Exploring the Motivations and Attitudes of Swedish Students Toward Decreasing Consumption of Fast Fashion

A study of Anti-Consumption Strategies
Bachelor Thesis

Title: Exploring the Motivations and Attitudes of Swedish Students Toward Decreasing Consumption of Fast Fashion

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Abstract

**Background:** The modern-day consumerism is detrimental to our planet. The consumption of fashion apparel alone has devastating consequences for the environment. Resources are depleted faster than they can be renewed or replaced. Thus, a change in consumption patterns is necessary.

**Purpose:** Explore the attitudes and motivations of Swedish students toward decreasing consumption of fast fashion through anti-consumption strategies.

**Method:** This study was conducted using focus groups since it has been found to be a highly valid qualitative research tool. It has an ability to provide in depth insights in an efficient and timely manner. This research is interpretivist in nature, aiming at understanding participants’ experiences and thereby explain the topic from their perspective.

**Conclusion:** Swedish students were found to have a negative attitude toward fast fashion due to perceived poor quality, the industry’s negative impact on the environment, as well as the commonly poor labour conditions. A willingness to reduce fast fashion consumption was expressed. The main motivations for limiting fast fashion consumption identified were to save the environment, saving the planet. Participants agreed amongst themselves that a greater awareness of the industry’s detrimental consequences were imperative in motivating people to minimize their fast fashion consumption.
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Table of Contents

1 Introduction........................................................................................................................................... 1

1.1 Background......................................................................................................................................... 1

1.2 Problem Statement.............................................................................................................................. 1

1.3 Purpose ............................................................................................................................................... 2

1.4 Delimitation ....................................................................................................................................... 2

1.5 Key Terms......................................................................................................................................... Error! Bookmark not defined.

2 Literature Review .................................................................................................................................. 4

2.1 Consumer Behaviour......................................................................................................................... 4

2.2 Attitudes .......................................................................................................................................... 5

2.3 Motivation ......................................................................................................................................... 6

2.4 Consumption ..................................................................................................................................... 7

2.5 Anti-Consumption ............................................................................................................................... 8

2.5.1 Reject............................................................................................................................................ 9

2.5.1.1 Ethical reasons ......................................................................................................................... 9

2.5.1.2 Symbolic reasons .................................................................................................................... 10

2.5.2 Restrict ......................................................................................................................................... 10

2.5.2.1 Voluntary simplification .......................................................................................................... 11

2.5.3 Reclaim ......................................................................................................................................... 13

2.6 Fast fashion ...................................................................................................................................... 14

2.7 Generation y ..................................................................................................................................... 15

2.8 Framework for studying fast fashion consumption ........................................................................... 16

3 Methodology ........................................................................................................................................ 19

3.1 Research Philosophy.......................................................................................................................... 19

3.2 Research Approach ............................................................................................................................ 19

3.3 Research strategy ............................................................................................................................... 20

3.4 Method for Data Collection ............................................................................................................... 21

3.4.1 Focus groups ................................................................................................................................. 21

3.5 Transcription style............................................................................................................................. 22

3.6 Sampling Method ............................................................................................................................... 23
1 INTRODUCTION

This section will introduce the background and the importance of the topic presented. It will also cover the problem formulation, purpose of the thesis, delimitations and key terms.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The western culture’s consumption pattern is contributing to our planets demise where the overall fashion apparel consumerism alone tends to have devastating consequences for our planet. This leads to the depletion of all types of resources, both renewable and non-renewable (Axelsson, 2012; Ruppert-Stroescu, LeHew, Hiller Connell & Armstrong, 2015). Fast fashion has created a new standard of consumption to only possess clothes for a short period of time, after which it encourages additional consumption of new trendy garments (Ekström, Gustafsson, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2012). This also promotes a “throwaway” mentality where it is costlier to repair something rather than replacing it with a new product (Cooper, 2013; Watson, 2008). Indeed, the fashion industry contributes to an insurmountable amount of waste, where in Sweden only, the average consumer discard approximately 8 kilos clothing and other textiles annually (Ruppert-Stroescu et al., 2015; Ekström, Gustafsson, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2015).

Generation Y are more interested in clothing than previous generations, e.g. the Baby boomers. Whereas Baby boomers are more interested in the quality of clothes, Generation Y care more about claiming the best deal when making a decision on what to buy (Parment, 2013). This is evident as Swedish students spend on average 13 percent of their earnings every month on shopping (Englund, 2014). Perhaps the reason for this is due to that individuals obtain meaning, contentment and acceptance through consumption to the extent that even our traditions are based around consumption. This can be seen through, for example, rites of passage which require an unnecessary level of consumption, yet it is seen as taboo or abnormal if one deviates from this pattern (Assadourian, 2010).

This is a problem since the current consumption pattern is unreliable in the long-run, diminishing resources faster than they can be replaced or renewed.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Due to unsustainable consumption patterns and mass consumption, a movement called anti-consumption has emerged with the purpose of diminishing this unstable consumption pattern.
Anti-consumption strives towards the end goal of minimizing the level of consumption, and it refers to individuals intentionally and meaningfully rejecting certain goods or services from their consumption cycle through either rejection (avoid consumption entirely), restriction (cutting, lowering or limiting consumption), or reclaiming (production rather than consumption) (Lee, Roux, Cherrier & Cova, 2011). The aspect of reclaiming could also be argued to be a way to reuse goods by transforming goods at the end of their service life into resources, which minimizes waste through using what you can, recycle what is broken, and remanufacture what cannot be repaired (Stahel, 2016).

Furthermore, since students, and more specifically generation Y, is seen as the generation responsible for the path of our future it is vital for this particular group of consumers to not further engage in the unstable behaviour of mass consumption. Thus, in order to see if anti-consumption could be our saviour from the unsustainable consumption one would need to explore the attitudes of generation Y toward anti-consumption and what possible motivations there is for engaging this movement.

1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the attitudes and motivations of Swedish students toward decreasing consumption of fast fashion through anti-consumption strategies.

1.4 DELIMITATION

The study for this thesis was limited due to various reasons which were identified and discussed early in the research process. Firstly, this research only focuses on students in Sweden, however, the participants were not all representing the same university or program. Furthermore, generation Y was chosen as the target to enable a deeper understanding of the future consumers’ motivations and attitudes, as well as potential future implications. Other generations were considered but were not included in the research as they did not fit the purpose of this study. Time constraints had a great impact on the delimitations of this study as only approximately four months were distributed to the research. However, the delimitations did not hinder the authors in their aim to find the relevant facts or to make any conclusions of those facts for the purpose of this study.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

Fast fashion – “Inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends.” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018b)
Attitudes – “A settled way of thinking or feeling about something.” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018a)
Motivation – “A reason or reasons for acting or behaving in a particular way.” “Desire or willingness to do something; enthusiasm.” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018c)
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the theoretical background to the topic which will serve as a foundation for the empirical study described later on. For the convenience of the reader, Appendix A illustrates the relationship between concepts mentioned in this section.

2.1 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour has, over the past 50 years, been a primary point of research for researchers within the social sciences field and has been the major topic for many studies (Peighambari, Sattari, Kordestani & Oghazi, 2016). During these 50 years an explosion of knowledge and academic research has been witnessed within the field and subjects such as consumer choice, consumption meanings, attitude and satisfaction judgment, consumer brand relationships et cetera has been investigated (MacInnis & Folkes, 2010). Regardless of how well cited this topic is, one should not disregard the complexity of this subject (Peighambari et al., 2016). Since consumer behaviour is affected by changes in our society such as economic changes and technological development, the subject becomes diverse and complex (Peighambari et al., 2016).

Consumer behaviour has been identified as “the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires” (Solomon, 2013, p.7). This process, however, needs understanding to enable good communication, such as the choice of marketing, throughout the process, which is where the importance of consumer behaviour study appears (Solomon, 2013). Due to consumer behaviour being such a broad and complex topic, there are some issues that have been raised over the years, one such issue being that consumer behaviour is difficult to define (MacInnis & Folkes, 2010).

Another aspect which may be contributing to making the field of consumer behaviour vague is the ease with which it blends into other fields of research, such as psychology, sociology, political science, economics, history and neurology (MacInnis & Folkes, 2010). Because of the subject’s ambiguity, there are some that claim that consumer behaviour is a subfield of marketing and not a separate field of study (MacInnis & Folkes, 2010). However, consumer behaviour is heavily linked to advertising and marketing, and as such it could be, and is seen by many as a separate field of research.

Moreover, this field concerns the two main reasons why people consume products, brands and services, which is mainly due to a functional value or a symbolic meaning associated with it.
Thus, consumers do not only buy to gain access to the function of the product but also for the meaning of that particular product. For example, one could argue that people buy luxury products as an attempt to reinforce their societal status. Therefore, one could claim that consumer behaviour is influenced and symbolized by personal attributes, motivations and social patterns. More specifically, this particular phenomenon within consumer behaviour can be linked to the personality and lifestyle of a consumer, communicating social distinctions. As a result, one could argue that consumer behaviour could be linked with self-expression (Hosany & Martin, 2012).

### 2.2 Attitudes

An attitude is “a lasting, general evaluation” of things, such as oneself, other people, objects etcetera. (Solomon, 2013, p.249). An attitude of an object will encapsulate beliefs, positive or negative feelings and behavioural information (Olson & Kendrick, 2008). Consumers might share an attitude or feel the very opposite about something, and consequently their behaviour will unfold in various ways. Furthermore, attitudes can be argued to exists with the purpose of serving an important function for a person and will be likely to affect one’s consumption pattern and overall consumer behaviour (Solomon, 2013). Kim & Lynn Damhorst (1997) defined an attitude as something which contributes to the perception and judgement of stimuli. The authors also found that if one’s level of knowledge increases, the commitment to that certain field can allegedly also have an upturn. For instance, when investigating the attitude towards environmental ads, the attitude got a reinforced positivity after the people were briefed about the subject (Kim & Lynn Damhorst, 1997).

Going into depth about attitudes and its complexity, it is based on three main components which forms into the well-known “ABC Model of attitudes”, also referred to as the “Tricomponent model”. Many authors discuss about this model and Solomon (2013) outlines the components as Affect, Behaviour and Cognition. Affect outlines a consumer’s feelings and potentially one’s values which in turn will contribute to the transformation of an attitude. Behaviour refers to the action stage, where personal behavioural tendencies becomes important and intentions are studied. Cognition represents the belief, i.e. the perceived value, of the object which the attitude will be formed towards. This insight on attitude knowledge should help the understanding and study of the subject (Chih, Liou & Hsu, 2015).

Wang, Dou & Zhou (2008) investigated consumers’ attitudes and how they adapt themselves to new products. The understanding of consumer behaviour and more specifically, their attitudes, becomes of high importance to companies if they want to successfully position their new products and have suitable communication strategies. Personal characteristics tend to steer one’s attitudes and final behaviour, for instance demographics and social-psychographics are characteristics that
can show an effect. Furthermore, regarding demographics, the study also found that consumers’ income and age had a predominant effect on the attitudes. Moreover, Wang et al. (2008) discuss how the consumers who were younger and more affluent did not get as influenced by their consumption attitudes as the remaining customers. Instead of being influenced by their preferences, they were driven within other circumstances like their financial state or something else not identifiable (Wang et al., 2008). Dahlstrand & Biel (1997) explains how the concept of habits can be related to attitudes and is characterized by peoples’ everyday behaviour. By creating habits, people tend to reduce their receptivity toward information aimed at changing attitudes. Though, if put into a new context, people might find their current habits unattainable which will force them to evaluate and finally adapt their values and attitudes. This will accordingly have an impact on the behaviour. Behaviour can also be influenced by other casual variables which will be engaged differently depending on the person. After examining certain studies of the ABC Model of attitudes, Stern suggests a provocative hypothesis namely that “the more important a behaviour is in terms of its environmental impact, the less it depends on attitudinal variables, including environmental concern” (Stern, 2000, p.416).

2.3 Motivation

Solomon (2013) argues that motivation can be processes which lead people, and consumers, to behave the way they do. This happens mainly when a need has appeared which the person wishes to satisfy. To do so, motivation arises and creates a drive to eliminate the need or even reach a certain goal. How strong the motivation is will vary depending on the degree to which a person will use their time, energy and will, et cetera, to reach the wanted result, i.e. motivational strength will create an instinct to fill the need as soon as possible.

When it comes to avoidance, one’s motivation can be discussed further. It can be argued that avoidance motivation does mostly appear in relation to hedonic consumption where a hedonic need can be defined as something which” designates those facets of consumer behaviour that relate to the multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of one’s experience with products” (Arnold & Reynolds, 2012; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982, p.92). Arnold & Reynolds (2012) found that avoidance motivation and this type of consumer behaviour would most likely appear and act in resistance to e.g. spending more money or buying unnecessary products, which usually are hedonic.

As consumption comes with certain motivations, one could therefore argue that avoidance motivation is strongly connected to e.g. anti-consumerism as there is a specific motivation to avoid the overall process of making a purchase. Furthermore, considering anti-consumption, which will be explained further later on in this section, there are different motivators for participating in anti-
consumption. Iyer and Muncy (2009) has developed a matrix describing different types of anti-consumption whereas one part of the matrix describes what motivators that impacts anti-consumption. This part of the matrix therefore represents the consumers who are motivated by societal issues versus the consumers who are motivated by personal issues. Societal issues concern issues such as social responsibility and environmental issues whereas the personal issues concern issues such as life-simplification (Iyer and Muncy, 2009).

2.4 CONSUMPTION

There is an increasingly common pattern across culture to obtain meaning, acceptance, and contentment mainly through what we consume. Though consumption is natural for humans as one must consume things in order to survive, the level of consumption is driven almost completely by cultural norms. The way of viewing reality, the consumerism paradigm, has spread across cultures, manifesting itself differently in different cultures, yet leading to a similar overall consumption which undermines human and ecological well-being. This can be seen through cultural norms, such as diet, which reflect a consumerist influence, e.g. foods which have a large role in driving the obesity epidemic worldwide are advertised as the tastiest and most satisfying have become normalized over time. Similarly, traditions are increasingly centred on consumerism, e.g. rites of passage like weddings and funerals are celebrated in ways which consume significant resources and perceived as abnormal or taboo if they do not (Assadourian, 2010).

Western consumption patterns are unsustainable and would require 3.25 Earths to sustain the lifestyle found in Sweden in 2012 if all of Earth’s inhabitants were to adopt it (Axelsson, 2012). Repairing products is often more expensive than buying a new product (Watson, 2008) and the throwaway mentality has become part of the Western society (Cooper, 2013). It can be argued that consumption is the reason as to why anything is produced and that consequently much responsibility for the environmental degradation as a result of production lies with the consumer (Heiskanen & Pantazar, 1997; Hoque, 2013). It is both a primary means of self-definition and an important leisure pass time activity (Varey, 2010).

Consumption has been defined by Zukin and Maguire (2004) as a social, cultural and economic process of choosing goods. One could argue that consumption and its process becomes a main act and field to study within consumer behaviour. Solomon (2013) further evaluates the various stages in the so-called consumption process, which starts with a consumer’s way of deciding that there is a need to buy a certain product. This is referred to as the pre-purchase issues which also includes finding the best sources of information about the possible purchase. Moving on to the purchase issues, Solomon (2013) argues that this is the stage where the consumer creates feelings
toward the whole experience, e.g. was it stressful or pleasant? Lastly is the stage of post-purchase issues where the consumer tends to evaluate the performance of the product and eventually the possible effect of the disposal while having environmental consequences in mind (Solomon, 2013).

The global consumption of goods has generally increased during the last decades which has led to a new phenomenon called mass consumption (de Castro, 2016). As production once became rationalized, the manufacturing of consumer goods revealed a drastic growth of productivity which in turn lead to for instance bulk packaging to reduce costs. Hence, the additional output of consumer goods had to be sold to avoid waste which caused an increment of the overall consumption (de Castro, 2016). Matsuyama (2002) argues that mass consumption was accelerated from that virtuous cycle of productivity and that this has formed certain societies. Mass consumption societies can be defined as one where “the majority of families enjoy the benefits of increased productivity and constantly expand their range of consumer goods” (Matsuyama, 2002, p. 1035).

2.5 Anti-Consumption

Consumer resistance were conceptualized in 1992 by Mark Poster, which has later been discussed and studied by many. Penaloza and Price (1993), discusses this topic further and explains it using four dimensions. The dimensions are represented by an axis ranging from individual action to collective action, another axis is representing goals and ranges from reformist to radical. The third dimension consists of resistance and different tactics of such and ranges from tactics that covers the marketing mix to actions regarding the meaning of products. The fourth and final dimension presented by Penaloza and Price (1993) covers the position of consumer’s relationship in relation to agents and marketing institutions.

However, anti-consumption is different from consumer resistance. Consumer resistance focuses on consumers opposing the products, practices and partnerships associated with a structure of dominance, while anti-consumption focuses on the reasons against consumption as expressed through rejecting, restricting, and reclaiming. Simply put, consumer resistance is concerned with power issues, and anti-consumption is concerned with consumption issues. However, in some cases, consumer resistance is expressed by acts of anti-consumption directed against a domineering corporation, leading to boycott behaviour of its products. It could also be expressed through certain consumption choices, for instance, opposing the dominant retail channel through the formation of consumer co-opts that fulfil consumption needs. Similarly, acts of anti-consumption do not necessarily need to involve resistance against a dominant force (Lee et al., 2011).
Individuals may intentionally and meaningfully exclude certain goods and services from their consumption cycle in processes of rejection, e.g. a consumer rejecting a brand due to functional, symbolic or ethical reasons. The restrict phenomenon refers to the process of cutting, lowering, or limiting consumption when total reject is not possible, such as restricting electricity or water use. The process of avoiding consumption entirely can be referred to as rejection. Furthermore, the reclaim phenomenon represents an ideological shift regarding the processes of acquisition, use and dispossession, such as reclaiming their identity through production rather than consumption (Lee et al., 2011).

2.5.1 Reject

The anti-consumption phenomenon of rejection is, as previously mentioned, an act of excluding particular goods from the consumer’s consumption pattern for functional, symbolic or ethical reasons (Lee et. al, 2011). Thus, the phenomena of rejection cover all goods that a consumer chooses to not consume due to one of the three reasons, one could argue that this phenomenon is heavily linked to brand avoidance. Brand avoidance can be identified as the act of when a consumer decides to avoid certain brands due to that the brand might not meet the consumer’s functional, symbolic or ethical values (Lee, Motion & Conroy, 2009). A consumer who does purchase a brand due to a commitment with the particular brand are considered as an individual with brand loyalty whereas an individual that reject a specific brand due to e.g. negative experience of the brand are referred to as anti-loyal consumers (Iyer & Muncy, 2009). The rejection of a product is often made with consideration to the consumers’ peers, that if other consumers rejects a product for e.g. ethical reasons, then it is more likely for other consumers to do the same.

2.5.1.1 Ethical reasons

Ethical reasons for rejecting a specific brand, product or service, are related to the act of moral avoidance. The act of moral avoidance can be defined as the rejection of a product or brand that collides with the consumer’s values and therefore, the consumer does not want any relationship with that particular brand or product (Lee, 2007). According to Lee (2007), the act of rejection through moral avoidance can be seen as a search to declare one’s ethical virtue and it is based on the individual’s view that the brand or product harms individuals, groups or the society in some matter.

However, the reasons and drivers for a consumer to be involved in rejection through moral avoidance are several. One reason could be to consistent reject the brand due that the brand does not behave in a rightful way, another reason is that the product might be rejected due to that it is
not consistent in behaviour and lastly that the least harmful brand always will be the number one choice in all situations (Rindell, Strandvik & Wilen, 2014). Furthermore, it is important to know the difference between ethical consumption and moral avoidance as a form of anti-consumption. Ethical consumption is the act of purchasing something as a reward for the company due to that the company performs in an ethical matter. On the other hand, rejection through moral avoidance as a form of anti-consumption is an act of punishment toward a company that performs in an unethical matter and is seen more often than the act of ethical behaviour (Sudbury-Riley & Kohlbacher, 2018).

2.5.1.2 Symbolic reasons

One of the reasons why people engage in rejection of certain brands is due to symbolic reasons, this aspect of rejection is linked to the consumers personal identity. More specifically, the act of rejection due to symbolic reasons can be defined as the brand’s incapability to satisfy the consumer’s symbolic identity desires (Lee et al. 2009). In relation to identity there are three components that create the stage of identification; the cognitive component, the evaluative component and the emotional component. The cognitive component refers to the feeling of awareness of membership, the evaluative component includes the logic that the awareness is related to a valuable meaning and the emotional component refers to the affective investment in an evaluation (Lam, Ahearne & Schillewaert, 2011). Furthermore, the incapability to satisfy one’s symbolic identity could lead to that the one reaches a state of an undesired self, finds oneself in an undesired group of reference or loses one’s identity completely (Lee, 2007). Moreover, Hogg (1998) investigates symbolic consumption and the phenomena of anti-constellations which represent a consumer’s negative choices. A consumer’s negative choices could either be a non-choice or an anti-choice. A non-choice is influenced by availability, accessibility and affordability whereas an anti-choice is influenced by abandonment, avoidance and aversion (Hogg, 1998). It was found in the study by Hogg (1998) that negative choices included different product categories. The product that the participants of the study affected was clothing/footwear, cars, food, fast food and public transport. Moreover, it was found that attributes were a main factor to why an anti-choice was made and thereby one of the biggest factors of rejection. Thus, that the product lacked appealing attributes that the consumer made a choice to not purchase the product (Hogg, 1998).

2.5.2 Restrict

Rejecting consumption completely might not always be an option, however, it may still be possible to cut, lower and limit one’s consumption. This is also known as restricting consumption (Lee et al., 2009). For instance, when it comes to products and resources which we need for
survival, anti-consumption and complete rejection will not be possible for the consumer to perform, therefore they might instead restrict themselves from consuming as much. Simultaneously, restriction of consumption can also be viewed as a phenomenon where consumers are precluded from acting on both their needs and desires in the marketplace. In that case, this can be argued to affect one's life satisfaction (Hill, Martin & Chaplin, 2012).

Rapp, Hill and Lehmann (2012) once evaluated a framework of restricted consumption to find how consumers recognize these restrictions and their reaction afterwards. The authors argue that restriction can be either recognized as self-imposed or imposed by other constraints where self-imposed restriction might remain unnoticed by oneself as it has to do with the individual and one’s values. Once a reaction is created, the behavioural intention takes form. Consumers might restrict their consumption both permanently or just temporarily. However, with help from the framework mentioned, a study found that if permanent restriction is occurring towards a certain product the substitution rates went up (Rapp et al., 2012). One could argue that that type of circumstance would not be connected to restriction or more importantly, anti-consumption, at all.

However, one must take into account that the consumption of products and services has different effects depending on the society one lives in. For a consumer from an impoverished society, the access to some goods or services, which are obvious for consumer in wealthy societies, such as water, education and healthcare are limited and therefore the consumption for these consumers are mainly focused on survival rather than self-acquisition (Hill et.al., 2012). Therefore, they argue that since consumers in wealthier societies that has a higher access to goods and services experiences a higher level of life satisfaction. Moreover, one could argue that the phenomenon of voluntary simplification could be a form of restriction made by consumers in affluent societies where poverty is not the primary factor for the restriction of consumption.

### 2.5.2.1 Voluntary simplification

One attribute of anti-consumption that could be argued to belong under restriction is voluntary simplification. Voluntary simplification was first introduced by Gregg (1936) where he compares these consumers to strong spiritual leaders such as Jesus, Buddha, Moses and Mohammed.

According to Iyer & Muncy (2009), consumers who participate in voluntary simplification seek to drop out of the fast-paced, high-consumption society and move to a simpler, less consumer-oriented lifestyle. They further state that these consumers are not frugal materialists who are reducing consumption in one area to increase consumption in other areas, like they have previously been identified to be. They are also not forced by changing economic circumstances to
reduce consumption. Instead, Iyer & Muncy (2009) argues that the so-called simplifiers believe that maximizing their consumption, as is commonly done, has undesirable consequences, such as stress and distraction from higher pursuits. That they are attempting to obtain a happier lifestyle through buying only what is needed, rather than attempting to improve society. Ballantine and Creery (2010) concur with that statement as they argue that voluntary simplifiers can be described as a consumer segment that aims to decrease the amount of clutter in their lives. Furthermore, Gregg (1936) state that voluntary simplification gives expression in both internal and external dimensions and involves giving up one thing in life in order to gain something else.

Simplifiers’ anti-consumption beliefs may also be spiritual or ethical in that they believe that it is morally abhorrent to focus so much energy on self-serving consumption activities (Iyer & Muncy, 2009). Ballantine and Creery (2010) further argues that exploring the diffident drivers and reasons behind voluntary simplicity revealed three types of voluntary simplifiers; reduced consumption, ethical consumption and sustainable consumption.

Firstly, reduced consumption is performed by, as mentioned above, removing clutter, but in addition, purchasing of second-hand items can be viewed as reduced consumption. Secondly, the ethical dimension of voluntary simplification includes the acts of environmental friendly consumption as purchasing ecological and environmental friendly products. Lastly, sustainable consumption involves an individual that recycles and compost (Ballantine & Creery, 2010).

Considering whether to consume with sensitivity through the selection of more ethical alternatives or to reduce one’s level of consumption to a more sustainable level through voluntary simplification, are important decisions surrounding ethical consumers. A substantial portion of the population was found to believe that over-consumption can create feelings of stress, fatigue, unhappiness, or disillusionment. Consumption and the creation of a healthy self may no longer be associated with one another by consumers. In fact, the Harvard Group found that many people buy and consume things as a substitute for what is missing from our lives (Iyer & Muncy, 2009).

As previously mentioned one could falsely believe that a driver behind voluntary simplification are for economic shortage or cheapness. This could be contradicted by the fact that the sustainability and ethical characteristics of this consumer segment drive the consumers to buy expensive products such as Fair-trade and ecologically and sustainable produced goods (Peyer et. al, 2017). Thus, the voluntary simplifier does not act in this matter to save money but rather to spend money on the right things in terms of the sustainable and ethical angels of voluntary simplification (Peyer et.al, 2017). In addition to the three types of voluntary simplification, Ballantine and Creery (2010) found six different guidelines for voluntary simplifiers to apply on their lifestyle. These
guidelines, also referred to as themes, of the voluntary simplification everyday consumption lifestyle were found to be; product quality, environmental concerns, possibility of shared ownership, second-hand consumption, consumption of ethical products and self-sufficiency (Ballantine and Creery, 2018).

2.5.3 Reclaim

Whilst the previous mentioned phenomena of anti-consumption cover the avoidance and reduction of goods, the last phenomenon focuses on reclaiming, which is the act of shifting to alternative way of processing, using and disposing goods (Lee et. al., 2011). An example of an individual that are involved in anti-consumption by the act of reclaiming is a so-called dumpster diver. A dumpster diver reclams goods that are considered trash by e.g. grocery stores by picking them up from the dumpster and thereby reclaim the goods from disposal. The basic concept of this form of anti-consumption focuses on the reuse of already produced goods as an alternative to new produced goods (Lee et. al., 2011). A way of reclaiming is through the concept of circular economy, which focuses on replacing production with sufficiency in order to minimize waste and close the industrial loop (Stahel, 2016). Moreover, it transforms goods at the end of their use into resources for others by using what you can, repair what is broken, and remanufacture what is irreparable (Stahel, 2016).

There are two approaches to circular economy: those who foster reuse and extend service life through repair, remanufacture, upgrades and retrofits; and those who transforms old goods into as-new resources by recycling the materials (Stahel, 2016). Central to these approaches is people of all ages and skills, where ownership is replaced by stewardship, turning users into creators (Stahel, 2016). There are three models of circular economy: Second-hand consumption, access-based consumption and collaborative consumption (Mont & Heiskanen, 2015).

Some drivers for why consumers buy second-hand include: practical and economic reasons; environmental reasons; a preference for high-quality used products rather than newly produced low-quality goods; a desire to distance themselves from a wasteful and commoditised lifestyle and see benefits in consuming less; and a desire to express their personality by buying second-hand products and then restoring them and personalising them (Clausen et al., 2010; Guoit & Roux, 2010).

Access-based consumption shifts the focus from selling product ownership to selling product use or function and include renting, hiring or leasing products without owning them (Mont, 2004; Baumeister, 2014). Consumer satisfaction in access-based consumption varies depending on type of
product, however the dynamics of the consumer and the provider in combination with ease of access appear to be key success factors (Baumeister, 2014; Raja et al., 2013).

Collaborative consumption, an emerging phenomenon that is growing rapidly, reduces the consumption of resources in the ‘use’ phase by sharing, exchanging, swapping or bartering products, such as cars, clothing, apartments and tools, but also skills, time, finances and services (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). Drivers for collaborative consumption predominantly concerns removing profit as a driver, and social needs for belonging and identity formation, but a desire to reduce consumption-related waste has also been identified as a driver for engaging in sharing schemes (McArthur, 2014; Burgio et al., 2014).

2.6 Fast Fashion

Companies who operates within the fast fashion industry aims at producing cheap clothes with a great speed. The manufactured clothes are characterised as trendy designs that can be purchased by the masses as they are affordable by a greater crowd on the market (Turker & Aluntas, 2014). The term “fast fashion” can be connected to “fast food” as they both represent products with a speeded delivery and the fashion is treated just like the food that spoils very fast (Byun & Sternqvist, 2008). Examples of fast fashion retailers are H&M and ZARA who operates on a global scale and have managed to successfully create a rapid inventory turnover by using the strategy of constantly presenting new merchandise. Retailers within the industry sends out a signal saying, “Buy now, it won’t be here tomorrow”, thus, the shoppers are encouraged to take immediate action by following through with a purchase (Byun & Sternqvist, 2008).

Fast fashion businesses can be argued to not put effort into creating their own designs. Instead, they get inspired by, some might even argue that they copy, other brands and their fashion shows (Reinach, 2005). This tactic enables them to offer the most promising trends and fashionable items at a lower cost as they operate within a more efficient supply chain. The fast fashion businesses have managed to create a supply chain that can be more responsive to continuous, drastic trend changes. This, in turn has an effect on the consumer demand. Therefore, fast fashion supply chains can, in general, be argued to be efficient (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2010). Another aspect regarding the industry is the objective of the constant update of products offered. Many fast fashion businesses tend to add new products as often as every week. Kim, Jung Choo & Yoon (2013) argues that this causes a product’s lifecycle to be drastically decreased from months to weeks, or even days, as consumers are encouraged to shop new items much more frequently. In turn, this leads to a circular process where seasonal products are in focus and urges consumers to follow the updates and the continual renewal of merchandises (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2010).
The fast fashion industry can be argued to have several negative impacts. For instance, as there is a constant pressure on the production as there are more and more orders of fast fashion, the transportation of shipments contributes to increased CO₂ emissions. However, some fast fashion companies try to represent themselves as being sustainable by constantly improving. This is done in terms of for instance their material, cleaner transportation models and eco-labelling their clothes (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). Furthermore, the industry comes with several ethical considerations regarding labour exploitation which includes for instance low wages, excessive working hours, the use of child labour et cetera. (Kim et al., 2013). The common strategy is to outsource the manufacturing to those nations with low wage systems which can be argued to decrease the responsibility of the retailer itself. (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010). These factors can be argued to have led to some people wishing to avoid the fast fashion industry (Kim et al., 2013).

2.7 Generation Y

Generation Y, also referred to as millennials or nexters, are born between 1981 and 1999, and constitutes 25% of the world’s population (Heery & Noon, 2017; Branigan & Mits, 2014). Regarding the size of this generation, it is considered to be as big as the previous generation, the baby boomers. Despite these generation being similar in size, their characteristics are tremendously different (Valentine & Powers, 2013).

Generally, for generation Y, this generation is stated to be optimistic and driven. More specifically, they are technologically driven, keen to challenges, global oriented and have a willingness to develop skills and experiences (Heery & Noon, 2017). Generation Y individuals are quite focused on teamwork and social aspects, such as social interactions. In general, they desire the acceptance and conformity of their peers, rather than achieving individual success. Furthermore, they value responsibility and feedback from their superiors and peers, yet simultaneously strive to be involved in any decisions taking place (Heery & Noon, 2017; Muposhi, Dhurup, & Surujlal, 2015). Hence, one could argue that this generation sees purchase decisions as a way of expressing their social identities (Muposhi et al., 2015). This means that these individuals view purchase decision as a way of expressing their social identities (Muposhi et al., 2015).

Social causes and companies that operates in a socially responsible manner are highly supported by this generation. The general view towards these companies by generation Y is that they are likely to buy the company’s products, increase trust in the company and pay attention to their messages (Valentine & Powers, 2013). Furthermore, this is one of the major factors which distinguishes generation Y from the previous generation. Given this generations positive attitude towards social causes, it has been found that social networks are the primary platform which
companies engage with this consumer segment when promoting environmental messages (Valentine & Powers, 2013).

2.8 FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING FAST FASHION CONSUMPTION

From the literature review conducted it was found that several things have the potential to impact generation Y individuals’ consumption.

Attitudes are likely to affect one’s consumption patterns and overall consumer behaviour, where different attitudes promote different behaviours. A correlation between an increase in the level of knowledge about something and the commitment towards it was found, where an increase in knowledge might lead to an increase in commitment. Furthermore, it has been stated that as people create habits, they also tend to reduce their reciprocity toward information aiming to change attitudes. However, it was also found that, if put into a new context, these habits may prove unattainable, forcing people to evaluate and adapt their attitudes. The complexity of attitudes can be analysed with the use of the “ABC model of attitudes” which is structured by three components; affect, behaviour and cognition. Affect refers to one’s feelings, behaviour to one’s actions and cognition refers to one’s beliefs of, for example, a product.

Similarly, as was found with attitudes, motivation has been identified as a phenomenon which leads people to behave the way they do. Where attitudes are more concerned with past experiences, values, et cetera. motivations are commonly derived out of a need which one is attempting to satisfy. Furthermore, avoidance motivation was found to often be connected with hedonic consumption, resulting in resistance towards unnecessary consumption, e.g. through anti-consumption activities. Moreover, some avoidance motivations have been identified, originating from either societal issues, such as social responsibility and environmental issue, or personal issues, such as life-simplification.

Consumption has long been driven to the extreme, exceeding the levels necessary for survival. It has been speculated this is due to consumption being both a primary method of self-definition and an important leisure activity. The act of rejecting goods from one’s consumption pattern was found to derive, in general, from functional, symbolic or ethical reasons. Brand avoidance and rejecting can be linked due to the reasons behind them, either functional, symbolic or ethical reasons, are the same for both of the phenomenon. However, where resistance concerns specific type of goods, brand avoidance rejects all products from a particular brand.
Ethical reasons for resistance are closely related to moral avoidance, where the act of moral avoidance is a rejection of goods or brands which oppose the individual’s values. Furthermore, rejection expressed through moral avoidance can be viewed as an attempt to declare one’s ethical virtues based on his or her perception of that the brand or product is harmful to society. However, a clear distinction has to be made between ethical consumption and moral avoidance. Ethical consumption entails rewarding a company for their performance in ethical matters through purchasing their products, whereas moral avoidance is an act of punishment for performing unethically.

Moreover, symbolic reasons for rejection have been found to originate from brands’ or companies’ inability to satisfy individuals’ symbolic identity desires. Symbolic rejection have three components, the cognitive, evaluative and emotional components. These components refer to an individual’s awareness of membership, the logic that this awareness is related to a valuable meaning, and the affective investment into an evaluation.

Also found, regarding anti-consumption, are individuals who participate in voluntary simplification, seeking to drop out of the fast-paced, high-consumption society and move to a simpler, less consumer-oriented lifestyle. These individuals restrict consumption in one or more areas of their life without increasing consumption in others. Furthermore, these individuals have been argued to believe maximizing one’s consumption has undesirable consequences. Thus, a desire to simplify one’s life can be a strong motive for engaging in anti-consumption. However, unlike the motivation of restricting consumption for the benefit of the society, they are selfish in their endeavour. Nevertheless, a strong attitude these simplifiers often hold against consumption is that they find it morally abhorrent to focus so much energy on self-serving consumption activities. Therefore, these simplifiers have been grouped into three segments: reduced consumption, ethical consumption, and sustainable consumption.

Another method of anti-consumption which have been identified are those who reclaim resources through shifting to alternative ways of processing, using and disposing goods. A phenomenon found in relation to the act of reclaiming is circular economy. It focuses on replacing production with sufficiency in order to minimize waste and close the industrial loop, as well as transforming goods at the end of their use into resources for others to use. This can entail reuse and life-extension, or transforming old goods into as-new resources. This can be achieved through second-hand shopping, renting or leasing, and collaborative consumption.

Fast fashion emerged in the apparel industry with the purpose of creating a more responsive supply chain. In response to this fast-paced supply chain, retail stores communicate to consumers
that they should purchase immediately or they will miss out. This is one factor which may impact consumers’ attitudes towards fast fashion. This could pose as an obstacle toward an individual’s aim to reduce his or her consumption. Although, it might also provide a justification for an individual’s consumption pattern. Moreover, the ethical issues connected with fast fashion have been found to deter some people from engaging in fast fashion consumption.

Generation Y have been found to be highly influenced by their peers, constantly seeking their acceptance or approval. Moreover, this generation tend to express their social identities through consumption. Consumption of environmentally friendly products, or goods produced by socially responsible companies, are of great value to these individuals. Furthermore, they are more likely to retain messages from organisations who engage in societal or environmental issues.
3 Methodology

In this section, the methodology chosen for performing the study is presented. The approach of the conduction of the empirical findings is explained along with a justification of the chosen methodology.

For the purpose of this study, it was decided to study fast fashion consumption in the context of Black Friday, which is a widely known shopping event.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The interpretivist paradigm is explained as a way of understanding people’s experiences and thereby, explaining the world from a perspective of other people’s experiences (Kawulich, 2012). As the purpose of using this paradigm is to gain understanding of peoples’ experiences, it was deemed suitable for the aim of this study.

One important aspect of the interpretivist paradigm is the fact that when studying people’s experience and the nature of humans, it follows a number of different realities (Mertens, 2009). Due to this fact it could be difficult to conduct a set of questions before the study process but rather be developed during the process. The human nature and experiences are complex issues that varies among individuals, therefore, it could be preferable to have a foundation of questions made before the study and form them for the specific set of individuals during the data collection process (Mertens, 2009). In order to use the interpretivist paradigm and investigate human nature and experiences, it is of high importance to establish trust during the process since individual’s nature is a personal issue. The importance of trust and authentic communication process also aids the researchers when it comes to interpreting the nuances of the participants’ voices and meaning of what the participants says (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

3.2 Research Approach

In order to collect data, one could either use a qualitative method or a quantitative method. Quantitative methods include the collection of data with the use of random selection. In this method, a random sample from a particular population are drawn and numerical data are then used to express the sample for the analysis of the sample. This method has been questioned regarding the fact that it lacks the human factor. Since this study is based on human experiences, a qualitative method is used instead to ensure relevant data was gathered. The aim of a qualitative method is to gain understanding of a particular phenomenon without generalizing data. The qualitative method
describes the findings in greater depth and can therefore be applied to different situations and contexts (Byrne, 2001). By using a qualitative method to this research, the approach can also be seen as inductive which means that it has the intention to create an increased understanding of the situation and the nature of the problem. It also emphasises the understanding of the overall research context and simultaneously focuses on creating an understanding regarding the meanings humans attach to events (Saunders et al., 2009). An inductive approach will focus on generating theory from the data collected instead of only imposing already existing theory on the data (Lee & Lings, 2008).

Since discussions on the data collected for this study were essential to reach a distinct conclusion, a qualitative and inductive approach was argued to be suitable.

### 3.3 Research strategy

For this study, the use of so-called action research was chosen as a strategy to enable full interpretation and evaluation of the research. Action research can be seen as an emergent process and a strategy in which the researchers remain highly involved, which can lead to a change in patterns (Bryman & Bell, 2011). By using action research, the investigators will become a part of the field of study and will be well aware throughout the research process. The process itself can be argued to be formed as a spiral where the identification of a purpose and objective is the starting line. Thenceforward, the process continues with collecting information, in this case in the form of a literature review. This will be necessary to formulate and design a relevant collection approach of data which is the next step. The empirical findings can thereafter be analysed and enables the researchers to conduct potential results. However, with action research, one can now do further reflecting of the findings and argue for improvements. This is where the form of a spiral becomes visible as the researchers now have the opportunity to proceed the investigation and conduct further empirical findings if desired (Saunders et al., 2009).

Action research can become a favourable option as it does not only investigate problem situations, instead it also perceives improvement as its task and will report the findings to the research community (Avison, Davison & Malaret, 2018). The multiple cycles of the various stages tend to increase the understanding of all involved, which hopefully has the potential to create improvements. Thus, as the participants increase their knowledge of the matter, it leads to new social actions and reflections that will provide a value to the research and new areas of inquiry (Mackenzie, Tan, Hoverman & Baldwin, 2012).
3.4 **METHOD FOR DATA COLLECTION**

In order to perform this study, focus groups were the chosen data collection method. Focus groups have been explained as a session with discussions which are carefully planned to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Krueger, 1994). Moreover, a focus group could be defined as a group interview that often involves a high degree of interaction between the participants and the moderator, where a moderator is the person in control of the session and make sure the discussion does not stray from the topic at hand. In a focus group, direct questions are asked, and the aim is to integrate the participants with each other (Halkier, 2010; Saunders et al., 2009). This has been found to be a highly valid qualitative research tool, mainly due to its ability to provide in-depth insights into a topic in an efficient and timely manner (Masadeh, 2012).

Since this study is based on individual perspectives and experiences, focus groups was chosen in order to create an open discussion where all realities are expressed and welcomed. Moreover, a focus group could create a broader picture of what the public think of a certain issue. Focus groups were conducted for this study for the purpose of restricting the conversation at some extent but at the same time create a flow of opinions. The aim of the focus groups is primarily to gain understanding of Swedish students’ motivations and attitudes towards the topic.

### 3.4.1 Focus groups

For this research, five focus groups were conducted and gathered to discuss and enable the authors to find answers with various point of views. All interviews took place in the middle of April between the 9th and the 16th to keep the found information fresh and useful for the analysis.

It can be discussed what the optimal number of participants of a focus group should be. Saunders et al. (2009) argues that a common construction of a focus group includes between 4 to 8 people. However, depending on the research topic and purpose, the number of participants can vary. Some might have as many as 12 participants and some might instead conduct smaller, mini-focus groups with only 3 people for more simple research topics as it can possibly have an impact on the way the discussion is formed during the session (Saunders et al., 2009; Burrows & Kendall, 1997). For this particular research, the authors decided to form five focus groups with various sizes. Three of the groups consisted of five persons, one with six and the last one only had three persons. It was chosen to include a group consisting of only three persons as it was believed that they would have some valuable arguments worth including in the research and also that the method of focus groups could be explored and enable a deeper discussion with more details and less pressure.
Two of the focus groups had their discussion held at Jönköping University where the authors study and had booked a room for the sessions. The other three groups instead met at two of the authors apartments since it was more suitable for the participants at that time. During these sessions, the authors offered coffee and cookies to lighten everyone’s mood and create a relaxed atmosphere. All sessions started with some small talk while making acquaintance with everyone before starting to ask the questions for the research which needed to be recorded. All participants were informed about the recording, how they all would be anonymous, as well as, that there are no right or wrong answers for the study. Furthermore, the participants would agree to keep any information disclosed during the session confidential. This information was provided through a consent form (see Appendix C) which they all got to sign to clarify an agreement to participate.

Furthermore, as illustrated in Appendix D, the participants were both male and female students in Sweden. It was chosen not to only focus on one gender as the authors considered the participants chosen to be suitable for the study. If only focusing on one gender, it could also have caused the study to be even more restricted.

3.5 Transcription Style

As all the focus group sessions were recorded, it allowed the researchers to go through each session and analyse them afterwards. However, transcription of recordings like these can be argued to be necessary while conducting a research. Lapadat and Lindsay (1999) argues that in the early years of mechanical recording and transcription of various interactions, the focus was mainly on enabling the presentation to include an expanded precision of language data. However, nowadays you can find transcripts which allows the reader to understand for instance emotions and precision of the structure, such as pauses made during the session.

While conducting primary data for a qualitative research study such as interviews or in this case focus group discussions, there can be argued to be two main ways of constructing a transcription. These are referred to as either naturalism or de-naturalism. Firstly, a naturalized transcription would enable the transcriber to introduce every detail of the discussion including the speaker’s in-breath, short or long pauses and if there were any particular emphasis. All the details should work in favour to the transcription reader as it might help develop a better understanding. Secondly, a denaturalized transcription avoids depicting the details that will have less meaning to the findings. Instead, it creates a less in-depth transcription and removes all the pauses, small talk et cetera. which can be argued to be unnecessary (Oliver, Serovich & Mason, 2005).
For this research, it was decided to use a de-naturalism style when constructing the transcriptions. The discussions held during the focus groups presented and expressed various point of views and emotions. However, as the interactions among participants, small talk and other things that might implicate on certain emotional expressions are not very relevant for the findings, it was chosen to only focus on the main details and statements made. Hence, the unnecessary noises and other considerations noticed during the sessions were not included in the transcriptions.

3.6 **Sampling Method**

Random sampling is rarely used in focus group research, in fact, it can be quite disadvantageous, mainly because a small sample is not adequate enough to represent a whole population and because it is not certain a random sample will provide a shared perspective on the issue under investigation. Instead participants whom suit the investigated issue shall be selected purposefully (Liamputtong, 2011). Moreover, it has been found that since the group will be the main unit of analysis in a focus group, it would be advisable to ensure that group members share at least one important characteristic in order to facilitate comparison, however, the group shall be homogenous only in terms of background and not attitudes. Indeed, differences in opinions causing a little bit of argument can enable the moderator to tease out what lies beneath opinions and allow clarifications of several perspectives to be voiced (Barbour, 2007).

The so-called snowball sampling method is a favoured approach in focus group research, also known as word-of-mouth technique, where communicating with one potential participant may lead to him or her approaching other potential participants (Liamputtong, 2011). This approach proved suitable for this research.

3.6.1 **Generation Y**

The empirical study, performed with the use of focus groups, targets Swedish students within generation Y. As mentioned, generation Y has different definitions but are defined by Heery and Noon (2017) as people born between 1981 and 1999 and can also be referred to as *millenials* or *nexters*. This generation was chosen for this study since it could be argued that these people are going to build and work for our society in the future. However, the reason why generation Y was chosen instead of the younger generation was due to that the younger generation might not be as experienced and the authors might have to ask for their parents’ consent for participating since some of them might be underage.
Generation Y is also considered to value meaningfulness and strives to contribute to a better world though working within organizations which are considered socially responsible (Valentine & Powers, 2013). Therefore, it is of interest for this particular study of anti-consumption. Since anti-consumption is a movement partly focused on social responsibility by reducing consumption, this generation is argued to be the most suitable group of individuals for this study.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research has been considering various ethical aspects when gathering data and applying the method. As primary data has been part of the research, there was an importance to avoid any embarrassment, harm or other kinds of disadvantages for the participants in the study. To do so, the whole design of a research should hence be considered to be presented in a moral and responsive manner (Saunders et al., 2009). To ensure that there would not be any ethical issues regarding the data collection, as well as to establish trust, it was chosen to present and collect a consent form from all the participants in the focus groups (See appendix C). The consent form included for instance the facts that the participation was voluntary and that one would have the opportunity to stop at any time, that the focus group session would be recorded and that the information would be used in this thesis. Furthermore, it was also decided that everyone participating in this study would have the right to be anonymous. Hence, all citations from the findings will be referred by an alias such as F1, F2, M1, M2 et cetera. To ensure all participants’ consent, the consent form was signed and collected before the sessions began.
4 Empirical Findings

In this section, the results from the focus groups will be presented. The section will give the reader an idea of what was discussed during the collection of data.

4.1 Consumption Patterns

All focus groups started with discussing the participants’ overall shopping habits. As such, it became clear that even though the groups were conducted with people who are somewhat alike, meaning they are all a part of generation Y, as well as being students, the consumption patterns did vary. Some participants would claim to shop only every third month whereas some would shop a new clothing piece every week. Those participants who rarely shopped agreed on that they mostly shopped in bulk due to, for example, the change in seasons and that they did not like the idea of going shopping.

F3: “I only go shopping about every third month, and the reason for that is because I feel poor. Otherwise it would probably be different”.

F11: “I think I have started shopping more in preparation for the seasons [rather than shopping at random occasions]”.

The primary factor affecting participants’ consumption patterns was found to be financial motivations. Aside from that, participants expressed their opinion that quality was more important to them than quantity of items purchased. Despite financial motivations being seen as the primary factor affecting shopping habits, participants were still willing to pay a little more for one quality item, rather than several cheaper items. This was the general consensus in most focus groups. Moreover, it was also found that this would be true, and perhaps of even greater importance, if participant had more money to spend on clothing items.

F12: “I’ve been sewing a lot since I was a kid, so I know a lot about quality and materials, therefore I want to be sure that I get the right quality of my clothes”.

F5: “Quality over quantity!”.

Regarding the participants’ preferred shopping environment, it was found that the majority of the participants preferred to go shopping by themselves instead of together with others. The reason for this was mainly due to factors such as the effectiveness and the spontaneity of the shopping
occasion. If they were to go shopping with someone else, it would merely be to simultaneously socialize, thus, turning it into a social experience. Although the majority did find the aspect of shopping with others unpleasant, there were a small number of the participants who expressed feeling exposed when shopping alone and therefore would rather go with a friend than alone. It was also mentioned that participants frequently found themselves wandering alone in town, shopping solely because they were passing stores and got an urge to explore the current offerings. Hence, many shopping purchases were admitted to being unplanned and impulsive.

F4: “I think it can be quite nice to go shopping by myself, then I can focus on what I want”.

F1: “I absolutely do more spontaneous shopping than planned”.

F4: “If I go shopping spontaneously, I would for instance not buy a jacket or a pair of shoes. I would only buy more cheap stuff that I would not have thought about before”.

F6: “Sometimes you find very nice clothes even if you didn’t have the intention of buying anything, and then I take it”.

From the discussion of preferences regarding shopping with company or not, there was a natural transition into the topic of other peoples’ influence on participants’ consumption habits. The participants had various opinions in this matter, where some of them did not really care of others opinion and some of them valued others opinion highly. Among the participants who preferred to go shopping with friends, the influence of others had a larger impact. Some participants even considered others opinion to the extent that they would consider refraining from buy something which they really like due to this influence of their peers.

Moreover, continuing with the topic of shopping with others or alone, a discussion of whether one would consume more or less when in the company of others ensued. The participants agreed that the influence of others could make them purchase things that they would not normally purchase if they were to go shopping alone. If their friends expressed the opinion that they should purchase something, participants admitted that they would probably buy it. Thus, their consumption could increase if they were shopping with friends. Nevertheless, some of the participants claimed that they thought that shopping with friends could make them less focused on what to purchase, which could result in that they would buy less in the company of others than if they were alone.
M2: “If I go shopping alone and are not sure if I want to buy something, I would probably not do it. But I was there with a friend that convinced me to buy the item, I would probably buy it even though I was not sure I wanted it”.

F12: “This is why I don’t like the influence if others because if I was doubting to buy something then there is a reason why I should not buy it”.

F10: “If I’m already second guessing the item and if they say no as well I might be influenced but if I really like it and they say no I will still buy it”.

4.2 MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES

4.2.1 Fast Fashion

Fast fashion has become a more well-known concept and most participants understood its meaning and could immediately give their opinion about it and their attitude towards it. For those participants who were uncertain of its exact meaning could still express their opinion and attitudes quickly after they were given a clear definition of fast-fashion. However, not all participants shared the same opinion, leading to an engaging discussion which revealed many different opinions and points of views regarding this industry. Starting off the conversation, the groups were initially asked what their overall thoughts about the fast fashion industry were. A common opinion of fast-fashion clothing, which was stated more than once in every focus group performed, was that:

F2: “You get what you pay for”.

Participants whom claimed they most definitely support the fast-fashion industry and purchase fast fashion items stated their main reason for this was due to low prices. Furthermore, the availability of fast fashion tends to attract the participants.

F1: “The reason I buy fast fashion is because it’s cheap”.

F3: “Before I started studying, I usually purchased more expensive clothes. However, now I would never buy a t-shirt that costs for example 600kr because I feel like I don’t have that money”.

As previously stated, there were participants who felt that the quality of clothing was, as a factor, more important than the quantity. However, there were also participants who were of the opinion that non-fast fashion clothes provide more than just quality. They thought that fast fashion clothing lack meaning and uniqueness.
F5: “I feel like fast fashion don’t have the same meaning [as non-fast fashion clothes]”.

M2: “I like [for] the brand to have a story behind it”.

Nevertheless, those participants who expressed a negative opinion about fast fashion, whether related to its quality or due to other reasons, also admitted to buying some fast-fashion items despite that. Some participants even plainly expressed experiencing cognitive dissonance, having attitudes and behaviour not adding up.

F19: “I buy from H&M but only basics, I don’t buy the clothes there”.

F20: “I think I buy fast-fashion just because that’s what I’ve always done, it’s what I grew up with”.

F20: “I am aware of labour conditions and the massive production of H&M, yet I still go to H&M, and I think I justify it with ‘I don’t shop that much’”.

The authors of this thesis took a decision to include the phenomenon of Black Friday and to use that as a context to deepen the understanding about fast fashion consumption. Hence, the focus groups integrated Black Friday into the conversation, allowing participants to express their opinions about the event and their previous experiences during Black Friday. All participants were familiar with the event. Though attitudes towards Black Friday varied, some participants expressed a positive attitude towards it, others a negative attitude. However, the majority of the participants had a rather poor perception of the event. In one focus group, for instance, the discussion was provided some inside knowledge from a participant who had previously been working at a shopping mall during Black Friday in the past. The participant mentioned that in the particular store which he or she worked at, the profit margin was so immense to begin with, that despite heavy discounts the store still earned a huge profit.

F3: “I do not have a good perception of Black Friday, but that is probably because I used to work at a shopping mall. All people working were gossiping about how bad the deals actually were”.

F11: “I have really strong opinions about Black Friday; I get disgusted, I hate the whole concept”.

M2: “That’s why I don’t like it because it’s just one day, that is what cause the desperation”.

F9: “I always end up buying things I don’t need because it’s cheap”.

F7: “I hate Black Friday because there are so many people, it’s just a hype”.

28
A discussion regarding the overall consumption behaviour associated with an event like Black Friday made it rather obvious that a majority of the participants spend more money on one of these events than on a regular shopping trip. Similarly, most participants did not make meticulous plans concerning what they shall buy and the type of bargains they will make. Moreover, during these types of events participants often found themselves spontaneously purchasing unnecessary items. Moreover, examining Black Friday and the focus group participants’ behaviour in relation to it, it became clear that Black Friday is an event which encourage consumers to increase their consumption. More specifically, they believed that it encourages consumers to purchase fast fashion, since it is rare for designers to have such high discounts that are associated with Black Friday. Nevertheless, despite the fact that they find themselves increasing their consumption spontaneously during Black Friday, and that many agreed that it encourages increased consumption, some participants believe that Black Friday has not been successfully integrated into the Swedish market.

F5: “Designers don’t do Black Friday so it’s only fast fashion”.

F4: “I think about over-consumption”.

F2: “I feel like Black Friday was only introduced to increase the consumption”.

Not all participants shop during Black Friday, however, those who did not shop during Black Friday admitted to changing their shopping behaviour during the holidays. Thus, a conversation regarding how one’s shopping behaviour change around the holidays ensued. In particular, the sale between the Christmas and New Year celebrations, also known as the box days, were discussed. Participants spoke of feeling like they were tricked by the stores to make them increase their spending during the box days, especially when they have already extended their shopping behaviour from before Christmas, shopping for Christmas gifts. Participants agreed among themselves that they become more willing to spend and that they become less price sensitive during this time. However, several participants have an overall negative view on the behaviour during pre-Christmas shopping. They mentioned crazy behaviour around Christmas and how people go so far as to take out bank loans to buy Christmas gifts, which is indicative of that the consumption around the holidays is an unhealthy behaviour and that it contributes to extreme over-consumption.

F12: “People save their money the whole year to just throw away their money on unnecessary stuff during December”.

F12: “I buy all my Christmas gifts before November in order to stay away from the crazy behaviour in December”.
F6: “If I see that there’s going to be a big sale and I see that everyone is going to buy it I want to be quick and buy it before it runs out, especially during Christmas when there’s huge sales in each store it makes me want to shop more, especially since these big sales don’t happen often during the year”.

Nevertheless, some of those participants who expressed a dislike for the over-consumption during the Christmas holidays, admitted that their own shopping behaviour was affected during this time of year. They discussed whether this change in behaviour is due to the shopping for gifts, or perhaps that their own consumption of fast fashion in particular increased during the holiday season. It was mentioned among the participants that their own increased consumption of fast fashion could be because they make a lot of spontaneous purchases for themselves while shopping gifts or because they wanted the perfect outfit for the holiday celebrations.

4.2.2 Anti-Consumption

The phenomenon of anti-consumption and all its strategies were somewhat new to the participants. After they were given a moment to speculate, the group(s) would together analyse their behaviours, discussing if it would indicate any type of anti-consumption. Participants mentioned how they did, or potentially would, consider lending or sharing clothes with friends and family. There were also some interesting conversations held regarding second-hand shopping and how that can be a form of anti-consumption. This was a concept and action which the participants had at least a little or a lot awareness about. Moreover, when it came to their reasoning, most participants saw this as an option to find unique garments and hopefully something branded. Even though all of the participants agreed that they know what second-hand is and some even shopped second-hand, the environmental reasons and anti-consumption was not the primary motivation for why they would consider second-hand clothes.

F3: “If I go to a second-hand shop, it is usually with the intention to find something unique. Or just finding something cheap”.

F10: “I only purchase second-hand since I want to find something that is trendy at the moment, like old Levi’s jeans or jackets”.

F5: “When I go to second-hand it has to be like rare, unique, it has to be something no one else has”.

Although the reasons for why participants where shopping second-hand did not often involve the environment, they all saw it as an added bonus, if not the main motivation. Along with this, the feeling of that the garment had a history and the feeling of extending the life of the clothing was brought to attention. When talking about this, the act of reclaiming and circular economy was
mentioned, and the participants said that they would value the act of extending the life of clothes by borrowing clothes from friends and family. Some of the participants even said that instead of buying new clothes they would rather use the ones they had instead of just letting it hang in the closet. These were the primary reactions when talking about circular economy:

F11: “I bought clothes from my friend this winter and I think I made some really good bargains, I’m frustrated that I don’t do this more often!”

F12: “This shirt that I’m wearing right now is from a friend, me and my friends do this all the time”.

F13: “I always say that I have nothing to wear even though my closet is full, I really want to start borrowing from friends or use clothes that I already have in my closet”.

F9: “I would really consider renting clothes if it is a piece of clothing that I only would wear once, like a prom dress or wedding dress”.

F14: “It’s great to “fix things” instead of just recycling it”.

Moving towards consumption habits regarding specific brands, we began a discussion regarding whether the participants avoided certain brands due to some reason, such as due to bad past experiences, the environment, et cetera. Participants mentioned that some fast-fashion brands were avoided by a majority of the participants mainly due to poor quality. However, even though quality was the main factor of avoidance, some also engaged in brand-avoidance because of environmental reasons, scandals the brand had been involved in or poor working conditions of employees of that brand.

F5: “I rarely shop at H&M due to the poor quality, and I also don’t like them due to all the scandals about them”.

F11: “I watched a documentary of the working conditions for the workers in H&M’s factories, so now I do what I can to avoid shopping from that brand”.

F16: “I try to avoid many new brands where you can tell that they don’t think about sustainability from the beginning, I think they have a responsibility”.

At this point in the discussion, when participants were asked to ponder what circumstances would motivate them to decrease their fast fashion consumption, the discussion came to a halt for a while. Participants slowly started the conversation back up, “brainstorming” out loud amongst themselves. They found that it might be difficult to imagine any circumstance where one would
change their opinion drastically about the industry and leading to a reduction of their consumption. Simultaneously however, participants of the focus groups declared that more awareness about the negative effects of the industry would possibly contribute to a change in their attitudes.

M1: “I think this [consequences of fast fashion consumption] should be brought to more attention and talked about to increase awareness”.

F9: “I am aware of it, I’ve heard about it, but I don’t think about it when I shop”.

Declarations that more awareness is what would deter participants from consuming fast fashion at the same, if on any, level as they do today were made. Several participants admitted that they would like to avoid stores or brands who are known to, for example, be bad for the environment or have bad labour conditions. However, they argued it is easy in theory, and while some would avoid these stores or brands in real life, some participants admitted that they could overlook this if that store or brand was the only one who had what they desired. Of those participants, some argued that if another brand or store had the same, or a similar item, participants found themselves avoiding the brand or store with the bad reputation and instead purchasing from the “better” alternative.

F5: “I don’t want to buy from H&M anymore because of the scandal, but I know other stores have the same items, so I would prefer just to go to another store because of the scandal”.

F9: “I will try to avoid that store if they have a bad reputation and they treat the labour badly but if it’s like the only option and I need this piece it’s like whatever”.

F9: “I would say I do shop there [fast fashion stores] ‘cause I don’t really think about labour conditions and stuff when I shop actually, so I just go and I’m like ‘okay I like this’ and I’ll buy it and the prices are reasonable”.
5 Analysis

This section will include an analysis of the data found in the previous section. The reader will thereby be provided with an analysis made by connecting the empirical findings to the literature.

5.1 Consumption Patterns

Findings from our literature review indicates that the current level of consumption is driven almost completely by cultural norms (Assadourian, 2010). The results from the focus group discussion only hint at the same phenomenon, where participants admit to purchasing items from fast-fashion stores simply because that is what they have always done. This phenomenon, of consumers following the consumption patterns from when they are young is the reason why we chose to study students, since one could argue that the way that the generation Y consumers consumes at this time will form a more permanent consumption pattern in the future.

Furthermore, as stated in the literature findings, consumption is a social, cultural and economic process of choosing goods (Zukin & Maguire, 2004). The study of Swedish students, regarding the choosing of products, showed that economic reasons are often more important than social and cultural factors. Nevertheless, social and cultural factors were not to be excluded from the process entirely. This was indicated through participants’ willingness to buy something which they initially had no intention of buying in the first place, if a friend or family member expressed an opposing opinion. However, they would not refrain from buying what they intended to buy for the same reason. The fact that participants allow themselves to be influenced to consume more than intended, but not the other way around, is an indicator of the consumerism plaguing our society and culture, encouraging mass-consumption.

5.2 Motivation and Attitudes

5.2.1 Attitudes

To clarify what attitudes were found among the participants, the authors of this thesis have used the ABC Model. As explained by the literature; A stands for Affect which represents feelings, B stands for Behaviour which represents the act, and C stands for Cognition which represents one’s belief of the object. One needs to identify why the students thinks and act the way they do in order the further understand the actual attitudes towards decreasing their consumption of fast fashion.
5.2.1.1 **Affect**

As mentioned, the empirical findings did identify several feelings towards fast fashion consumption. Depending on the individual, the attitude will transform in relation to their personal values and what matters to them. Feelings identified regarding fast fashion were expressed as participants having low expectations and demands of the quality, as well as a tendency to shop spontaneously. However, there were also feelings of contempt involved towards certain brands from some of the participants. One could ask oneself, how much more does the positive feelings towards fast fashion consumption weigh on one’s attitude scale in relation to the negative feelings? What would it take, or under what circumstance would the negative feelings towards fast fashion win the argument?

5.2.1.2 **Behaviour**

It was found that many people act very spontaneously when it comes to the question of fast fashion. This type of clothing products allows individuals to purchase many items or shop on many occasions et cetera. One could even argue that it encourages people to by more than needed by presenting different offers, coupons and campaigns. However, from the perspective of some participants, they admitted to purchasing goods even though they despise the industry. Hence, the negative feelings towards the industry were not strong enough for participants to refrain from following through with the purchase. Although, some participants did refrain from making a purchase. Those participants who chose not to purchase fast fashion, did so, not out of any negative feelings towards the industry itself, but rather due to perceived shortcoming in the products.

5.2.1.3 **Cognition**

Beliefs held by participants of fast fashion consumption were for instance that the clothes are mass produced by people with poor working conditions to satisfy our shopping cravings. The cognition towards Black Friday was also negative and people perceived it to have been introduced to encourage more consumption. Hence, one could argue that the beliefs that the majority of the participants had regarding fast fashion consumption were extremely negative in various ways. Nonetheless, there are many people consuming great amounts of fast fashion clothes which, as previously mentioned, has led to an extreme total amount of consumption in Sweden. As mentioned in the literature, the consumption patterns are so terribly unsustainable that it would be required to have 3,25 Earths to sustain the lifestyle found in Sweden in 2012, and that is assuming that all inhabitants of the world would adopt to that style (Axelsson, 2012).
After analysing attitudes towards fast fashion with the help from the ABC Model, one could argue that the combination of one’s affect, behaviour and cognition leads to a rather poor attitude. However, the attitude is not strong enough to actually avoid the consumption pattern and reduce the overall fast fashion consumption. To serve the purpose of our thesis, exploring what it would take to strengthen and change the attitude towards fast fashion, or perhaps instead create a stronger and positive attitude towards supporting a more sustainable clothing industry is necessary.

5.2.2 Fast Fashion

Even though the participants in our study did not all share the same opinions, they did have clear and concise arguments for their perception towards fast fashion which can help identify their consumer behaviour. As explained by Hosany and Martin (2012), consumer behaviour is influenced by attributes, motivations and social patterns. This can be relevant in terms of the outcome of this study as many participants of the focus groups mentioned how one of the main reasons for their consumption of fast fashion was that those businesses offer more specific trend pieces and with many variations. Furthermore, a common motive and objective for consuming fast fashion is to obtain a certain identity since it is cheaper and has a larger variety of styles. Moreover, social patterns and the urge to fit in and be a part of the society or other social groups can be connected to fast fashion perceptions and the update of fashion trends. One can argue that the relevance of today’s society and pressure from others can influence the consumption. Particularly when it comes to fast fashion, it might be easy to let others influence an individual as it is a standard to only possess certain clothes for a short period (Ekström, Gustafsson, Hjelmgren & Salomonson, 2012). The empirical findings revealed this was sometimes the case for the participants and that people tend to update their wardrobe quite often. Moreover, since participants were all students, the results also came across individuals who did never shop fast fashion, reputable for being a cheaper clothing options, whether due to budget restrictions or other reasons. However, the expressions of how fast fashion allows one to buy for instance ten clothing pieces instead of one expensive, is one attractive factor of the purchasing. This brings one to argue about the overall fast fashion impact and the popularity of the concept. It was found how some participants somewhat contradicted themselves when it came to the matter of fast fashion. People tend to express their knowledge about what the industry lack, while they simultaneously, with an unproblematic tone, admits to supporting the business and sometimes appreciates the concept.

Just like Watson (2008) argued, a throwaway mentality has become a part of the Western society and is seen as a regular process and choice. Thus, as mentioned, replacement of clothing items has become an advantageous preference by many people. Regarding how it is often more expensive to repair products than buying a new, it can be found from the focus groups that many
participants would consider buying fast fashion items despite the strong awareness of possible consequences. Those consequences would be, for instance: that the unfortunate bad quality would be purchased once again in hope for improvements; the occurrence where one would buy an item hoping for fashionable outcomes yet leaving the item in the wardrobe and eventually forgetting about it. Thus, one could ask; why buy fast fashion even though I know all possible shortcomings? Or even more importantly, what would it take to for somebody to decrease their consumption of fast fashion?

Concerning Black Friday, a phenomenon chosen by the authors to illustrate the extent of fast fashion consumption, the opinions among the focus group participants varied. Since some participants were repulsed by the whole concept due to several reasons, one could argue that the participants with such opinions were more likely to engage in anti-consumption. Moreover, there were several participants who thought that Black Friday was a positive concept, but few of the participants of the study longed for the event. A majority of the participants argued that others only buy things because it is cheap, which they find abhorrent and thus, they do not want to buy anything. Thus, this could also be linked to anti-consumption by excluding unnecessary purchases from their purchase cycle. As mentioned by Lee et al., (2011), that anti-consumption is seen as an act where individuals may intentionally and meaningfully exclude certain goods and services from their consumption cycle. By analysing these answers provided by participants, one could further discuss whether the concept of Black Friday is perceived in such a negative way by consumers that it actually could make consumers by less on this day rather than more.

However, even though Black Friday is a big event in Sweden, the Swedish students found it easier to relate to the sale that occurs between Christmas and New Year, and the shopping around the holidays. Thus, the discussion naturally evolved into talking further about this event. Assadourian (2010) argued that the level of consumption is driven almost completely by cultural norms and that tradition also plays a vital role in consumption. The participants discussed how they are raised in a culture with a tradition of increased consumption around the Christmas holidays, and how they see this phenomenon as more of a natural happening rather than something which encourages an increase consumption. Considering what participants have revealed about their consumer behaviour during the holidays, one could see that the holiday shopping is deeply rooted in culture and traditions.

5.2.3 Anti-Consumption

As discussed in the literature review, Lee et al., (2011) claims that anti-consumption could be divided into three main categories which are reject, restrict and reclaim. These three aspects were
also identified by the participants of acts they were already doing or could consider doing in order to decrease consumption of fast fashion. The anti-consumption phenomenon of rejection is, as previously mentioned, an act of excluding particular goods from the consumer’s consumption pattern for functional, symbolic or ethical reasons (Lee et. al, 2011). Regarding the rejection of fast fashion, participants discussed that rumours and scandals had a high impact of whether they wanted to reject that particular store. As Rindell et al., (2014) discussed about moral avoidance, one reason could be to consistent reject the brand due that the brand does not behave in a rightful way, another reason is that the product might be rejected due to that it is not consistent in behaviour and lastly that the least harmful brand always will be the number one choice in all situations.

Considering restriction, participants mentioned that they wanted to start, or was already, trying to use the clothes they already have rather than purchasing new clothes regularly. The focus groups also showed that some participants liked to clear their closets from clothing they do not use regularly and donate it. This was discussed to be both for environmental aspects but also for the simplification of the individual’s life. As Iyer and Muncy (2009) claims, this act could be referred to as voluntary simplification, which appeals to consumers who seek to drop out of the fast-paced, high-consumption society and move to a simpler, less consumer-oriented lifestyle. One could therefore argue that some participants was and had a will to participate in voluntary simplification.

Reclaiming was mentioned in the literature review to be a way of shifting to alternative way of processing, using and disposing goods (Lee et. al., 2011). The concepts within reclaiming that were found in the study was mainly collaborative consumption and second-hand. Those who used second-hand had price and the uniqueness of the clothes as main motivation but had environmental aspects in the back of their minds when purchasing second-hand. The main reasons that individuals expressed regarding why they wanted to shop second-hand clothing was due to self-expression, finding unique pieces of high quality, economic reasons and partly environmental reason. These reasons are partly the same findings made by Clausen et al., 2010 and Guoit & Roux (2010) regarding why consumers would want to engage in second-hand.

Regarding collaborative consumption, the participants discussed that they were willing to start sharing clothes with friends and explore creative ways of sharing clothes with each other. Thus, it could be seen to be true that, As Stahel (2016) argues, a way of engaging consumers in collaborative consumption is to turn users into creators.

Furthermore, motivations and attitudes supporting anti-consumption have been found, however, it seems to not be quite enough for many of the participants. This was identified through
the contradiction of participants’ perception of their intention and their action. Thus, we argue that the motivation to pursue anti-consumption is present in this generation, yet it is not strong enough to encourage action.

5.3 **NECESSARY ENCOURAGEMENTS FOR CHANGE**

As previously stated, Olson and Kendrick (2008) argued that an attitude of an object includes: beliefs, positive and negative feelings, and behavioural information. It has been argued that attitudes exist to aid in consumption decisions, thus influencing consumption patterns and consumer behaviour (Solomon, 2013). This has been, to a degree, confirmed by the conducted focus groups, where participants agreed that they would avoid stores due to bad past experiences, service dissatisfaction, knowledge about poor labour conditions and scandals. However, despite having expressed the habit to avoid stores due to any of the aforementioned reasons, participants also admitted to purchasing from stores in spite of similar “flaws”. Discussing back and forth between what students’ current habits are, and what they feel would motivate them to change in the future towards a decreased consumption of fast-fashion, proved to be a complex matter. Participants openly told their thoughts on fast-fashion, if they bought fast-fashion, if they were concerned for the environment, et cetera. Yet, without realizing it, several participants began to contradict themselves. Many were of the opinion that being exposed to greater awareness about the effect fast-fashion and mass-consumption has on our society would encourage them to reduce their consumption. However, several of those same participants admitted to buying clothing from fast-fashion brands even if they were aware of the fact that the brand has one or more of the “flaws” which they previously stated would deter them from purchasing from that brand. A few participants even expressed themselves that they often experience cognitive dissonance regarding this. One could speculate that a reason for this might be the consumerism mind-set that exists in most modern societies, which encourage you to consume at a fast rate. This could cause any objection or obstacle, such as learning about its detrimental effect on our planet or about some scandal a specific brand was involved in, to cause an instant reaction which deter consumers from associating with that brand, for a while. Later, the consumerism mind-set would allow, or even enable, the mind to suppress that knowledge in order to continue with the same consumption pattern as previously. Thus, one could argue that information regarding the industry’s detrimental effects on the planet and its people should be distributed continually and consistently.
6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine Swedish students' attitudes and motivations toward decreasing their consumption of fast fashion through anti-consumption. This section will provide the reader with the solutions found in relation to the purpose of this thesis.

Through focus groups it was uncovered that Swedish students have an overall negative attitude towards the Fast Fashion industry. This attitude derives from a perceived lack of quality and uniqueness, bad labour conditions in production facilities, and the industry’s detrimental effect on the environment. It was possible to identify a willingness of students to decrease their consumption of fast fashion. However, despite this readiness to act, students found themselves unable to overcome certain obstacles, such as financial means and availability of non-fast fashion alternatives. Students’ motivations for wanting to limit their consumption of fast fashion focused on those factors which they stated were reasons for why they viewed the fashion industry negatively. What became especially clear when participants in the focus group talked about these motivations, was that they were often discussed in relation to scandals which fast fashion brands had been involved in. The general consensus, regarding what would have to happen for them to become even more motivated to cut back on their fast fashion consumption, was that the industry’s destructive nature needed to be brought to attention. They explained that an increase in awareness would enable them to actively think about their choices when they go shopping.
7 **DISCUSSION**

This section will provide a further discussion on the topic and will provide the reader with the perceived contributions, limitations and present possible further research.

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7.1 **CONTRIBUTION**

This study was done through the perspective of Swedish students, generation Y, and as some participants said themselves, people do what they have always done. This means that the result of this study may be used to glean some insight into the shopping behaviour of generation Y, which will likely remain quite similar throughout their life. This could result in marketers becoming more successful in their endeavour to reach generation Y consumers in their marketing efforts.

More importantly, however, this study provides insight into what attitudes generation Y have towards fast fashion and what would motivate them to limit or stop the consumption of fast fashion. Consequently, the result of this study can be utilized to discover how generation Y consumers could be persuaded to reduce their fast fashion consumption, which as we have established, is pertinent for the survival of our planet. Additionally, the authors hope to provide a contribution to the study made by Iyer and Muncy, 2009, since they were the main scholars that were focused on in this thesis.

7.2 **LIMITATIONS**

The authors of this thesis did come across certain limitations which might possibly have had an impact on the empirical findings and final analysis. As a clear target was chosen, Swedish students who belong to generation Y, the findings would be restricted and are never able to represent everyone. One needs to consider this while reading the analysis of the findings, as the result could have turned out differently if findings could be generalized. With the time constrains, the number of focus group and also participants had to be limited in order to gather the suitable amount of information and prevent an overwhelming amount of empirical findings. Hence, the conduction of smaller focus groups was chosen and executed. Another limitation identified was that the authors did have some kind of relationship to the people chosen for the focus groups. This can have the potential to make the study more biased and allows the authors to speculate the results before conducting the groups. However, this did not affect the result of performance. Additionally, a study has a risk of becoming limited when a specific type of individual is chosen as in this
situation where the participants were not picked randomly. This has the potential to include many participants who are alike and shares similar opinions and values. Hence, the findings become more limited than if various people characters were included.

7.3 Future Research

Since it was concluded that increased awareness about the destructive nature of fast fashion could be seen as a motivation for consumers to decrease fast fashion, this aspect could be of interest for future research. Further research could perhaps investigate how one could increase awareness to make consumers more conscious of the negative aspects of fast fashion. Moreover, this could also include spreading awareness of which companies are the better choice when it comes to for example, environmental aspects.

Another suggestion in order to dive further into the topic of anti-consumption related to fast fashion could be to look into another consumer segment when investigating. Since this study covers students, a majority of the participants of the study had financial shortage as a reason of why they purchased fast fashion. Therefore, it could be of interest to perform a similar study but with a consumer segment whom are not as restricted by financial aspects. Other aspects that could be covered in further research could be to do a study with consumers of different genders and ages in order to see if motivation and attitudes are different depending on age and/or gender.

Since the focus of this thesis was on attitudes and motivations towards the whole concept of anti-consumption, future research could be to dive deeper into a specific aspect of anti-consumption. Even though this thesis investigated all different aspects of anti-consumption of fast fashion, it could be of interest to study, for example, only the rejection-aspect of the anti-consumption movement.
8 REFERENCE LIST


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Figure explaining the relationship between concepts within anti-consumption

- Reject
- Restrict
- Reclaim
- Circular Economy
  - Second-hand
  - Renting or Leasing
  - Collaborative Consumption
APPENDIX B

Focus Group Guide

1. Name, age, gender.
2. How often do you go “shopping”?  
   a) Never - why?  
      i. Environmental reasons.  
      ii. Social reasons.  
      iii. Not materialistically bound  
   b) Rarely - why? What do you buy?  
      i. Environmental reason.  
      ii. Social reasons  
      iii. Not materialistically bound  
   c) Every month- why? What do you buy?  
   d) Every week - why? What do you buy?  

3. Do you prefer going shopping by yourself or in a group?  
   a) Why?  
   b) If you go shopping in a group, do you do it for the social experience?  

4. Are you influenced by others while shopping?  
   a) In what way do they influence you?  
   b) If your friend advised you not to buy something, would you still buy it?  

5. Do you tend to plan your clothing purchases, or is the shopping experience spontaneous?  
   a) If planned, what are the usual reasons for it?  
   b) If spontaneous, what type of products do you usually buy?
“Fast fashion - Inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends.”

6. Do you usually purchase fast fashion? Why?

7. What are your overall thoughts about fast fashion?

8. Would you consider reducing your consumption of fast fashion? How and why?

“Anti-consumption strives towards the end goal of minimizing the level of consumption and refers to individuals intentionally and meaningfully rejecting certain goods or services from their consumption cycle through either rejection (avoid consumption entirely), restriction (cutting, lowering or limiting consumption), or reclaiming (production rather than consumption).”

9. Would you say that you participate in some type of anti-consumption?
   a) What kind of strategy or reasons do you have?

10. Have you ever heard of “circular economy”?

11. Do you ever buy products second-hand?
   a) Is it because of trend reasons?
   b) Is it because it is seen as “environmentally friendly”?
   c) Any other reasons?

12. What are your overall thoughts about second hand?

13. Have you ever rented or leased goods rather than purchasing them?

14. Are you currently, or have you ever, shared your resources with others?

15. Are you aware of the phenomenon Black Friday?

16. Do you typically await Black Friday?

17. What do you typically purchase during Black Friday?

18. What is most important to you during Black Friday?
19. What do you enjoy most from Black Friday?
   a) Obtaining the lowest price possible.
   b) Discounts, lowest relative price possible (a lot cheaper than original price, even if it is not cheap per se)

20. Does your shopping behavior change during holidays?
   a) Do you buy more? Why?
   b) Do you buy less? Why? e.g. price sensitivity, economic reasons, et cetera.

18. Do you engage in brand-avoidance?
   a) If so, Why?
      i. Bad experience
      ii. To impact societal issues, for example global warming
   b) If not, are you brand-loyal?
APPENDIX C

Focus Group Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Focus Group

You have been asked to participate in a focus group with the purpose of understanding attitudes and motivation of Swedish students to decrease their consumption of fast fashion. Information gathered in this focus group will be used solely as primary data for our thesis.

Your participation in this focus group is voluntary and you may request to stop at any time.

The conversations conducted during this focus group will be recorded. The recordings will be used only for our thesis and your identity will remain anonymous.

Our aim in this thesis is to uncover the attitudes and motivations of Swedish students and all answers and opinions are valued. Thus, there are no correct or incorrect answers. Our intention is to provide an open and truthful discussion. We ask that you respect one another and keep the information discussed in this focus group confidential.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and accepted the information stated above. I agree to participate fully in this focus group and to comply with the above-mentioned requirements.

Name _______________________________________________________
Signature ____________________________________________________
Date _________________
**APPENDIX D**

Table 1

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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