significant evidence that the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers`

brand trust, and accordingly, the greater the negative effect on attitudes towards the two fast fashion brands.

Moreover, the results also tell us that there is an effect of the Greenpeace information, via the mediating role of brand trust, on consumers` intentions to purchase products. Yes, there is statistically significant evidence that the stronger effect of the Greenpeace information, the greater negative effect it has on the consumers` brand trust, and accordingly, the greater negative effect on the consumers` intentions to purchase products from the two brands.