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A Comparison of Consumers' Perceptions of Sustainable Supply Chains Between the Luxury and the Fast Fashion Industry

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

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Abstract

The ongoing trend of globalization and the resulting increase in consumer demand for fashion products have led to globally scattered supply chains throughout the industry. The awareness of sustainability issues within the fashion industry and the resulting developments in consumer demand regarding sustainably produced apparel has caused significant restructuring of traditional supply chains. Within the scope of this thesis, the differences in consumer perceptions towards sustainable supply chain practices between the luxury and the fast fashion industry shall be investigated. Furthermore, this thesis focuses on the extent to which consumer perceptions of sustainable supply chains influence visit intention and word of mouth marketing. For this purpose, a quantitative survey based on assumptions derived from existing literature has been conducted. The sample includes 100 valid participants. It has been shown that consumers consider supply chains within the fast fashion industry as unsustainable as within the luxury fashion industry. In addition, the experiment's results indicate that consumer perceptions towards sustainability have a positive impact on visit intention and word of mouth marketing. The conclusion of this thesis is that fashion brands should increasingly shift their focus on implementing sustainable supply chains, maintaining transparent information and transferring it to the public. Furthermore, the results indicate that following an environmentally and socially friendly supply chain strategy might also lead to economic benefits.

Keywords: Sustainability, supply chain, fast fashion industry, luxury fashion industry, consumer perceptions, visit intention, retailer trust

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WOM = word of mouth

1 Introduction

Through the ongoing process of globalization, many industries had to develop an international supply chain to stay competitive and relevant in the global market (Foerstl et al., 2010). The constant transnational movement and transportation of goods can also be found in the fashion industry and, consequently, also affects luxury as well as fast fashion brands and organizations (Caniato et al., 2011). Particularly, these companies have to ensure that the quality of goods and services does not decrease within their supply chains. Especially in the last years, the sustainability of these processes increased in importance not only for businesses or organizations but also for consumers. Kong et al. (2016) stated that the average customer prefers to rather purchase from sustainable brands than from businesses without a sustainable mindset. Another study conducted by Hill and Lee (2012) showed that 91.8% of Generation Y members promote and support environmentally friendly businesses. Several fashion enterprises developed strategies to adapt to this current trend. One corresponding approach discussed in this thesis will be implementing sustainable supply chain solutions to ensure that every participant of the supply chain acts according to rules and regulations set by the firm or state.

The current research found in literature does not sufficiently cover consumer perceptions towards sustainability within luxury fashion supply chains compared to fast fashion supply chains. The aim of this thesis is to evaluate sustainable actions taken in the luxury fashion industry with focus on their supply chain management, as well as in the fast fashion industry. This thesis analyzes corresponding consumer evaluations concerning sustainable supply chain structures and provides more detailed information about resulting perceptions. Hence, this thesis' main focus is the differences in consumers' perceptions between the fast fashion and luxury fashion industry. Furthermore, it aims to link the findings to the impact on consumers' visit intention, word-of-mouth marketing and general trust in the retailer. More formally, this thesis investigates the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do consumers' perceptions of sustainable supply chain practices differ between the luxury and fast fashion industry?

RQ2: To what extent do consumers' perceptions of sustainable supply chains influence retailer visit intention and word of mouth marketing?

Findings based on the online experiment will provide detailed information about the importance of a sustainable supply chain from the consumer's standpoint. Organizations can use the results as a basis for developing and structuring their global supply chains.

Throughout the empirical part of this thesis, the reader gains specific insights about the different consumer perceptions between the fast and luxury fashion industry concerning several sustainability aspects. Furthermore, an analysis of the impact of consumers' general knowledge about supply chains on their sustainability perceptions towards supply chains is provided. Additionally, this thesis aims to elaborate if sustainable supply chain perceptions positively influence consumers' trust in the retailer. Throughout the experiment conducted at the end of this thesis, the reader is provided with an analysis on how consumers' trust influences their visit intention. Finally, the thesis provides an evaluation of the impact of consumers' trust in the retailer on consumers' intention of word-of-mouth marketing.

The thesis' structure begins with an in-depth literature review concerning the fast and luxury fashion industry in general and is followed by an evaluation of the differences between these two industries. Furthermore, the author provides an overview of possible supply chain solutions which can be implemented within the fashion industry. In the subsequent chapters, a comparison of sustainable supply chains between the fast fashion and the luxury fashion industry is undertaken. The literature review ends with a detailed description about consumers' general perceptions towards sustainable supply chains. The methodology section deals with the empirical part mainly concerning the survey conducted throughout this thesis. Finally, the author provides a discussion of the results and further recommendations regarding possible future research opportunities.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Fashion Industry

The fast fashion industry in general is characterized by short product life cycles, large product variety and complex supply chain processes, in comparison to the luxury fashion industry, which has longer product life cycles since it aims to create more expensive and high-quality products (Şen, 2008). In general, the terms *fashion* and therefore *fashion industry* are very broad and cover many products and markets. This thesis focuses solely on the term fashion industry as the industry concerned with solely luxury and fast fashion and excludes utility wear such as working clothes and uniforms. Given the properties of the industry, the current thesis will concentrate on the luxury fashion industry and the fast fashion industry. Examples of luxury fashion brands would be *Gucci*, *Balenciaga* and *Versace* (Brun et al., 2008). The fast fashion industry includes fashion brands such as *Zara* (Christopher et al., 2004), *H&M* (Li et al., 2014) and *C&A* (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). Consumers in both industries increasingly pay attention to environmental aspects and impacts of the fashion industry (Yang et al., 2017).

Due to the rise of globalization throughout the past two decades, the demand for apparel has significantly increased and, consequently, the fashion industry' supply chains have grown in complexity. The large amounts of apparel sales caused sustainable development within the textile industry to become a main issue of fashion retailing (Yang et al., 2017). Due to a highly competitive market, fashion brands must constantly change their entire product line in order to keep their customers satisfied (Christopher et al., 2004). By regularly adding completely new merchandise within fashion stores, the processes within the supply chain concerned with production, manufacturing and distribution experienced an exponentially increasing need for operating as fast as possible to respond to the market's demand. According to Christopher et al. (2004), particularly the fast fashion industry changes their product line significantly more frequently, in comparison to the luxury fashion industry. The fast fashion retailer *Zara* for instance is known for its rapid change in product lines which amounts to more than 20 different seasons per year. Therefore, adjusting these

business strategies within the fashion industry to the rising trend of sustainable and environmentally friendly supply chain management is a major issue (Yang et al., 2017).

In general, two types of strategies can be observed within the fashion industry. Some fashion companies choose to target the mass market, sell their products at low prices and consequently make them available for a larger number of customers. Other companies choose not to operate in the mass market and aim to provide more exclusive and expensive products and therefore decrease the availability for potential customers (Brun et al., 2008). In the following, each industry will be explained in detail.

2.1.1 The Luxury Fashion Industry

Within this study, the term 'luxury' refers to fashion products representing wealth, high quality, exclusivity as well as goods which satisfy the needs for nonessential requirements (Brun et al, 2008). The luxury segment within the fashion industry belongs to one of the fastest growing industries worldwide and is expected to continually grow by about three to five percent until 2025 (Marefat, 2019). According to Brun et al. (2008), the Italian luxury fashion industry including for instance *Balenciaga*, *Gucci* and *Versace* accounted for 27,5% of luxury goods sold all around the world. Furthermore, the researchers claim that total global sales of Italian luxury fashion goods amounted to 26 billion Euros in 2006. In former years, the luxury fashion industry was more restricted to a low number of locations such as its origin cities Milano and Paris (Djelic & Ainamo, 1999). Nowadays, due to constant and significant growth, luxury brands expanded their sales over domestic borders to reach a larger number of customers. Consequently, the brand image as well as company messages increasingly gained more relevance.

Customers are increasingly paying attention to emotional factors such as brand identification and rational factors such as the exquisiteness in detail (Kim et al., 2016). In the past decades, several important aspects of luxury fashion products evolved. These variables include, among others, uniqueness, quality, product complexity and product variety (Caniato et al., 2011). Uniqueness and quality are the characteristics which set luxury brands apart from the mass market. Examples of luxury fashion brands are *Louis Vuitton, Prada* and *Gucci* (De Angelis et al., 2015; Fernie et al., 2010).

Compared to luxury fashion brands, companies operating within the fast fashion industry lay much more focus on the cost factor when making decisions about their supply chain strategy (Brun et al., 2008). The reason for that is that luxury fashion consumers are willing to pay more for the products because of the comparatively higher quality than fast fashion consumers. Furthermore, many fashion brands outsource their production process entirely, and additionally, their suppliers are located in several countries scattered across the globe (Brun et al., 2008). Especially the luxury fashion segment has to carefully select its suppliers and manufacturers due to the importance of maintaining high quality. Consequently, supply chains result in high complexity levels, since they source raw materials such as leather from Italy, cashmere wool from India and crocodile leather from Australia. Brun et al. (2008) implies that luxury brands are well aware of their environmental and social sustainability performance since they usually apply supply chain managers in control. Sources concerning shared information along the supply chain about working condition, fair wages and child work are scarce. Brun et al. (2008) claim that supply chain information which is shared with the fashion brand often only considers performance, production plans and forecasts.

This thesis focuses on the differences between luxury fashion and fast fashion in terms of sustainable supply chains. Hence, the next chapter provides a detailed description about the characteristics of the fast fashion industry.

2.1.2 The Fast Fashion Industry

The fast fashion industry's strategy is characterized by creating and producing apparel and other fashion products inspired by the designs and looks from luxury fashion's products and selling them at a lower quality and therefore at lower prices to the mass (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). In comparison to the luxury fashion industry, characteristics such as uniqueness, quality, product complexity and emotional factors such as brand identification (see Chapter 2.1.1) do not play such an important role. Furthermore, from a company's perspective, the characteristics of the fast fashion industry result in shortened product life cycles and more seasons within a year, which highly differentiates the fast fashion industry from the luxury fashion industry. Other supply chain requirements would be the need for flexible manufacturing and design capabilities or fast supply of raw materials (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

Due to the previously mentioned reasons, the focus of companies operating in this sector lies on implementing a rather responsive supply chain strategy (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). To ensure its maintainance, these steps have to happen at very short lead times. A research conducted by Bhardwaj and Fairhurst (2010) demonstrates that the fast fashion industry, specifically concerning the apparel industry, has significantly changed over the past 30 years. Many characteristics appearing within this industry, such as constant change in fashion concerning looks and style, lead to a shift within companies' supply chain strategies operating within this sector (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010). For instance, retailers are faced with a steadily changing market and consequently have to adjust and adapt their overall strategy to a flexible, fast and responsive strategy in order to preserve a beneficial and profitable position in the market. In order to compensate the costs of a responsive and flexible supply chain, companies within the fast fashion industry aim to attract as many customers as often as possible into their stores. Hence, the average product life cycles of fast fashion apparel are significantly shorter compared to the luxury fashion industry (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

A research conducted by Turker and Altuntas (2014) concluded that the fast fashion industry has been operating within both developing and developed countries. The constantly increasing importance of sustainable business operations have led to companies expanding their focus on sustainability. The research claims that an increasing number of companies within the fast fashion industry have implemented regulations in order to ensure improved working conditions, quality standards and fair wages throughout their complex supply chains (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). Examples of fast fashion companies responding to the ongoing developments of environmental sustainability and social responsibility would be *Zara, H&M, GAP* and *UNIQLO* (Li et al., 2014). To provide a more detailed comparison between the luxury and the fast fashion industry, the following chapter aims to summarize their most important differences in relation to this thesis.

2.2 Differences Between Fast Fashion and Luxury Fashion Industry

This chapter is mainly concerned with the major differences of the fast fashion industry compared to the luxury fashion industry. The author describes the distinctions in terms of strategy and product life cycles. Later on, a detailed

description and specification of supply chains differences within fast fashion brands and luxury fashion brands is given (see Chapter 2.4). Furthermore, different sustainable actions implemented within the supply chains are discussed and compared in detail (see Chapter 2.3).

The overall business strategy of fast fashion brands is characterized by responsive production capabilities focusing on strengthened product design in order to achieve sufficient inventory for satisfying uncertain demand (Cachon & Swinney, 2011). In contrast to luxury fashion, fast fashion sells apparel at cheaper and more affordable prices (Caro & Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015). Due to responsive production capabilities, the fast fashion industry needs a highly responsive supply chain. The literature concerning supply chains within the luxury fashion industry is rather scarce, however, Brun et al. (2008) state that companies within this industry maintain a responsive supply chain strategy as well, but with a higher focus on efficiency. The product life cycles of fast fashion apparel are characterized by short durations due to low quality manufacturing and the fast response to latest fashion trends (Zamani et al., 2017). Within the luxury fashion industry, an efficient supply chain strategy, the careful selection of suppliers, manufacturers and high-quality materials are responsible for product life cycles with longer durations (Brun et al, 2008). After this more general differentiation, the following sections elaborate on specific factors that constitute the differences between fast fashions' and luxury fashions' supply chains concerning their overall strategies. Furthermore, the researchers identified several significant factors differentiating the luxury fashions' supply chains from those of the fast fashion: *product quality, style and design, country of origin, emotional appeal, brand reputation* and *creation of lifestyle.*

The subsequent chapter provides a detailed overview of international supply chain structures within the fashion industry in order to enhance the readers' overall understanding about their functionality.

2.2.1 Global Supply Chains in the Fashion Industry

Scientific sources concerning global supply chains in the fashion industry predominantly refer to the textile and apparel industry in the US. This particular industry accounts for 22,000 companies and employs around 675,000 people (Şen,

2008). In general, the supply chain of an US fashion brand consists of fiber producers, apparel manufacturers or industrial textile manufacturers and retailers which sell the final products. Between all these supply chain stages, increasingly high numbers of miles are covered by transportation (Vidal & Goetschalckx, 2001). Figure 1 describes and compares the average breakdown of costs related to producing a T-Shirt (Figure 1).

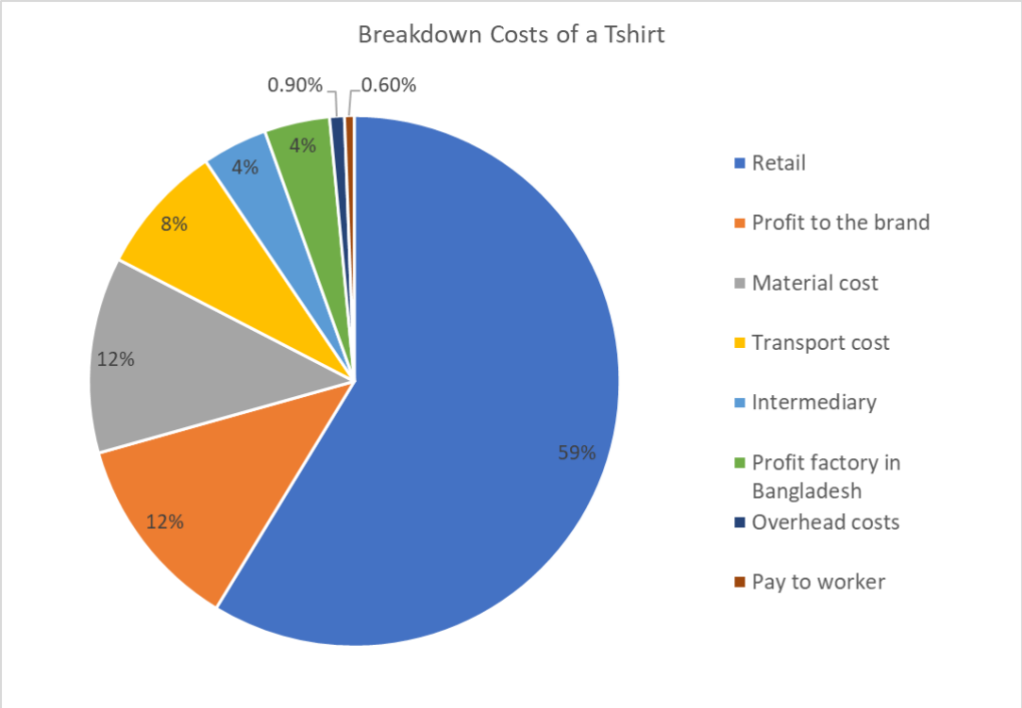

Figure 1 Cost Breakdown of a T-Shirt own illustration based on International Trade Union Confederation (2016), p. 9

Figure 1 visualizes the costs linked to buying a regular T-Shirt. The uneven distribution of the original cost of the product is due to large global supply chains in which every single participant profits from the T-shirt's price. Retailing makes up most of the costs and the actual payment of the worker, who has sewn the shirt, amounts to 0.6% of the total cost. In addition to retail, intermediaries, transportion costs, material costs, factories, and other supply chain members visualized in Figure 1 receive a major share from the actual T-shirt price. Consequently, a very small share is spent for the workers who created the actual product (Figure 1).

A study by Brun et al. (2006), in which 12 Italian luxury fashion brands have been observed, investigates the main operation areas of supply chains within the luxury

fashion industry as following: Managing production as well as decisions about sourcing or outsourcing certain steps of the supply chain are success factors of the luxury fashion's supply chain. Supply chain strategies are aiming to most suitably match company goals to generate increased customer value and to reach strategic fit (Cigolini et al., 2004). Furthermore, managers must focus on balancing production and demand in order to receive strategic fit regarding the perfect settlement between a responsive and an efficient supply chain. Aitken et al. (2003) state that in general fashion industries' supply chains are characterized by a rather responsive supply chain strategy since they must be innovative for covering new trends and movements. When comparing global supply chains of luxury fashion brands with those of fast fashion brands, some significant differences can be observed. For instance, the fast fashion industry must focus much more on responsive supply chains rather than efficient supply chains. Supply chains within luxury fashion do not have the need to be as reactive as those of fast fashion since their products mostly involve hand-made details and consequently longer manufacturing lead times (Cigolini et al., 2004).

Many apparel brands do not offer only one type of product but a wide range of fashion products such as shoes, watches, jewelry and parfums (Brun et al., 2006). Consequently, companies within the fashion industry maintain several supply chains for each product division. Furthermore, a significant difference concerning the number of launches within a year can be observed. The fast fashion industry launches much more collections each year compared to the luxury fashion industry which orientates its collection on seasonal factors (Brun et al., 2006). This aspect is another reason why the fast fashion industry maintains a rather responsive supply chain strategy compared to the luxury fashion industry.

The following table shows a comparison between the famous fast fashion brands *Mango, C&A, H&M* and *Inditex* (owning among others *Zara, Pull & Bear, Massimo Dutti* and *Bershka* (Inditex, 2021)) based on the information gained from sustainability reports concerning their suppliers (Table 1). Inditex, as one of the world's largest fashion retailers, counts a total number of 1434 suppliers to their supply chain. C&A and Mango are partnering with respectively 785 suppliers in total. Mango, as the smallest fashion retailer among these brands, counts 264 suppliers of garments and accessories to its supply chain.

Table 1 Number of Suppliers own illustration based on Turker & Altuntas (2014), p. 841

Fast Fashion Brand	Headquarter	Number of Suppliers
Mango	Barcelona (Spain)	264
C&A	Brussels (Belgium)	785
H&M	Stockholm (Sweden)	785
Inditex	A Coruña (Spain)	1434

Table 1 visualizes how complex and scattered the supply chain network within the fast fashion industry can get (Table 1). The careful selection and controlling of suppliers, which is also conducted within these four brands, can become very challenging (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

Empirical evidence suggests that, in the past years, the luxury fashion industry has not faced as many concerns about their environmental and social responsibilities in comparison to the fast fashion industry (Winston, 2016). Nevertheless, the increasing importance has led businesses selling luxury apparel to expand their focus on luxury sustainability. In former years, the luxury's exclusiveness, quality and therefore higher pricing have protected the industry from scandals and damaged images (Karaosman, et al., 2018). In 2017, several luxury fashion brands such as *Dior*, *Hermès* and *Louis Vuitton* got admonished due to toxic chemicals found in their children's wear products. Furthermore, it was reported that *Louis Vuitton* produced some of its leather wear products in the low labor cost country Romania, even though it marked them as 'Made in Italy' (Lembke, 2017).

In the next chapters, the author elaborates the importance as well as issues concerning sustainability within fashion supply chains in general.

2.2.2 Sustainability within Global Supply Chains of the Fashion Industry

Environmental sustainability of global supply chains within the fashion industry has increasingly gained importance in recent years (Caniato et. al., 2011). Managers are challenged with finding a perfect balance between acting sustainably or socially responsible while satisfying the economic interests of the businesses. Due to the high visibility and interest from the public, companies are constantly confronted with sustainability issues (Pookulangara & Shephard, 2013). Fashion companies

themselves are often held responsible when disregarding social or environmentally friendly practices, even though these problems are caused by their suppliers or other members within their supply chain. Research shows that the fashion industry's total environmental impact is significantly increasing (McKinsey, 2019). For example, as Caniato et al. (2011) state, the fashion industry accounts for 9.3% of employees all around the world and for 4% of exports worldwide which result in generally higher greenhouse gas emissions. Within the luxury fashion industry, 97% of economic output is generated by around 20 companies (McKinsey, 2019) and only 1% of used materials get recycled (Hermann, 2017). Another significant environmental impact of the fashion industry results from the production processes. The different phases within such processes like dyeing, drying and finishing involve wasteful usages of chemicals and natural resources (Caniato et. al., 2011). Furthermore, a large number of international fashion brands outsource their entire production process into low-labor cost countries, such as China, Bangladesh, Serbia and Italy (Guler et al., 2016). The production of average fashion items, such as a T-shirt (Figure 1), must pass all phases of dyeing, drying, weaving, finishing, cutting and sewing. These production phases are separately performed by different globally scattered manufacturers, which additionally increases transportation routes and their CO2 impact.

A research conducted by Khurana and Ricchetti (2015) suggests dividing the sustainability issues occurring within supply chains of the fast fashion and luxury fashion industry into three categories: Social sustainability, environmental sustainability and economic sustainability. The following three chapters analyze these pillars of sustainability in more detail and elaborate their importance within the fashion industry.

2.2.3 Social Sustainability within Global Supply Chains of the Fashion Industry

Especially the apparel industry has faced many disruptions concerned with several sustainability scandals in the past decades. *Nike, H&M, Adidas* (Turker & Altuntas, 2014) and luxury fashion brands such as *Louis Vuitton, Dior* or *Hermes* have been faced with public backlashes and negative news coverage (Karaosman et al., 2018). Particularly the successful fast fashion brand *H&M* has caught the attention of the general public since it was confronted with many scandals of child labor in Myanmar,

Bangladesh and Cambodia (Schuhmacher, 2018). The issue of low working conditions has drastically increased in the past years due to globalization (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2015). Supply chains in the fashion industry have grown into complex networks consisting of many different parties spread out over several countries and locations. In general, 70% of supply chain's workforce within the fashion industry consists of young and low educated workers (Allwood et al., 2006). The legislation of labor in countries such as China, Bangladesh, India or Thailand is weak, which consequently leads to unfair wages, poor working conditions and child labor (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2015). Another important aspect of social sustainability would be consumer safety. This subject is mainly concerned with dangerous and unhealthy chemicals used for the production of apparel (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2015).

A study conducted by Karaosman et. al. (2018) states that fashion companies operating internationally have to face many challenges such as the implementation of social and environmental protection regulations within their supply chain. The supply chains segments of the fashion industry causing the most significant negative impact on the environment are their suppliers. Irresponsible behaviors such as poor working conditions, child work and low wages could harm a firm's image and consequently its overall sustainability performance (Karaosman et. al, 2018). The research concludes that a fashion company's sustainability performance cannot be presumed better than those of its suppliers (Sancha et al., 2016). Therefore, businesses operating in the fast and luxury fashion industry must focus on a strategy which is concerned with improving the sustainability performance of the organization itself as well as those of its suppliers (Fritz et al., 2017). The reason for suppliers not meeting the necessary sustainable requirements are consumers' and business' mostly unfeasible suppositions of fast production and supply as well as correlating costs (Perry et al., 2015).

Many different possibilities arise when adjusting and adapting a more sustainable strategy. Some apparel companies apply actions such as green marketing as a mean to influence customers buying decision which automatically forces suppliers to act in the same way. Other examples would be a change in return policies which influence suppliers in order to ensure reduced waste generated through unsold apparel (Li et al., 2014).

2.2.4 Environmental Sustainability within Global Supply Chains of the Fashion Industry

The environmental sustainability issues within global supply chains have increased due to globalization and expectations of strong and fast economic performance of businesses (Seuring et al., 2008). In 2003, the apparel industry was held responsible for accounting about 6% of total global warming potential based on Europe's household consumption (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2015). A research conducted by Kant (2012) claims that 20 % of industrial water pollution are due to the environmentally harmful processes during the production and manufacturing of the end-product such as dying and other finishing treatments (Kant, 2012). The World Health Organization (2008) published that the fashion industry's impact on the environment is significant since it accounts for about 9.4% of world's employees and almost 5% of worldwide exports. Due to these issues, the pressure on the fashion industry is constantly increasing and forcing them to implement and adjust their business and supply chain strategy to the ongoing trend of acting environmentally and socially responsible (Caniato et al., 2011). Some brands within the apparel industry are more exposed to the public such as *C&A* and *H&M* because of their scandals of using transgenic cotton during their production processes. Nevertheless, Caniato et al. (2011) state that, in most cases, the environmental and social issues of fashion brands are caused by their suppliers, manufacturers and producers throughout their supply chain.

2.2.5 Economic Sustainability

This chapter deals with the impacts of sustainable strategies implemented in businesses and supply chains on their corporate economy. Economic sustainability refers to the term sustainability as a driver for corporate economic success (Schaltegger, 2011). From a financial perspective, sustainable attributes and actions can either be seen as increased costs or added values (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2011). Most importantly, sustainable adjustments to the fashion industry's supply chains can generate value for stakeholders. In general, fashion brands which claim to implement sustainable actions within their business strategy were reported to have a more positive brand image which in turn increases overall sales (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2011). A steadily rising number of consumers significantly focusing on fair-trade and environmentally friendly produced apparel (Mol, 2015), as well as a higher demand

for improved transparency concerning fashion brands' supply chain practices has emerged over the past decades. Consequently, the need for a sustainable supply chain in this industry is often described as essential in order to keep customers satisfied (Strähle & Köksal, 2015).

Based on the previously defined issues and possibilities concerning social, environmental and economic sustainability, this thesis provides a description about possible solutions for fast and luxury fashion industry's supply chains.

2.3 Sustainable Supply Chain Solutions of the Fashion Industry

Due to many scandals within the fashion industry (Hogarth, 2015) (also see Chapter 2.2), most of these companies have shifted their focus on global supply chain management (Caniato et. al., 2011). Nowadays, many fashion retailers such as *Zara*, *Benetton*, *Adidas* and *Victoria's Secret* include the reduction of environmental impacts within their business strategies (Hogarth, 2015). The relevance of sufficient use of resources has become more important and encouraged through global competition. For instance, some companies launched green collaborations with socially and environmentally responsible companies such as *Gucci* collaborating with UNICEF (UNICEF, 2015).

Over time, many different opportunities evolved to reduce supply chains' environmental footprints within the fashion industry. One very common method is shifting to organic fibres since it prevents the usage of toxic chemicals (Caniato et al., 2011). Examples of those fibres would be organic cotton, wool, kapok or silk. Another strategy is to reduce and recycle used materials as well as vintage practices and secondhand sales. Developing and designing green products is concerned with using environmentally friendly materials within the entire production process. However, sustainable aspects must not only be considered throughout the production process, but also in supply chain management. Therefore, to maintain sustainability in fashion, collaborations and involvements of members within global supply chains is necessary (Caniato et al., 2011).

Further important aspects of luxury fashion supply chains are the consequences of the product's quality (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). To ensure excellent quality, luxury fashion

brands are more or less forced to sufficiently control and manage their supply chains. Therefore, a constant exchange and close collaboration with supply chain partners is necessary. According to Yang et al. (2017), retailers play a significant role within the fashion industry's supply chain and therefore can have a significant impact on environmental management. Since fashion retailers are the contact point between customers and fashion brands, the retailers have, for example, the chance to provide information on environmental and social issues throughout the distribution channels (Yang et al., 2017). By providing information about this topic and by adjusting their services and products such as delivery, packaging and their commitment to the current and ongoing trend of acting sustainably, retailers can have a significant impact on social and environmental sustainability. These implementations might force manufacturers, suppliers and producers along the supply chain to improve their processes and result in high impact on customers consumption behaviors.

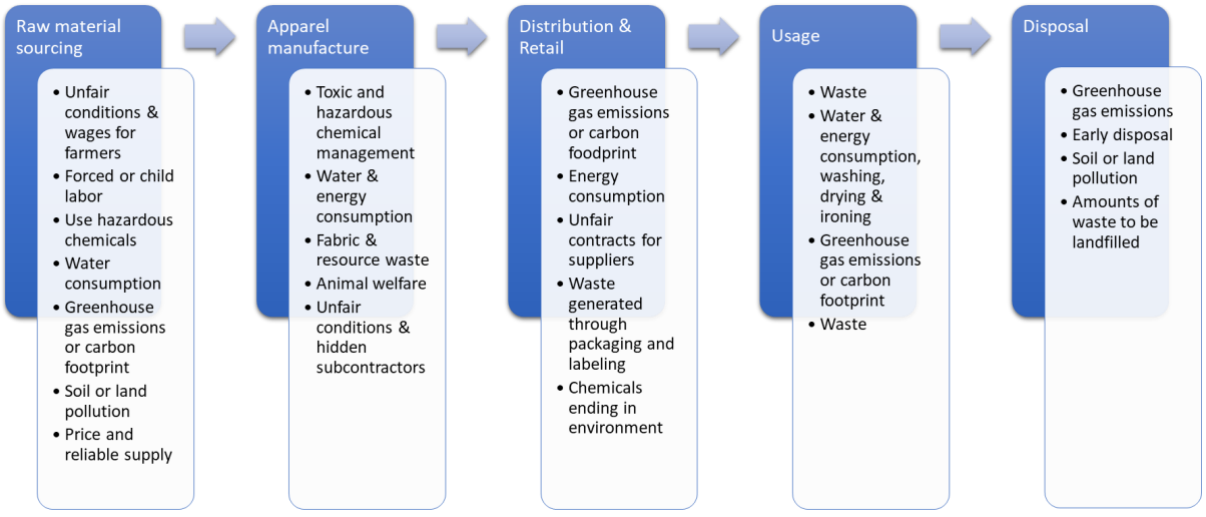

Figure 2: Luxury fashion industry supply chain processes and resulting social and environmental issues own illustration based on Muthu, 2020, p. 2-26

Figure 2 visualizes the general steps and processes within a typical supply chain of the fashion industry and its correlating environmental and social issues. The process starts with raw material sourcing, continues with apparel manufacture, distribution, and usage, and ends with the disposal of the final products (Figure 2). The process of raw material sourcing within the fashion industry's supply chain often implies unfair wages, poor working conditions and even forced or child labor. Apparel manufacturing includes massive usage of hazardous chemicals and waste of

resources. The distribution and retail within different supply chain processes as well as the final supply of the retail store causes significantly harmful greenhouse gas emissions and packaging pollution (Figure 2).

Researchers such as Caniato et al. (2011) have identified various steps within the fashion industry's supply chains, but none of them has shown the significant environmental actions throughout the luxury fashion supply chains. This thesis aims to explicitly describe the main steps companies in the luxury fashion industry take, to reduce their environmental impacts and to act more socially responsibly. Table 2 visualizes and compares the six different stages of a supply chain in the fashion industry and their corresponding sustainability strategies (Table 2).

Table 2 The phases of supply chains within the fashion industry and corresponding strategies to act more sustainably (self-developed)

Phases of Supply Chains in the Fashion Industry	Sustainability Strategies
Raw material	• Use of organic fibres • Recyclable material • No chemical products • Upcycling • Fair trade partners
Supplier	• Reduce transportation routes • Low carbon emission transportations • Reduce distances • Transparency regulations • Sustainability certificates
Manufacturing	• Strict ethical labor laws • Diversity • Adequate working conditions • Fair wages • Job security (no seasonal jobs)
Transportation	• Reduce transportation routes • Mass shipping in a bulk • Increased usage of environmentally friendly vehicles • Reduced packaging • Reusable packaging
Retailer	• Recycling • Second hand • Sustainable packaging • Diversity • Promote donations towards sustainability projects
Fashion brand	• Donations • Controls • Green collaborations • Transparency of supply chain • Take immediate actions • Slow fashion • Systematic supplier selection

The raw material phase involves sustainable strategies such as the use of organic fibres. As previously mentioned, examples of fibres would be organic cotton, wool, kapok or silk (Caniato et al., 2011). The supplier can reduce its environmental footprint by decreasing transportation routes through bulk/mass deliveries and locating itself close to the manufacturer (Vidal & Goetschalckx, 2001). The manufacturing sector has many issues concerning poor working conditions, forced labor and child labor which can be prevented by strict labor laws (Garetti & Taisch, 2011). Through reusable and reduced packaging, the supplier can also participate in acting more sustainably (Foerstl et al., 2010). The retailer and the fashion brand itself can implement several potential strategies such as recycling programs of unsold goods, diversity within their workforce and collaboration with social and environmental organizations (UNICEF, 2015). Additionally, the fashion brand can prevent issues concerning sustainability in advance, by systematically selecting their suppliers based on environmental, social and economic aspects (Luthra et al., 2017).

This thesis mainly focuses on the differences concerning sustainability within supply chains between the fast and luxury fashion industry. Hence, the following chapters provide a detailed analysis of these industries in terms of sustainable supply chains.

2.4 Comparison of Sustainable Supply Chains between the Fast Fashion Industry and the Luxury Fashion Industry

As mentioned in Chapter 2.2, the fast fashion industry operated within more responsive supply chains than the luxury fashion industry. The main reasons for those supply chain strategies are that cost issues are not as relevant for the luxury industry as for the fast fashion industry since the luxury apparel brands rather focus on high quality and high service durations (see Chapter 2.1.2). In comparison to the fast fashions' apparel products, the luxury fashion goods include exclusive hand-made details which cannot be obtained by operating within a reactive and responsive supply chain (see Chapter 2.1.1). Another strategy maintained by fast fashion brands which is significantly different to the luxury fashion's strategy is the number of collections they introduce each year (Zamani et al, 2017). A research conducted by Hut et al. (2014) came to the result that brands within the fast fashion industry such as *Zara* and *H&M* constantly try to achieve a short interval of three to five weeks when launching

new clothing collections. A study about 12 Italian luxury fashion brands concluded that luxury brands in particular do not launch more than two clothing lines per year on average (Brun et al., 2008).

2.4.1 Sustainable Supply Chains in the Fast Fashion Industry

This chapter focuses on the sustainable actions implemented in supply chains of the fast fashion industry. At the beginning, the author analyzes the extent to which the strategies and parties within supply chains act environmentally and socially sustainable and continues with a comparison with the luxury fashion industry in the following chapter.

In general, through the ongoing trend of globalization and linked awareness of environmental and social issues, the fast fashion industry increasingly addresses these concerns regarding their supply chain strategy (Li et al., 2014). For instance, a research conducted by Li et al. (2014) concludes that famous fast fashion brands such as *ZARA, H&M* and *GAP* are using green marketing to influence consumers' buying behavior and consequently aim to change suppliers' business strategies to be more socially and environmentally friendly as well (Ye Li & Chen, 2013) (see also Chapter 2.2). Green marketing includes strategies which aim to satisfy consumers' desire to decrease the impact of their purchase behavior on the national and social environment (Ongkrutraksa, 2007).

The previously mentioned companies strive for a common awareness concerning environmental and social issues among all parties throughout their supply chain (Li et al., 2014). Many supply chains within the fast fashion industry have been redesigned based on the sustainable issues in order to meet stakeholders' interests and to find the equilibrium between their economic, social and environmental performance. Through the supply chain strategy which is based on influencing consumers' buying behavior by making them more aware of environmental and social sustainability issues, the fast fashion brands can reduce uncertainty and risk linked to consumers' purchase behavior. By implementing this strategy, companies operating as fast fashion brands can reduce their environmental footprint and act more sustainably. However, many sustainability issues still exist within the fast fashion industry, as for instance, many suppliers and manufacturers of famous fast fashion brands

consistently refuse to change their environmental behavior and still treat their employees poorly (Li et al., 2014).

Many companies operating within the fast fashion industry have increasingly realized the potential advantages of acting environmentally and socially sustainable (Joy & Peña, 2017). By acting more sustainably, fast fashion brands may gain competitive advantage because of their resulting product differentiation and improved market position. Furthermore, another advantage of implementing sustainable action would be the reduction in cost caused by a reduction of waste such as packaging materials (Da Giau et al., 2016). A research conducted by Winter and Lasch (2016) interviewed six companies operating in the fast fashion industry based on the environmental and social criteria applied when selecting suppliers and manufacturers. Overall, the results show that fast fashion brands increasingly focus on the careful selection of their suppliers and manufacturers. These brands undergo a long and complex application process including an evaluation which supplier or manufacturer fits their overall strategy and objectives best. Table 3 visualizes the results from the interviews with six fast fashion companies and their environmental and social criteria applied when selecting suppliers and manufacturers (Table 3).

Table 3 illustrates the environmental and social criteria applied by fast fashion brands throughout their careful selection of suppliers (Winter & Lasch, 2016). The companies interviewed for this particular study have not been named.

Table 3 Environmental and social criteria applied by 6 companies operating within the fast fashion industry; own visualization based on Winter & Lasch (2016), p. 184

Category	Criteria	Companies
Social Criteria	No child labor	6
	Working hours	5
	No forced labor	4
	No discrimination	4
	Employment compensation	4
	Freedom of association	4
	Health and safety practices	4
	No disciplinary and security practices	2
	Employment contract and working permission	2
Environmental Criteria	End-of-pipe control (wastewater treatment system)	6
	Use of environmentally friendly material	5
	Carbon and hazardous substance management	2

Table 3 shows that all interviewed companies claim that *no child labor* is one of the most important considerations when analyzing their supplier selection. Only five out of six fast fashion brands list fair *working hours* among their main supplier criteria. However, four of the interviewed brands claim that factors such as *no forced labor*, *no discrimination*, *employment compensation*, *freedom of association* and *health and safety practices* are important when selecting suppliers (Table 3). In general, it can be said that many fast fashion brands focus on social sustainability aspects but, however, some companies still seem to not address social and environmental issues within their supply chain. Furthermore, the companies were asked whether they apply any environmental criteria throughout their selection. All companies' suppliers should have an end-of-pipe control system implemented in order to manage their wastewater treatment. Additionally, five out of six brands state that their suppliers should also use environmentally friendly materials. Nevertheless, only two out of those companies who claimed that the usage of environmentally friendly material is crucial, state that their suppliers control and manage the waste generated through carbon and hazardous substances (Table 3).

Table 4 below describes the process and criteria for selecting and controlling suppliers in the fast fashion industry.

Table 4 Process for selecting and controlling suppliers in the fast fashion industry, cited from Winter & Lasch (2016), p. 185

Criteria	Companies
Code of Conduct	5
Audit in supplier selection	5
Audit in supplier controlling	6
Checklist with defined criteria	4
Improvement of sustainability performance	3

Within almost every company's process of supplier selection, the code of conduct, an audit in supplier selection, an audit in supplier controlling and a checklist with defined criteria are included. Winter and Lasch (2016) found out that only two out of six fashion brands' suppliers provide information about the improvement of sustainability performance and their sustainability department (Table 4). To conclude, still many social and environmental, but mainly environmental, issues and challenges emerge in the fast fashion's supply chain which are not being dealt with.

2.4.2 Sustainable Supply Chains in the Luxury Fashion Industry

This chapter deals with the role of social and environmental sustainability within luxury fashion brands' supply chains. In the past years, the luxury fashion industry has not been associated with environmental and social issues within its supply chains to the same extent as the fast fashion industry (Karaosman et al., 2018). Profiteering and using raw materials and other resources necessary to produce apparel increasingly and continuously leads to exploitation and results in major environmental and social issues (Freise et al., 2015). As well as the fast fashion industry, the luxury fashion industry also needed to shift their focus to a more sustainable supply chain strategy than before (Karaosman, 2018). As mentioned in Chapter 2.2, fashion brands are dependent of their suppliers' performances (Sancha et al., 2016). The luxury fashion industry stands out through its high quality and exclusively designed products but the change in consumer and stakeholder expectations has shifted their focus on luxury sustainability (Karaosman, 2018). Higher prices, better quality and superior designs have protected the luxury fashion industry from negative associations with environmental and social issues, but in recent years, consumers' attitudes and expectations have changed which shed the light on this industry, too (O'Flaherty, 2017). For example, a research conducted by Greenpeace in 2014 found out that famous fashion brands such as *Dior*, *Hermès* and *Louis Vuitton* included the usage of hazardous chemicals for the production of children's apparel (Karaosman, 2018).

Nowadays, consumers of the luxury fashion industry expect a well-structured sustainability plan from luxury fashion brands which covers the areas of social and environmental sustainability and transparency (Marefat, 2019).

Academic resources regarding to which extent luxury fashion brands implement sustainable actions within their supply chain are scarce, however Marefat (2019) suggested several solutions for these types of companies to overcome social and environmental issues: developing new technologies which aim to reduce population's environmental footprint, lowering exploitation of raw materials and other resources, provide transparency on each level of their supply chains and beyond and to respond to the needs of those who work at the bottom of the supply chain to ensure fair wages, safe working conditions and no forced labor. Furthermore, the researcher also

provided sustainable solutions for each process within the supply chain to illustrate that acting socially and environmentally friendly is feasible for luxury fashion brands.

In an interview conducted by Karaosman et al. (2018) with Production Managers of luxury fashion brands, they stated that: *"Raw materials come from all over the world: cotton from Egypt or Turkey, polyester from Bulgaria or Romania, silk from India or China...the raw silk comes from China to Como then receives dyeing and other elaboration.... we do not exactly know all the components within (the fabrics)"* (p.657) and *"Before the textile arrives to us, we don't know which kind of tests the suppliers have done"* (p.657).

Karaosman et al. (2018) therefore conclude that many fashion brands within the luxury industry are not sufficiently reducing their environmental impact or implementing sustainable practices such as mentioned above.

2.5 Consumers' Perceptions towards Sustainable Supply Chains

The following chapter is concerned with consumers' perceptions towards sustainable supply chains in terms of the importance of transparency and the impact on their purchase intention. It covers the general expectations consumers have about the supply chain of fast fashion industries compared to luxury fashion industries in terms of sustainability. In Chapter 2.5.1, the dissimilarities of consumers' perceptions are presented as well as attitudes towards the described industries. As previously stated in Table 1, there are various strategies for participants within the supply chain of the fashion industry to act more sustainably. As seen in Figure 1, the uneven distribution of costs within the supply chain causes poor working conditions, forced labor and child labor. Research shows that the average customer would pay more for a fashion item, if it would have been produced within a sustainable background (Kong et al., 2016). A study undertaken by Jessica Hill and Hyun-Hwa Lee in 2012 found out that 91.8% of Generation Y supports sustainability regardless of their social class. These numbers are very general and are not specific for the luxury fashion sector. The aim of the thesis is to define the exact actions taken in the luxury fashion industry and especially in their supply chain to participate in acting more sustainably.

As mentioned in Chapter 2.1.7, an increasing number of consumers focus on environmentally and socially friendly produced apparel. Consequently, a higher demand for transparent supply chain has arisen over the past decades (see Chapter 2.1.7). Researchers found out that the supply chain strategy of fashion brands has a significant impact on the social and natural environment, therefore, sustainable actions should be considered by businesses operating within the fashion industry (Strähle & Köksal, 2015). The results of several studies show that, in general, the traditional apparel consumer is willing to pay more for a sustainably produced item if the according marketing strategy is perceived as successful. Sustainably produced apparel, which was not promoted and marketed well, and therefore not enough information about the actual production process was made available for the consumer, is not perceived as valuable (Strähle & Köksal, 2015). Based on the outcomes of those studies, Guo et al. (2020), Jordan and Rasmussen (2018), and Caniato et al. (2012), have identified significant transparency issues concerning social and environmental sustainability within supply chains of fashion brands.

However, it has not been discussed yet whether there is a significant difference between the transparency perceptions of consumers concerning fast fashion brands compared to luxury fashion brands. A research conducted by Aytekin and Büyükahraz in 2013 found out that, generally, the awareness of social and natural environmental issues has an impact on consumers' purchase intention and their willingness to pay more. Additionally, the more aware and concerned consumers are, the higher the impact on their willingness to pay more (Strähle & Köksal, 2015). Furthermore, it is important to mention that the typical consumer has strong believes that his/her decisions positively influence general environmental issues (Pagiaslis & Kontalis, 2014). The purpose of this thesis is to conduct further research on the awareness of consumers concerning sustainability issues within fast fashions' and luxury fashions' supply chains.

Overall, consumers expect supply chains within the fast fashion and luxury fashion industry to act socially and environmentally responsible (Marefat, 2019). Furthermore, due to the fact that consumers have become aware of the negative impacts of the fashion industry (Shen et al., 2012), the need for transparency has increasingly gained importance in recent years (Marefat, 2019). Additionally, the

typical consumer of apparel within both, the luxury and the fast fashion industry, demands the usage of non-hazardous chemicals and requires sufficient recycling of materials (Weber et al., 2017). The production of apparel, which is more durable to ensure a relief of supply chain and reduce general waste, is also a major concern of apparel consumers (Marefat, 2019). The reason for the need for higher transparency is the desire for information based on the sustainability performance of all fashion brands.

3 Methodology

This chapter gives a detailed description of the development of the research questions and the resulting hypotheses (Chapter 3.1). Furthermore, in the subsequent chapters (Chapters 3.2 and 3.3), the author provides an explanation of the chosen research design and the conducted experiment. Chapter 3.4 presents the data collection and analysis. Additionally, the author provides the reader with an in-depth description about the determined sample of the thesis's survey. The subsequent chapters entail the results, concluding discussion and further criticism.

3.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

This chapter presents the research questions and corresponding hypotheses of this thesis. As mentioned before, the subject matter is a current, socially and environmentally relevant topic. The issue of maintaining sustainable supply chains within the fashion industry has significantly gained attention in recent years (see Chapter 2.2.2). Furthermore, both fast and luxury fashion industries are maintaining rather similar supply chains but are focusing on different product life cycle strategies (see Chapter 2.2). The fast fashion industry is shifting their supply chain strategy towards short product life cycles (Zamani et al, 2017), whereas the focus of luxury brands' supply chains is based on high-quality and enduring apparel (Brun et al, 2008). As mentioned in Chapter 2.1.7, an increasing number of consumers focus on environmentally and socially friendly produced clothes. Hence, consumers expect supply chains within the fast fashion as well as in the luxury fashion industry to be socially and environmentally responsible (Marefat, 2019). Consumers within the luxury and fast fashion industry demand environmentally sustainable treatment of resources as well as a responsible supply chain approach to protect the social environment (see Chapter 2.5). Based on these assumptions, the first research question, which is also the main research question, has been formed accordingly:

RQ1: To what extent do consumers' perceptions of sustainable supply chain practices differ between the luxury and fast fashion industry?

Previously conducted academic research shows that, in recent years, the luxury fashion industry has not been associated with as many environmental and social issues and scandals within its supply chains to the same extent as the fast fashion industry (Karaosman et al., 2018). Additionally, the general public's perception towards sustainability and corresponding demand have changed over time, since nowadays the average customer is willing to pay more for a fashion item which has been produced sustainably (Kong et al., 2016). Consequently, based on the literature review, the thesis' first hypothesis has been developed:

H1: Consumers perceive supply chains in the fast fashion industry as less sustainable compared to the luxury industry.

Furthermore, an increasing number of consumers within the fashion industry is becoming aware of the negative impacts caused by global and complex supply chains (Marefat, 2019). Academic research indicates that the fashion industry experiences major transparency issues within their supply chains, due to their underlying high complexity (Guo et al., 2020). Therefore, transparent information about the exact impacts on the social and natural environment generated by fashion brands has increasingly gained importance among consumers (see Chapter 2.5). The author assumes that the effect mentioned in H1 is moderated by consumer knowledge, which results in the following hypothesis H2:

H2: More knowledgeable consumers perceive supply chains in the fashion industry as less sustainable compared to less knowledgeable consumers.

As mentioned before, the demand for socially and environmentally friendly produced apparel has significantly increased in recent years (Strähle & Köksal, 2015; Marefat, 2019). Therefore, consumers within the fast and luxury fashion industry are willing to pay more for fashion items which have been produced in a sustainable manner (see Chapter 2.5). This leads to the following research question:

RQ2: To what extent do consumers' perceptions of sustainable supply chains influence retailer visit intention and word of mouth marketing?

According to Karaosman (2018), stakeholders' expectations are shifting to more sustainable supply chains since this approach is generating additional value for them. Therefore, many businesses have implemented sustainable adjustments to their supply chains to satisfy stakeholders' needs (see Chapter 2.2.5). Based on these findings concerning the general increasing demand for sustainable products and services, the following three hypotheses have been developed:

H3: Sustainable supply chain perceptions positively influence consumers' trust in the retailer within the fashion industry.

H4: Consumers' trust in the retailer has a positive impact on visit intentions.

H5: Consumers' trust in the retailer has a positive impact on word-of-mouth marketing.

3.2 Research Design

This thesis uses a quantitative research design in order to explore the relationship between fashion industry type (fast fashion vs. luxury) and consumer perceptions towards the sustainable aspects, especially concerning their global supply chains. In order to collect the necessary quantitative data, a one-factor (luxury fashion industry vs. fast fashion industry) between-subjects design has been employed. Due to the current health policy which does not allow face-to-face interviews, and the possible larger pool of participants, the experiment was conducted online. The link to the experiment was distributed via the online panel platform *clickworker.de*, in order to gain high-quality results in a timely manner. The survey's questionnaire section consists of established scales based on existing literature. The answer options are derived from adapted measurement scales mainly in form of seven-point Likert scales.

3.3 Experimental Procedure

The conducted online experiment was prepared and distributed via *SoSci Survey*, a web-application developed for the creation of online surveys, as mentioned due to the current pandemic and the wider range of available test persons. The questionnaire consists of two different parts, whereby the distribution of the two experimental

conditions (luxury fashion industry vs. fast fashion industry) was completely randomized.

In general, the survey can be divided into three sections. The first part is concerned with the presented fashion brand which is either *H&M* (fast fashion) or *Gucci* (luxury fashion) on which the following questions are based on. As mentioned before, participants have been randomly allocated to either the fast fashion or the luxury fashion condition. The following part asks questions about participants' perceptions towards the fashion brand's supply chain. The final section of the survey aims to collect demographic data about the respondents. The survey was online for three days. Furthermore, the survey included a manipulation check as well, which is further discussed in Chapter 3.6.3 (see Chapter 3.6.3). The exact wording of the questions and statements can be found in the Appendix (see Appendix).

In the beginning of the experiment, either the fast fashion brand *H&M* or the luxury fashion brand *Gucci* are introduced and described. The subsequent question serves as an attention check in order to ensure high quality data. Participants are presented with logos of both fashion brands and must choose the one which was presented to them in the beginning. Due to the subject matter of the thesis, this question is an exclusion criterion for participating in the survey. Persons who chose the wrong fashion brand were therefore not able to complete the survey.

3.4 Measurement

The main part of the survey starts with an attention check in order to monitor the test person's attention and to filter out computer programs which process tasks without relying on interaction with a human user. The attention check asked the respondents with which of the two fashion brands (*H&M* or *Gucci*) they have been confronted with in the previous question. As just mentioned, persons who chose the wrong answer were therefore no longer eligible of completing the survey.

Furthermore, a manipulation check regarding the general perception towards the fashion brand presented in the first section had been conducted. The participants had to indicate whether they perceive the fashion brand as elitist, extremely expensive, very inclusive, luxurious or glamorous (Christodoulides et al., 2009). If not mentioned

otherwise, the questions' answer options within the survey's main part were given as a Likert scale ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree). The following questions ask the participants about their perceptions towards the ecological, economic and social objectives of the fashion brand's supply chain strategy (Hansmann et al., 2012). This item aims to develop a deeper understanding about consumers' perceived differences between the fast and luxury fashion industry and the respondents were therefore asked whether they think the presented fashion brand acts accordingly.

The following question deals with consumers' trust towards the retailer to gain insight if sustainable supply chain perceptions positively influence their trust in the retailer (Yuen et al., 2018). Therefore, the participants were asked about the effectiveness, trustworthiness and perceived values concerning different sustainable actions implemented within the retailer's business operations. In order to gain an understanding if consumer perceptions have an influence on people's visit intention, the subsequent question asks the participant if they would visit the retail or online store of the business (Kim et al., 2018). The following questions evaluates if consumer perceptions have an influence on consumers' word-of-mouth intention (Jung and Seock, 2017). Therefore, the test persons are asked if they would talk positively about the brand or recommend it.

The next questions are dealing with the general understanding and state of knowledge of the test persons concerning supply chains within the fashion industry in general (Kelting et al., 2007; Mitchell & Dacin, 1996). The author provided these questions in order to analyze the impacts of the knowledge of participants on sustainability perceptions within the fashion industry. To be more precise, the test persons are asked about their understanding of supply chain characteristics within the fashion industry and could indicate their answer on a Likert scale from 1 (very bad) to 7 (very good). The next question asks about respondents' level of knowledge about supply chains within the fashion industry compared to the rest of the population (Kelting et al., 2007; Mitchell & Dacin, 1996). The participants were able to choose on a Likert scale between 1 (very low) to 7 (very high). In addition to the previous questions about general understanding and state of knowledge, the survey includes a question about awareness and general environmental concern. The participants had to indicate if

they believe that humans' interference with nature results in catastrophic consequences and massive abuse of the environment (Cruz & Manata, 2020). Furthermore, the test persons were asked if they perceive that humans are still subject to the laws of nature, despite our special abilities. The final question of the survey's main part asks the participants how often they have purchased apparel from the brand presented in the beginning of the survey.

At the end of the survey, demographic data about the test persons has been collected. The first question asks about the participant's age, whereas they can enter their age in numbers into the provided text box within the answer section. Subsequently, the participants were asked about their gender. The test persons were able to choose between "male", "female" and "diverse". This particular question was optional and did not have to be answered. Additionally, the participants were asked to indicate their nationality into the textbox provided in the answer section of Question 10. The next question of the survey asked about the test person's highest completed education.

3.5 Sample Characteristics

The sample selected for this survey was only restricted by age and language. The predefined specifications for participating in the questionnaire were being between the age of 18 and 65 and the ability to understand the German language. The broad age interval was chosen because members of each generation are consuming fashion items from luxury as well as fast fashion brands. The limitation at the age of 65 was chosen since the topic of sustainability within supply chains of the fashion industry has gained attention in recent years only. The questionnaire's language was German since it was conducted via the German online tool *clickworker*. The survey was available for respondents on *clickworker* via *SoSci Survey* between 18th May 2021 and 20th May 2021. In total, the survey has been viewed and clicked on 102 times, however, only 100 test persons completed the questionnaire.

Analyzing the sample's gender composition, 60 out of 100 participants selected the category 'male'. Furthermore, 39 respondents chose the category 'female'. One test person indicated the gender category 'diverse'. With regards to the sample's age compositions, the mean, standard deviation, minimum as well as maximum were

analyzed. The survey's sample mean age value amounts to 39.29 in total with a corresponding standard deviation amounting to 11.088. The minimum age represented is 20, whereas the maximum age of all respondents is 65. Finally, the participants were asked to indicate their highest completed education level. 50 people (50%) selected 'University, University of Applied Sciences' and 27 people chose the category 'High School (Abitur)' which amounts to 27%. This is followed by 'Vocational Middle School' as highest completed education level, with 6 respondents. Furthermore, out of 100 participants in total, 17 test persons indicated 'Apprenticeship'.

3.6 Analysis and Results

This section of the thesis represents the results of the survey. First, a description of the sample based on sociodemographic data is analyzed, followed by a discussion about the reliability of the survey's scales and its manipulation checks. Subsequently, the main results of the survey are presented, which are structured based on the thesis' hypotheses. In the end, a discussion of the results and further recommendations from the author are provided.

3.6.1 Scale Reliability

This chapter is concerned with the reliability of the scales used in the questionnaire. The Cronbach α which needs to amount to a minimum of 0.7 to be considered statistically sufficient was above 0.8 for each construct (Table 5). The item discrimination has to be above 0.3 to be considered statistically relevant. The item discrimination values have always been above 0.3, excluding for one item where it only amounted to a minimum of 0.29. The maximum item discrimination was 0.97.

Table 5 Cronbach's α for each Construct

Construct	Items	Cronbach's α
Ecological Sustainability Perceptions	Protection of natural spaces and biodiversity.	**0.83**
	Responsible use of renewable resources.	
	Reduction of use of nonrenewable resources.	
	Protection of the natural environment.	
	Protection from environmental hazards, reduction of risks.	
Economic Sustainability Perceptions	Generating income and employment.	**0.92**
	Enhancing social and human capital.	
	Promoting the innovative power of the economy.	
	Consideration of externalities in the market.	
	Economic situation of future generations	
Social Sustainability Perceptions	Protection of health and safety.	**0.94**
	Education and free personal development.	
	Sustaining cultural and societal values.	
	Juridical equality and certainty.	
	Solidarity between and within generations and global.	
Retailer Trust	The retailer seems to be competent in implementing sustainable supply chain practices.	**0.94**
	The retailer seems knowledgeable with respect to implementing sustainable shipping practices.	
	The retailer seems truthful in its disclosure of sustainable shipping practices.	
	The retailer seems sincere in implementing sustainable shipping practices.	
	The retailer's involvement in sustainability seems altruistic.	
	The retailer seems genuine in implementing sustainable shipping practices.	
	The retailer's involvement in sustainability seems to be guided by self-interest.	
	The retailer seems to be effective in implementing sustainable supply chain practices.	
Visit Intention	I would visit the website, the online shop of the retail store of this fashion brand.	**0.95**
	In the future, I would very probably shop at this fashion brand.	
	I would visit the fashion brand's webiste, online shop or retail store regularly.	
	I would consider to visit this fashion brand for my purchases (website, online shop or retail store).	
Worf-of-Mouth Marketing	I would speak positively about this fashion brand.	**0.94**
	I would recommend this fashion brand to my friends.	
	If my friends were looking for apparel products, I would recommend them to try this company's online shop.	
Supply Chain Knowledge	How clear is your understanding of characteristics of the fashion supply chain?	**0.89**
	How would you rate your knowledge about the fashion supply chain relative to the rest of the population?	
Manipulation Check (Luxury Perception)	Elite.	**0.97**
	Extremely expensive.	
	Very exclusive.	
	Luxurious.	
	Glamorous.	

3.6.2 Manipulation Check

This chapter describes the manipulation check conducted within the thesis' survey in order to evaluate whether the participants perceived the two brands differently in terms of luxury. The author manipulated the two fashion conditions by using two different brands: *Gucci* represented the luxury brand, while *H&M* represented the fast fashion brand. Table 6 demonstrates the mean differences of luxury perceptions from respondents in the luxury vs. the fast fashion condition (Table 5).

Table 6 Manipulation Check

Descriptive Statistics			
Group	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
Gucci	5.88	0.99	50
H&M	2.66	1.41	50
Dependent Variable: Mean of Luxury Perceptions			

Table 6 illustrates that the respondents perceived the two brands differently in terms of luxury perceptions. The mean of participants' luxury perceptions regarding the luxury fashion brand *Gucci* amounts to 5.88 compared to the fast fashion brand *H&M* which results in 2.66 with a standard deviation of 0.99. The mean values of *Gucci* and *H&M* significantly differ significantly from each other ($F(1, 98)=175.48$, $p<.001$). The survey's participants perceive the fashion brand *Gucci* as a significantly more luxurious brand compared to *H&M* (Table 6). Hence, it can be concluded that the manipulation worked out as intended.

3.6.3 Analysis and Results

This subsection briefly presents the statistical methods used for data collection and analysis. Furthermore, a structured evaluation of the thesis' survey results is carried out along with answering the hypotheses presented in Chapter 3.1. The participants' response behavior is presented through statistical figures and tables.

The descriptive analysis of the sample was done using absolute frequencies and percentages. A reliability analysis for all constructs of the survey, then means were used as scale scores whereby metric scale level was assumed. For further analysis and manipulation checks whether the respondents perceived the two presented fashion brands differently, a univariate variance analysis by using the composite scores has been conducted. The main part of data collection and analysis consists of hypothesis testing. For the first two hypothesis, a MANOVA was applied in order to analyze the different respondents' perceptions concerning sustainable supply chains within the fashion industry and the correlating influence of general understanding and state of knowledge. For the remaining hypotheses, a regression analysis was estimated in order to test the effect of the positive relationship between sustainable supply chain

perceptions and consumers' trust in the retailer as well as the positive influence of consumers' trust on visit and word-of-mouth intention.

Table 7 presents the results corresponding to Research Question 1, i.e., to what extent consumers' perceptions of sustainable supply chain practices differ between the luxury and fast fashion industry and the corresponding hypothesis H1 (see Chapter 3.1). It summarizes consumers' perceptions towards sustainability based on ecological, economic and social means (Table 7).

Table 7 Consumers' Sustainability Perceptions by Brand

Descriptive Statistics				
	GROUP	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
Ecological Perceptions	Gucci	2.70	1.52	50
	H&M	3.09	1.47	50
Economic Perceptions	Gucci	3.45	1.27	50
	H&M	3.53	1.25	50
Social Perceptions	Gucci	3.48	1.29	50
	H&M	3.44	1.43	50

The prerequisite homogeneity of covariance of the MANOVA can be accepted (Box's M test, F(6, 69585.70)=0.85, p=.528). As seen in Table 7, the means of all constructs are very similar, which is also represented in a non-significant model (Wilks-Lambda=.96, F(3, 96)= 1.52, p=.216). The average responses for the construct ecological perceptions concerning *Gucci* result in a mean of 2.70 with a standard deviation of 1.52. The responses relating to *H&M* are resulting in a mean of 3.09 with a standard deviation of 1.47 (Table 7). The participants' economic perceptions amount to a mean of 3.45 with a standard deviation of 1.27 for *Gucci* and to a mean of 3.53 with a standard deviation of 1.25 for *H&M*. The last construct tested for Research Question 1 is concerned with respondents' social perceptions towards the two presented fashion brands. The mean equals to 3.48 for *Gucci* with a corresponding standard deviation of 1.29. For this construct, the mean concerning social sustainability perceptions towards *H&M* is also similar compared to *Gucci* (3.44 and a standard deviation of 1.43).

Figure 3, 4 and 5 illustrate the similarities of each construct's mean comparing the fashion brands *Gucci* and *H&M* presented in the thesis' survey (Figures 3,4 & 5).

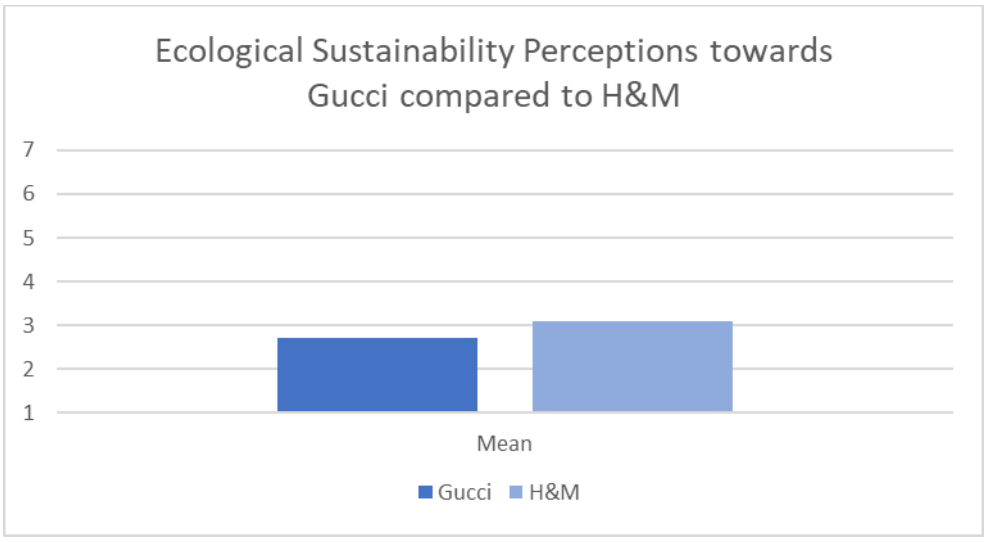

Figure 3 Consumers' Perceptions towards Ecological Sustainability

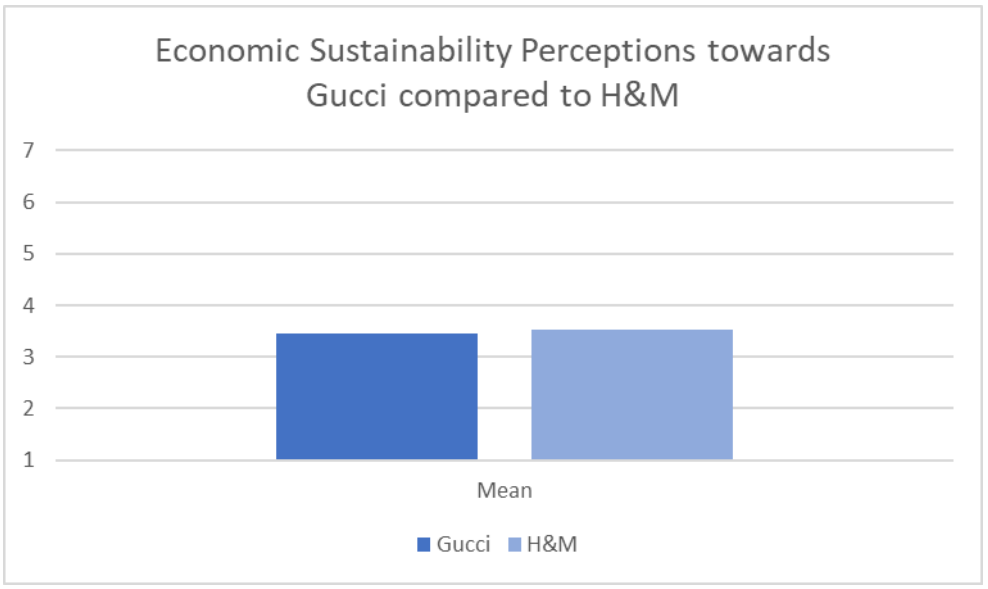

Figure 4 Consumers' Perceptions towards Economic Sustainability

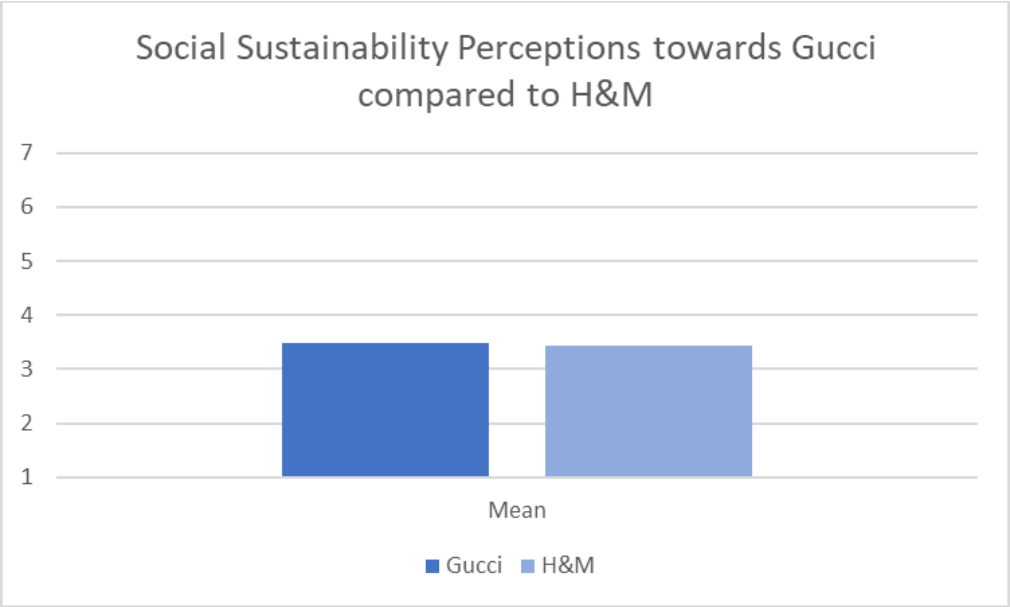

Figure 5 Consumers' Perceptions towards Social Sustainability

Due to the insignificant results for Research Question 1 (see Chapter 3.1), the main hypothesis could not be supported by the data. There is no difference of consumers' sustainability perceptions towards supply chains between the fast fashion industry and the luxury fashion industry.

The next hypothesis derived from Research Question 1 states that more knowledgeable consumers perceive supply chains in the fashion industry as less sustainable as compared to the less knowledgeable consumers (see Chapter 3.1). In order to analyze the participants' responses, a linear regression model predicting consumers' *economic sustainability perceptions* towards both fashion brands by general *supply chain knowledge* results in a highly significant R^2 (R^2=0.09, R^2_{adj}=0.08, F(1,98)=9.72, p=.002). Consumers' general *supply chain knowledge* is a positive predictor for perceptions concerning economic sustainability towards both fashion brands (B=0.28, β=0.3, p=.002). Consequently, consumers' general *supply chain knowledge* is a medium-sized predictor for consumers' economic perceptions concerning sustainability. A scatterplot is given in Figure 6.

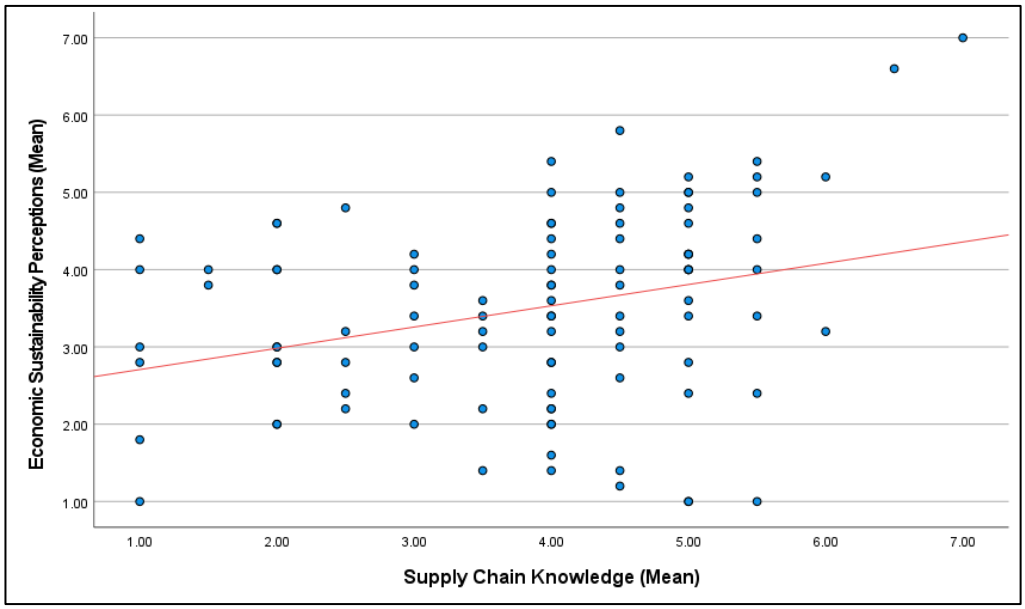

Figure 6 Consumers' Economic Sustainability Perceptions based on Consumers' Supply Chain Knowledge

Furthermore, another linear regression model has been conducted and results in a significant R^2 predicting consumers' *ecological sustainability perceptions* towards the two fashion brands based on general *supply chain knowledge* (R^2=0.09, R^2_{adj}=0.08, F(1,98)=9.73, p=.002). According to a positive β-value of β=0.30, *supply chain knowledge* can be seen as a positive predictor for *ecological sustainability perceptions* of consumers (B=0.33, β=0.30, p=.002). This means, that general *knowledge* about *supply chains* is perceived as market predictor for consumers' *ecological sustainability perceptions* with a positive marginal effect. In order to further illustrate the data collected and analyzed throughout answering RQ2, the author provided a scatterplot to support the reader's understanding of the results (Figure 7).

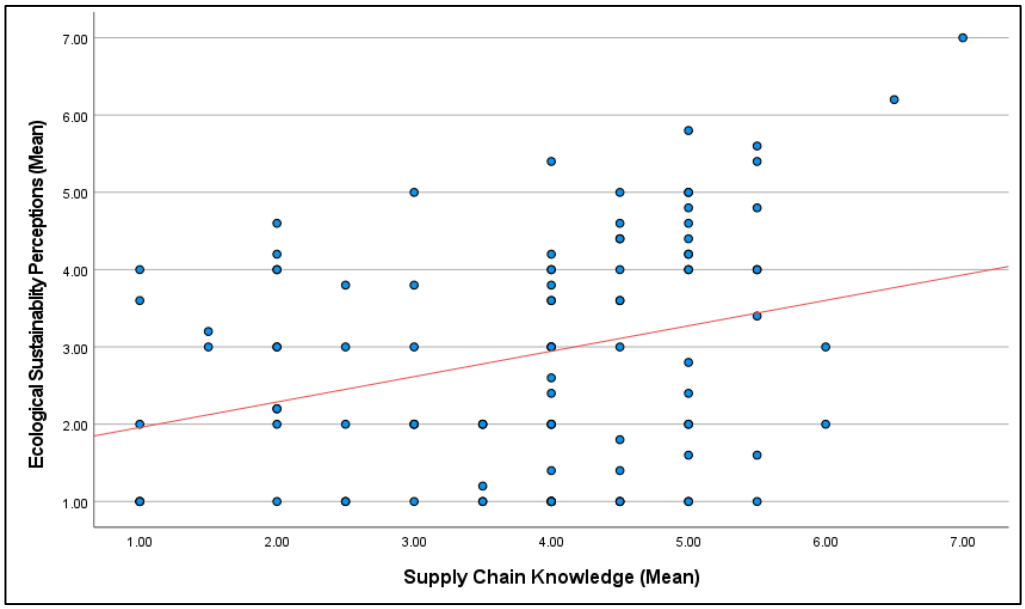

Figure 7 Consumers' Ecological Sustainability Perceptions based on Consumers' Supply Chain Knowledge

The author estimated a third regression analysis, to further analyze H2. This model predicts the construct of participants' *social sustainability perceptions* by general *supply chain knowledge*. The prediction concerning this regression analysis results in significant R^2 (R^2=0.07, R^2_{adj}=0.06, F(1,98)=7.00, p=.009). Hence, consumers' general knowledge about supply chains positively predicts respondents' perceptions regarding the fashion brands' social sustainability (B=0.256, β=0.26, p=.009). Consequently, there is a small positive effect concerning general *supply chain knowledge* as market predictor for *social sustainability perceptions*. Figure 8 below shows the average score of answers for the constructs of general *supply chain knowledge* and *social sustainability perceptions* within a scatterplot.

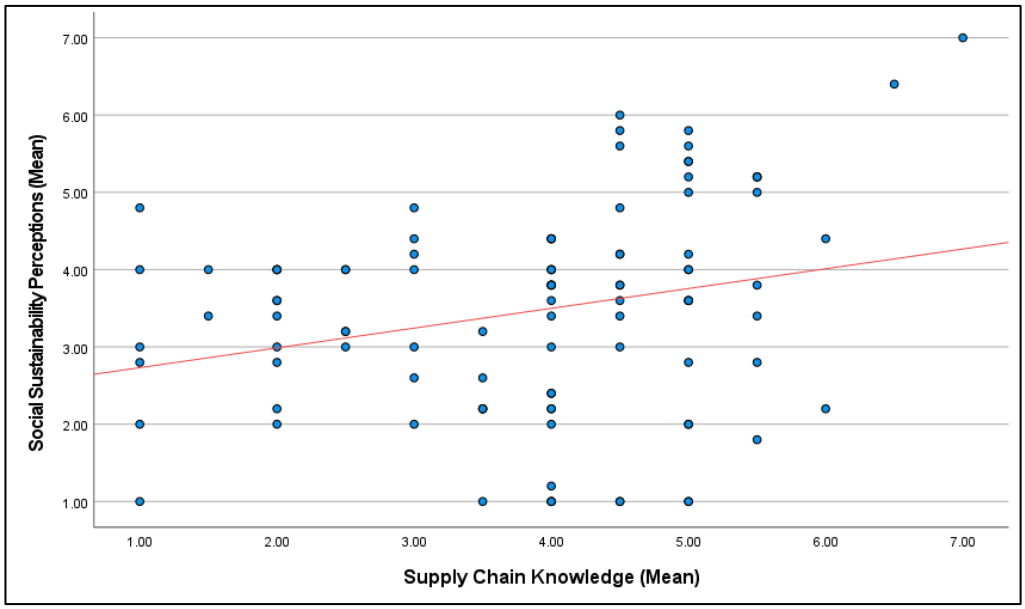

Figure 8 Consumers' Social Sustainability Perceptions based on Consumers' Supply Chain Knowledge

Based on the findings and significant results described above, the author's second hypothesis, stating that more knowledgeable consumers perceive supply chains in the fashion industry as less sustainable as compared to the less knowledgeable consumers, can be supported.

The following hypothesis H3 is derived from Research Question 2, analyzing whether sustainable supply chain perceptions positively influence consumers' trust in the retailer within the fashion industry. A linear regression model was conducted predicting consumers' trust in the retailer towards consumers' *ecological sustainability perceptions* using the predictors *ecological, economic* and *social sustainability perceptions*. The model's prediction shows a highly significant R^2 (R^2=0.82, R^2_{adj}=0.81, F(3,96)=145.72, p<.001). Consumers' perceptions towards both fashion companies' ecological sustainability are a positive predictor and therefore a market predictor with a medium effect for consumers' trust in the retailer (B=0.27, β=0.31, p<.001). Figure 9 presents the positive marginal effect through a scatterplot consisting of all data collected for these constructs.

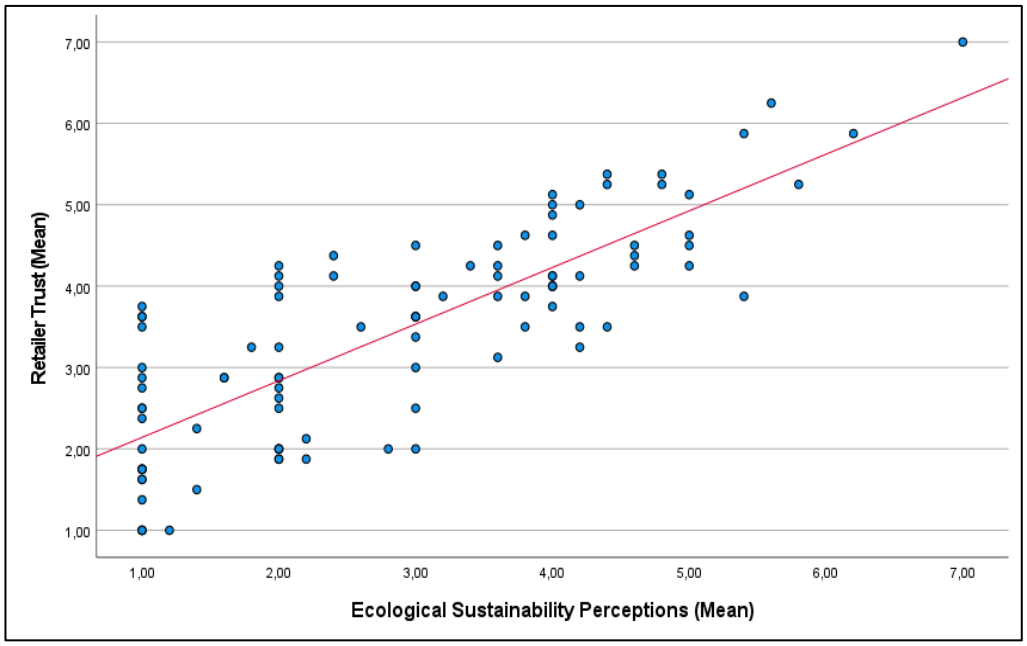

Figure 9 Consumers' Retailer Trust based on Consumers' Ecological Sustainability Perceptions

The second predictor *economic sustainability perceptions* was not significant (B=0.17, β=0.16, p=.074) but the third predictor *social sustainability perceptions* is positively related to consumers' retailer trust (B=0.48, β=0.50, p<.001). The positive correlation between these two constructs can be seen as a statistically large effect; Figure 10 illustrates the respective scatterplot.

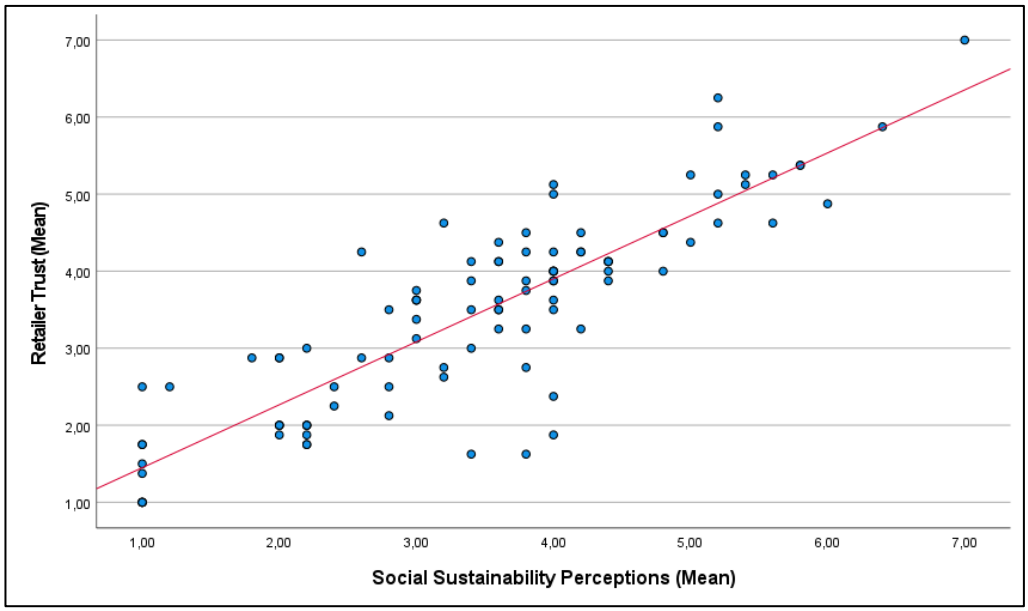

Figure 10 Consumers' Retailer Trust based on Consumers' Social Sustainability Perceptions

To answer hypothesis H3, whether sustainable supply chain perceptions positively influence consumers' trust in the retailer within the fashion industry, the results are significant. Therefore, hypothesis H3 is supported by the collected data and can be confirmed.

Hypothesis 4 derived from RQ2 states that consumers' trust in the retailer has a positive impact on *retailer visit intentions*. As for the constructs mentioned above, the intention to visit the retailer are determined through a Likert scale ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree). As seen in Figure 11, the linear regression model for this hypothesis evaluates the prediction of trust in the retailer dependent on consumers' *retailer visit intention* concerning the two fashion brands (Figure 11). The prediction results in a highly significant R^2 (R^2=0.32, R^2_{adj}=0.31, F(1,98)=45.94, p<.001). Additionally, *retailer trust* is a positive predictor and therefore a market predictor for consumers' *retailer visit intention* with a strong effect (B=0.78, β=0.57, p<.001). In a scatterplot prepared with SPSS, the specific results reflecting the obtained data on hypothesis H4 were displayed (Figure 11).

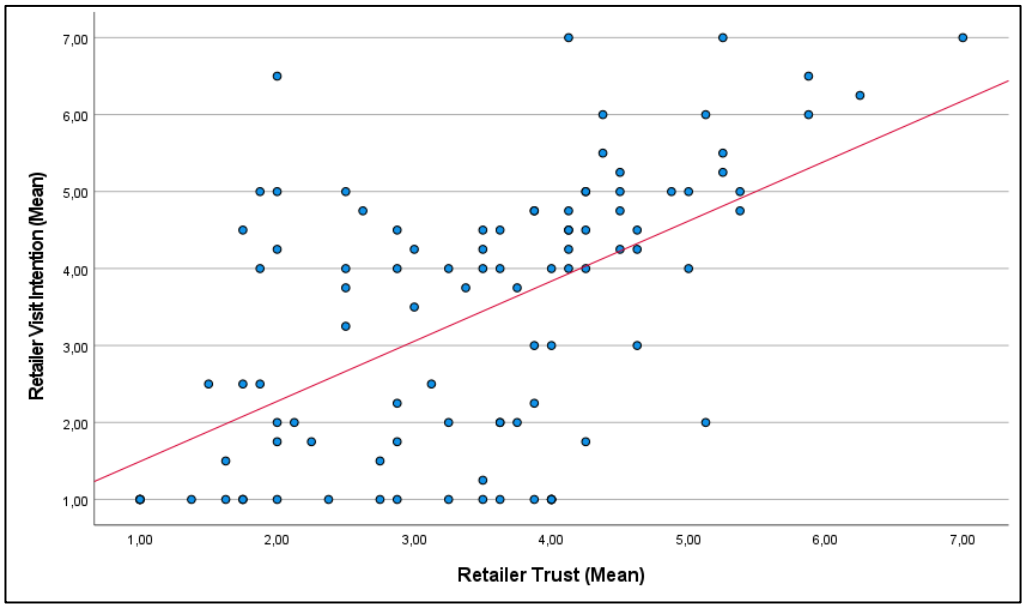

Figure 11 Consumers' Visit Intention based on Perceived Trust in the Retailer

In conclusion, the obtained data supports the hypothesis, and it can be accepted.

The final hypothesis of this thesis H5 is concerned with positive relationship of consumers' trust in the retailer towards *word-of-mouth (WOM) intention*. In order to analyze the participants' responses to the survey, a linear regression model predicting consumers' trust in the retailer towards both fashion brands by the consumers' intention to WOM marketing results in a highly significant R^2 (R^2=0.64, R^2_{adj}=0.41, F(1,98)=69.15, p<.001) (Figure 12). Consumers' *retailer trust* is a positive predictor for *WOM intention* concerning both fashion brands (B=0.78, β=0.64, p<.001). Consequently, consumers' trust in the retailer is a market predictor for consumers' intention for WOM with a statistically strong effect. To further support the reader's understanding, a scatterplot was provided visualizing the relationship between *retailer trust* and *word-of-mouth intention* (Figure 12).

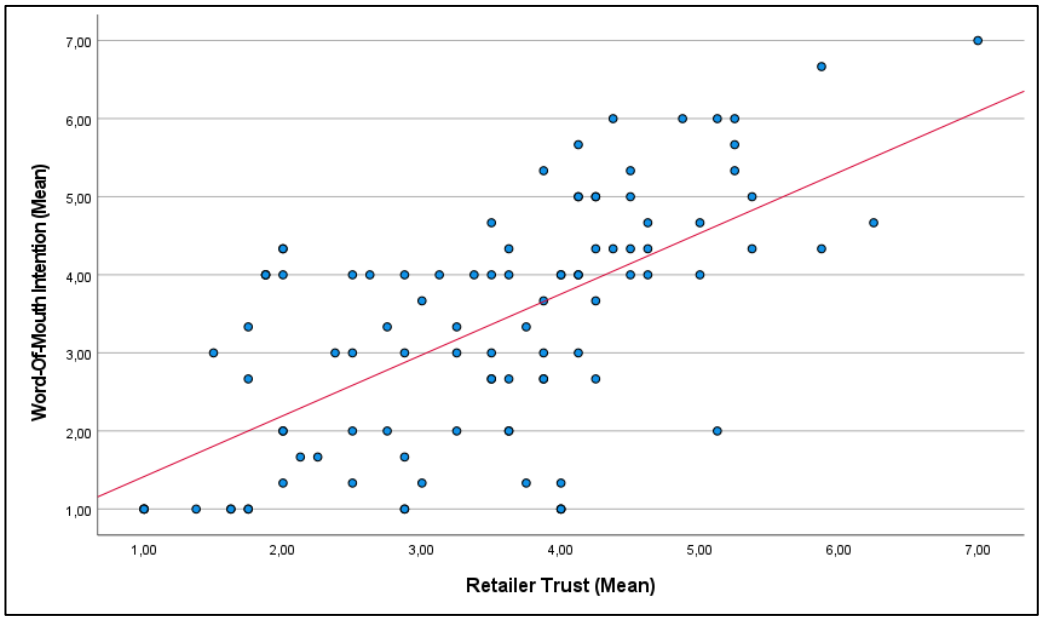

Figure 12 Consumers' Word-of-Mouth Intention based on Consumers' Perceived Retailer Trust

Based on these significant findings, H5, assuming that consumers' trust in the retailer has a positive impact on *word-of-mouth intention*, is supported.

3.7 Discussion of Results and Recommendations

The aim of the following discussion is to summarize and combine the findings from the literature review, as well as the results from the quantitative survey, which forms the empirical part of the thesis. Furthermore, the results will be compared, and the research questions will be answered. This chapter's final aspect provides a few recommendations for the fashion industry in general which are based on the thesis' findings.

To answer Research Question 1 (to what extent consumers' perceptions of sustainable supply chain practices differ between the luxury and fast fashion industry) it can be stated that there is no difference in consumer perceptions.

Based on the sample, the differences between the fast fashion and luxury fashion industry could only be shown to a limited extent. While academic resources very clearly report strategic differences in supply chains between these industries, this difference is hardly evident in the respondents' perceptions. Consumers have the same perceptions for both industries concerning social and environmental sustainability within supply chains (Marefat, 2019). However, the fast fashion industry

has been confronted with many more scandals concerning those issues than the luxury fashion industry (Karaosman et al., 2018). Contradicting to the results of the literature review, and therefore unexpected, has been the insignificant result for the main hypothesis H1, stating that consumers perceive supply chains as less sustainable in the fashion industry. Overall, it cannot be proven that consumers perceive supply chains as less sustainable in the fast fashion industry compared to the luxury fashion industry. This statement is also not consistent with the findings in the literature concerning the willingness to pay more for sustainably produced products, especially concerning the luxury fashion industry (Kong et al., 2016). Based on these results, the author assumes that consumers consider fast fashion brands as socially and environmentally harmful as luxury fashion brands.

The author suggests to organizations operating within the fast as well as luxury fashion industry to invest in further research on how to improve their supply chains in terms of social and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, a potential recommendation could be to maintain a consequent, permanent and transparent transferal of information regarding supply chain practices and making it publicly available to the customers. However, *Gucci* has been publicly stating a reduction of CO_2 impacts within their supply chain but no differences in consumer perceptions have been observed in the experiment (Gucci Equilibrium, 2021). Due to this potential generalization between fast and luxury brands' environmental impacts, the author suggests to luxury fashion brands an improved marketing communication in order to differentiate themselves from the fast fashion industry.

The second hypothesis derived from Research Question 2 is consistent with the findings of the academic literature and could be accepted (see Chapter 3.6.4). It is known that many consumers are interested and informing themselves about the environmental and social impacts of supply chains within the fashion industry (Marefat, 2019) and increasingly demand transparency (Guo et al., 2020; Jordan & Rasmussen, 2018). This research is also reflected in the present data, and it can be stated that more knowledgeable consumers perceive supply chains in the fashion industry as less sustainable compared to less knowledgeable consumers. A potential explanation for that would be the increasing number of consumers which are aware of supply chain practices and their impacts on the environment and, therefore, are

also familiar with opportunities in order to improve supply chain issues. This assumption is consistent with the academic research conducted based on possible environmentally and socially friendly supply chain solutions (Table 2).

Based on Research Question 2 (to what extent consumers' perceptions of sustainable supply chains influence retailer visit intention and word of mouth), the findings report clear similarities towards the conducted and extant research. Sustainable supply chain perceptions positively influence consumers' trust in the retailer within the fashion industry. The author assumes that this effect is explained by the rising demand for transparency as well as increasing awareness about sustainability issues within supply chains in general. This assumption is consistent with the literature, which declares that stakeholders' expectations towards fashion brands' supply chains are shifting towards a more sustainable trend (Karaosman, 2018). Furthermore, it can be stated that consumers' trust in the retailer has a positive impact on visit intention. H4 also reflects the literature about fashion brands increasingly focusing on implementing sustainable adjustments to their supply chains in order to satisfy stakeholders' needs (Khurana & Ricchetti, 2011; Strähle & Köksal, 2015).

A potential consequence of these findings would be the standardization of implementing actions to maintain a sustainable supply chain within the fashion industry. The author assumes that the previously mentioned effects concerning Research Question 2 led to the result of consumers' trust in the retailer having a positive impact on word-of-mouth marketing. Therefore, RQ2 can be answered that consumers' positive perceptions of sustainable supply chains influence retailer visit intention and word-of-mouth marketing. The author therefore proposes to lay much more focus on implementing and maintaining sustainable practices within supply chains of the fashion industry in general. Through the findings, it may be assumed that following an environmentally and socially friendly supply chain strategy would be economically beneficial for organizations operating within both, the fast and luxury fashion industry.

3.8 Limitations and Further Prospects

The comparatively small sample size of only 100 valid survey completions has been the greatest limitation of the performed experiment, in particular since it cannot be seen as a representative sample. Certainly, a larger sample size would have been preferable. The sample's sociodemographic characteristics are not well adjusted, due to a significantly higher percentage of male respondents (60%). This bias might be caused by the utilization of the clickworker.de platform and more diverse acquiring tools should have been implemented. Furthermore, another potential factor causing prejudices among the respondents might be the personal relations or experiences with one of the two brands (*H&M* and *Gucci*). Especially the choice of *H&M* might have caused biases because of public backlashes and bad publicity within recent years (Caniato et al., 2012). The observed lack of knowledge about supply chain practices and processes among the participants within the fashion industry might have led to less meaningful results. A potential solution for this issue would be to adjust the necessary requirements for completing the survey to a minimum background knowledge about supply chain practices. The general necessity to represent luxury as well as fast fashion brands by just one brand does not allow for too general conclusions in principle, and even less if one of the brands used could be an outlier in its group.

Nevertheless, the experiment's results may be seen as reliable because of the conducted manipulation and attention checks. The author made sure that participants really understood the evaluated fashion brand by including a short description at the beginning of the survey. Additionally, the manipulation check regarding luxury perceptions verified the participants' awareness about the two brands.

On the one hand, the unexpected lack of knowledge about supply chains in general has been identified as the main limitation of this thesis' survey. The entire structure of questioning seems to be less relevant when presented to people without the necessary background information. One the other hand, the author may assume that this outcome indicates that the average population is not well informed about supply chains in the fashion industry. Therefore, one suggestion for further research would be to investigate the general state of knowledge of the average consumer about the fashion industry's supply chain processes. The author suggests in-depth interviews

with fashion brand executives responsible for supply chain management to collect more relevant data about sustainable supply chain characteristics. The scarce information of unbiased quantitative data concerning environmental and social impacts and sustainability actions of fashion brands demands further research.

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4 Appendix

13/06/2021 Δρυχκανσιχητ HM (ΦωσημονΙνδυσιρψ) 13.06.2021, 15:11

soSci
oFb - der onlineFragebogen

Seite 01

Willkommen zur Umfrage!

Diese Umfrage ist anonym und dauert ca. 3-4 Minuten. Wir sind an Ihrer persönlichen Meinung interessiert - es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten.

Die Teilnahme ist freiwillig und Sie können jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen zurücktreten. Durch die Betätigung der "WEITER" Schaltfläche bestätigen Sie, dass Sie freiwillig an dieser Studie teilnehmen und dass Ihre Daten für Forschungszwecke genutzt werden dürfen.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Unterstützung!

Seite 02

Alle Fragen in diesem Fragebogen beziehen sich auf die Marke:

H&M (Kurzform für Hennes & Mauritz) ist ein schwedisches Textilhandelsunternehmen aus Stockholm. Über Ladengeschäfte und den Onlineshop bietet H&M weltweit Kleidung, Accessoires und Schuhe für Damen, Herren und Kinder an.

(Quelle: Wikipedia, 2021).

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Seite 02

Alle Fragen in diesem Fragebogen beziehen sich auf die Marke:

GUCCI

Gucci ist ein italienisches Modeunternehmen für Damen-, Herren- und Kinder-Bekleidung sowie Accessoires im Luxusgütersegment mit weltweiten Einzelhandelsgeschäften.

(Quelle: Wikipedia 2021)

Seite 03

1. Welches der folgenden Modeunternehmen haben Sie auf der vorherigen Website gesehen?

○ H&M

○ GUCCI

○

Seite 04

2. Bitte geben Sie an, inwieweit Sie den folgenden Aussagen zustimmen:

Die zuvor gesehene Marke ist...

	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu 1	2	3	4	5	6	Stimme vollkommen zu 7
elitär	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
extrem teuer	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
sehr exklusiv	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
luxuriös	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
glamourös	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

3. Bitte geben Sie an, inwieweit dieses Modeunternehmen den Eindruck erweckt, die aufgelisteten Praktiken zu verfolgen:

	Überhaupt nicht						Sehr
Schutz von Naturräumen und Biodiversität.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Verantwortungsvoller Umgang mit erneuerbaren Ressourcen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reduktion der Nutzung nicht erneuerbarer Ressourcen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Naturschutz.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Schutz vor Umweltgefahren, Reduzierung von Risiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Stimme gar nicht zu						Stimme vollkommen zu
Schaffung von Verdienst- und Beschäftigungsmöglichkeiten.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Steigerung des Sozial- und Humankapitals.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Förderung von Innovationen innerhalb der Wirtschaft.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Berücksichtigung von externen Effekten (z.B.: Auswirkungen auf Umwelt und Bevölkerung) innerhalb des Marktes.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Förderung wirtschaftlicher Situationen zukünftiger Generationen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Die folgenden Aussagen beziehen sich auf die Arbeitnehmer und Arbeitnehmerinnen innerhalb des Modeunternehmens. Bitte ziehen Sie hierbei auch alle Prozesse (z.B.: Herstellung, Produktion und Lieferung) der Lieferkette in Betracht.

	Stimme gar nicht zu						Stimme vollkommen zu
Schutz der Gesundheit und Sicherheit.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Bildung und freie Entfaltung der Persönlichkeit.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Erhalt kultureller und gesellschaftlicher Werte.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Juristische Gleichheit und Sicherheit.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Globale Solidarität sowie Solidarität zwischen und innerhalb Generationen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

GUCCI

3. Bitte geben Sie an, inwieweit dieses Modeunternehmen den Eindruck erweckt, die aufgelisteten Praktiken zu verfolgen:

	Überhaupt nicht						Sehr
Schutz von Naturräumen und Biodiversität.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Verantwortungsvoller Umgang mit erneuerbaren Ressourcen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reduktion der Nutzung nicht erneuerbarer Ressourcen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Naturschutz.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Schutz vor Umweltgefahren, Reduzierung von Risiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Stimme gar nicht zu						Stimme vollkommen zu
Schaffung von Verdienst- und Beschäftigungsmöglichkeiten.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Steigerung des Sozial- und Humankapitals.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Förderung von Innovationen innerhalb der Wirtschaft.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Berücksichtigung von externen Effekten (z.B.: Auswirkungen auf Umwelt und Bevölkerung) innerhalb des Marktes.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Förderung wirtschaftlicher Situationen zukünftiger Generationen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

4. Bitte geben Sie an, inwieweit die folgenden Aussagen Ihren Eindruck wiedergeben:

Die in zwei Aussagen genannten Lieferketten-Praktiken beziehen sich auf Prozesse wie Herstellung, Produktion und Lieferung von Modeprodukten.

	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu 1	2	3	4	5	6	Stimme vollkommen zu 7
Dieses Modeunternehmen erweckt den Eindruck, es sei kompetent bei der Umsetzung nachhaltiger Lieferketten-Praktiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dieses Modeunternehmen erweckt den Eindruck, es sei sachkundig in Bezug auf die Umsetzung nachhaltiger Versandpraktiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dieses Modeunternehmen erweckt den Eindruck, es sei wahrheitsgemäß in seiner Offenlegung nachhaltiger Versandpraktiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dieses Modeunternehmen erweckt den Eindruck, es sei ehrlich bei der Umsetzung nachhaltiger Versandpraktiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Das Engagement dieses Modeunternehmens für Nachhaltigkeit erweckt den Eindruck, es sei altruistisch (uneigennützig).	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dieses Modeunternehmen erweckt den Eindruck, es sei aufrichtig bei der Umsetzung nachhaltiger Versandpraktiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Das Engagement dieses Modeunternehmens für Nachhaltigkeit erweckt den Eindruck, es sei von Eigeninteresse geleitet.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dieses Modeunternehmen erweckt den Eindruck, es sei effektiv bei der Umsetzung nachhaltiger Lieferketten-Praktiken.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

5. Bitte geben Sie an, inwieweit Sie den folgenden Aussagen zustimmen:

	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu 1	2	3	4	5	6	Stimme vollkommen zu 7
Ich würde die Website, den Online Shop oder den Retail Store dieses Modeunternehmens besuchen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
In Zukunft würde ich sehr wahrscheinlich bei diesem Modeunternehmen einkaufen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ich würde die Website, den Online Shop oder den Retail Store dieses Modeunternehmens regelmäßig besuchen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ich ziehe einen Besuch dieses Modeunternehmens in Erwägung (Website, Online Shop oder Retail Store).	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

6. Bitte geben Sie an, inwieweit Sie den folgenden Aussagen zustimmen:

	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu 1	2	3	4	5	6	Stimme vollkommen zu 7
Ich würde positiv über dieses Modeunternehmen sprechen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ich würde dieses Modeunternehmen meinen Freunden/Freundinnen empfehlen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wenn meine Freunde/Freundinnen auf der Suche nach einem Kleidungsstück wären, würde ich ihnen empfehlen, dieses Modeunternehmen auszuprobieren.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

7. Bitte kreuzen Sie bei dieser Skala genau den Mittelpunkt an:

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
.	.	.	.	.

Seite 08

	Sehr schlecht 1	2	3	4	5	6	Sehr gut 7
Wie gut ist Ihr Verständnis über die Eigenschaften der Beschaffungs-/Lieferkette innerhalb der Modeindustrie?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Sehr niedrig 1	2	3	4	5	6	Sehr hoch 7
Wie würden Sie Ihren Wissensstand über die Beschaffungs-/Lieferketten innerhalb der Modeindustrie im Vergleich zum Rest der Bevölkerung bewerten?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

8. Bitte geben Sie an, inwieweit Sie den folgenden Aussagen zustimmen:

	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu 1	2	3	4	5	6	Stimme vollkommen zu 7
Wenn der Mensch in die Natur eingreift, hat das oft katastrophale Folgen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Der Mensch missbraucht die Umwelt massiv.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Trotz unserer besonderen Fähigkeiten ist der Mensch noch immer den Gesetzen der Natur unterworfen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

9. Wie oft haben Sie in den letzten 6 Monaten Kleidung bei diesem Modeunternehmen gekauft?

Mal

Alter

10. Geschlecht

[Bitte auswählen]

Nationalität

11. Höchste abgeschlossene Ausbildung

[Bitte auswählen]

12. Wollen Sie uns sonst noch etwas mitteilen?

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!

Bitte kopieren Sie den folgenden Code und fügen Sie ihn in das dafür vorgesehene Feld innerhalb Ihres Clickworker-Aufgabenformulars ein.

Ohne die Angabe dieses Codes kann eine Gutschrift Ihres Honorars nicht erfolgen!

CODE:FIL2021

Wir möchten uns ganz herzlich für Ihre Mithilfe bedanken.

Möchten Sie in Zukunft an interessanten und spannenden Online-Befragungen teilnehmen?

Wir würden uns sehr freuen, wenn Sie Ihre E-Mail-Adresse für das SoSci Panel anmelden und damit wissenschaftliche Forschungsprojekte unterstützen.

E-Mail: Am Panel teilnehmen

Die Teilnahme am SoSci Panel ist freiwillig, unverbindlich und kann jederzeit widerrufen werden. Das SoSci Panel speichert Ihre E-Mail-Adresse nicht ohne Ihr Einverständnis, sendet Ihnen keine Werbung und gibt Ihre E-Mail-Adresse nicht an Dritte weiter.

Sie können das Browserfenster selbstverständlich auch schließen, ohne am SoSci Panel teilzunehmen.

Prof. Dr. Marion Garaus, MODUL University Vienna – 2021