Tampere University of Applied Sciences

Finnish consumers' perception of sustainability in clothing, and its effects on purchasing decisions

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ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
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SUONIEMI, AKI-JUSSI:
Finnish consumers' perception of sustainability in clothing, and its effects on purchasing decisions

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The following thesis was conducted in order to understand the way the Finnish consumers think and act when it comes to sustainable clothing. The writer has a clothing brand and intends to use the gathered information to better serve the customer base and understand their thoughts on sustainability in fashion. Previous research has found an attitude-behaviour gap when it comes to the purchasing of sustainable clothing, and the goal is to find out if it is true in this market at this time.

The data for this research was gathered through a questionnaire, and the findings were compared to findings of other similar research which have been conducted in Finland and elsewhere.

The research did not find a significant attitude-behaviour gap in the group that answered the questionnaire. Almost all of the respondents stated they have bought clothing, which is made in Finland and the group, on average, were willing to pay significantly more when asked to name a price for two similar pieces of clothing, one made in Bangladesh, one in Finland.

The consumers which were surveyed for this thesis seem to be quite sustainable. The findings were positive towards making clothes in Finland, as well as for the possibility of opening a store which stocks both second-hand clothing as well as clothing from sustainable brands.

Key words: sustainable clothing, clothing, sustainability, consumerism

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Ylempi tradenomitutkinto
Growthmakers

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Finnish consumers' perception of sustainability in clothing, and its effects on purchasing decisions

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on selvittää suomalaisten kuluttajien ajatuksia ja käyttäytymistä mitä tulee kestävään vaatetukseen. Kirjoittajalla on vaatebrändi, joka valmistaa vaatteita Suomessa. Aiemmat saman aihepiirin työt ovat havainneet, että kuluttajat haluaisivat ostaa kestäviä vaatteita, mutta eivät päädy näihin ostopäätöksiin.

Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on ymmärtää brändin potentiaalisten, suomalaisten kuluttajien ajatuksia kestävää muotia kohtaan. Työn toimeksiantajana on kirjoittajan oma brändi.

Tutkielman data kerättiin kyselyllä, joka jaettiin Hypend- nimisessä Facebook ryhmässä, sekä kirjoittajan omassa sosiaalisessa mediassa. Hypend on vaatteisiin ja kulttuuriin keskittyvä Facebook ryhmä, jonka jäsenet ovat brändin keskeistä asiakaskuntaa. Näitä löydöksiä verrattiin aiempien töiden löytöihin.

Lähes kaikki vastaajat kertoivat ostaneensa suomessa valmistettuja vaatteita, ja suomalaista valmistusta pidettiin tulosten mukaan arvokkaana. Vastaajat olivat keskimäärin valmiita maksamaan merkittävästi enemmän Suomessa valmistetusta vaatekappaleesta verrattuna vastaavanlaiseen Bangladeshissa valmistettuun vaatteeseen. Opinnäytetyön yhteydessä saaduista vastauksista ei löytynyt yhtä merkittävää eroa ajatusten ja kulutuskäyttäytymisen välillä, mitä muista töistä on löytynyt. Naiset olivat vastausten perusteella kauttaaltaan hieman vastuullisempia kuin miehet.

Suomessa vaatteiden valmistaminen on vastaajien mielestä arvokasta, ja siitä ollaan valmiita maksamaan. Suomessa saattaisi olla markkina kaupalle, joka myy käytettyjä vaatteita ja vastuullisesti valmistettuja vaatteita saman katon alla.

Avainsanat: vastuullinen muoti, vastuullisuus, muoti, kulutuskäyttäytyminen

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

The writer of this thesis runs his own luxury clothing brand. The clothing brand in question, called “False Dilemma”, focuses on creating long-lasting and sustainable clothing.

The brand makes all its clothing in Finland, and uses materials that are of high quality, and thus likely to last longer than cheaper alternatives. When choosing materials, natural fibers are preferred over synthetic fibers, and within natural fibers, the ones that are likely to be less detrimental to the planet are chosen. As an example, most of the cotton used by False Dilemma is GOTS certified organic cotton. This means that, among other things, less water has been used in the process of growing the cotton, in addition to some other parameters that need to be met for cotton to be given the GOTS certification. (Global Standard gGmbH)

The brand also uses some deadstock materials, which means the fabrics have been produced for another brand and have been left over from production. This is a way of upcycling that is one way of creating a more sustainable piece of clothing, I.E., limiting waste produced by the industry.

Having this type of background and drive for making a sustainable clothing brand in Finland makes the information derived from this thesis very valuable to the writer. Having knowledge on what the Finnish public view as sustainable, whether it affects purchasing decision, and if trends are changing when it comes to the consumption of more sustainable clothing, is key to knowing how to market to consumers, as well as what kind of choices to make in multiple variables when it comes to not only making sustainable clothing, but making a sustainable, profitable business. Since sustainable clothing is a nice idea, but it only works if the companies making those clothes can thrive, understand the market, and make a profit.

1.2. Objective

The objective of this thesis is to shed light on the tendencies and thoughts of the Finnish consumer when it comes to sustainable fashion. Getting this information through a survey was determined to be the best way to get the most data and widest cast of answerers.

The data and observations gathered from this thesis can bring great value to False Dilemma, which is looking to become a staple in the Finnish fashion scene. Having heightened knowledge into the thought process of the Finnish consumer will help False Dilemma make choices in both manufacturing and marketing.

As in most if not all markets, the more knowledgeable a manufacturer can be on what its customers want and expect, the better it can serve its customer and avoid some pitfalls. When it comes to manufacturing clothing, this knowledge can be useful when determining aspects of the manufacturing process, such as manufacturing country, fabrics, the manufacturing country of materials, whether consumers value things such as recycled materials etc. There are a variety of variables that can gravely affect the cost of production. Knowing which of these variables consumers give value to, can have a massive effect on the choices that False Dilemma makes when making clothes.

Another aspect of the valuable information gathered from the writing of this thesis is having the information available when marketing the brand. Given the brand's focus is on making ethical and sustainable clothing, there is lots to be proud of in the marketing but having concrete information on what the consumer values will be a great asset when determining which aspects of the brand to bring forward in marketing material, visuals and messaging.

Much of the literature which has been written on similar topics to this thesis, have discovered an attitude-behaviour gap, meaning that consumers want to purchase sustainable goods (attitude) but don't end up purchasing those goods despite wanting to (behaviour gap).

There is no up to date research on Finnish consumers' attitudes and behaviour when it comes to sustainability in clothing. Niinimäki (2010) researched the

Finnish consumer, but this was twelve years ago, and the demographic in her research was heavily skewed towards female respondents, with only 8 per cent male respondents. (Niinimäki 2010.)

There are some very recent studies conducted in other countries, such as the researches conducted in Spain by Riesgo, Codina & Sabada (2022) as well as Castro-Lopez, Iglesias & Puente (2021). (Riesgo, Codina & Sabada 2022; Castro-Lopez, Iglesias & Puente 2021.)

However, seeing as False Dilemma is focusing on the Finnish market, the most valuable information will be that which is gathered from Finnish consumers, and seeing as how the best information on the topic when it comes to Finland is twelve years old, the information gathered here fills in the gap in the research.

1.3. Thesis Content

The aim of this thesis is for the writer and the reader to understand how and if sustainability drives purchasing decisions made by the Finnish consumers.

In order to understand this, the matter needs to be looked at from a multitude of facets. What do people view as sustainable? Which variables do consumers pay attention to? How much do people spend on clothing? How much does spending differ between demographics? Is there a noticeable shift happening in spending habits? Are there other correlations that can be connected to spending on clothing?

The above are just a few different aspects that need to be understood in order to understand the current market before diving into data collection and viewing it from this thesis' aspect of sustainability and how it affects people's spending patterns.

The second chapter, which focuses on the theoretical framework, will be a deep dive into literature about what sustainability in clothing means, what drives peoples purchasing decisions, and what previous studies on similar subjects have uncovered. The chapter cites multiple resources which have researched the matter from their own perspectives.

The third chapter will focus on data collection methodology. This thesis will gather its data through a questionnaire which will be mostly delivered through social media. The chapter will look at what information was gathered and how.

The fourth chapter will dig deeper into the data, analysing the collected data and making sense of what the data is telling us.

The fifth and final chapter will be the conclusion. In this part of the thesis, the data has been analysed, as well as literature on the subject. The combination of these things will give the insight needed to arrive at a conclusion on how sustainability impacts purchasing decisions. Through this data, and an understanding on how variations affect cost of goods and sales prices, there will be a conclusion on what could positively or negatively affect False Dilemma’s and other clothing brands endeavours in the Finnish market when it comes to making and marketing sustainable clothing.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The research question is “What affects Finnish consumers’ perception of sustainability in clothing and does sustainability play a role in purchasing decisions”.

The goal of this question is two phased, it is to get a better understanding of what makes consumers' think a piece of clothing is sustainable, and on the other hand whether that has an impact on their consuming habits and is there a shift in this area of thinking, and if the thinking translates to actions.

Sustainability has a lot of factors that can affect consumers perception. There are variables such as manufacturing country, certificates, brands, stores, materials etc. The goal is to find out how much these variables have weight when it comes to consumers making decisions on what to buy.

The subject has gathered steam, as found by Busalim, Fox and Lynn (2022) the number of publications on the topic of sustainable fashion has been growing quite substantially in the last decade (Busalim et AL 2022, 9).

2.2. Attitude – behaviour gap

When reading through material on similar subjects, it was quite clear that the research shows that there is an attitude-behavioural gap when it comes to sustainable clothing. Meaning that people endorse sustainable clothing as a concept, but these beliefs do not translate into sustainable clothing purchases.

This can be seen quite clearly in a multitude of sources. Carrigan and Attala (2001) state that although consumers care about the ethical behavior of companies, it does not equate to consumption choices that would make consumers choose ethical companies’ products. Carrigan and Attala also stated that consumers don’t want to make ethical choices if it inconveniences them. (Carrigan, Attala, 2001, 566-574.)

Salomon and Rabolt (2004) also pointed out that ethical markets have been very slow to expand, even though the interest in ethically produced clothing is rising, it does not actualize in purchasing behavior (Salomon & Rabolt, 2004).

As stated by Joergens (2006) the attitude-behavior gap can be seen in the global clothing business with consumers being interested in eco fashion but their knowledge does not significantly affect their purchase decisions (Joergens 2006, 369).

There has been some research that has asked consumers questions about their readiness to pay more for sustainable products, in her research, Niinimäki (2010) found, that under 10% of her sample group were ready to pay more than 25% extra for eco-clothes, while about one third were willing to pay no more than 10% extra for eco-clothing (Niinimäki, 2010, 160).

Ciasullo, Maione, Torre and Troisi (2017) found that 19% of respondents were willing to pay 30-50% extra, while 61% of respondents were willing to pay 20% extra, and the remaining 20% were either willing to pay no more, or 10% more for the sustainable choise (Ciasullo, Maione, Torre & Troisi 2017, 10).

Riesgo, Codina and Sabada (2022) found in their research of Spanish consumers' tendencies towards sustainable fashion, that the main driver in consumers' purchasing decisions is price. Their research showed that 32% of consumers' always chose the lowest price independent of the other factors such as country of origin, materials etc. In their research, Riesgo, Codina and Sabada also found that 74% of their batch of consumers were interested in sustainable fashion, with 40% stating they had bought an article of sustainable clothing, and 9% stating they buy sustainable clothing regularly. Their research found no people that were willing to pay 45€ for sustainably produced t-shirts (which they found to be the average t-shirt price for sustainable Spanish brands). (Riesgo, Codina, Sabada, 2022, 17-18.)

Crommentuijn-Marsh, Eckert and Potter (2010) stated that most participants in their study had a contradiction in that they wanted to follow their principals and purchase sustainably but found a continual conflict between their personal values and their budget. This paper also found that people were willing to pay 5 to 10 British pounds more for eco-labeled clothing but no more than that. (Crommentuijn-Marsh, Eckert and Potter, 2010.)

These numbers and statements clearly show the attitude – behavior gap, a majority express interest, a minority have actually made a sustainable fashion purchase and a small minority do it regularly.

Pelsmmacker, Janssens, Sterckx and Mielants (2005) found that even though 50% of European consumers claim to be willing to pay a higher price for sustainable products, the market share of these products is still under 1%. This demonstrates quite well how clear the attitude-behavior gap was back in 2005 (Pelsmmacker, Janssens, Sterckx & Mielants 2005).

2.3. What drives sustainable purchases

Shen, Richardson, Liu (2013) found, that when it comes to sustainable fashion, consumers were most receptive towards garments, in which the company producing the clothes, adhere to standards of social and ecological policy, as well as to products that are second-hand clothes, or clothes made with recycled, biodegradable materials. Their research also found that not many consumers were interested in vegan, made-to-order or artisanal products, this may also be due to not fully understanding what all these things mean, as well as the fact that made-to-order and artisanal products sound expensive, and usually are, and thus are out of the reach of many consumers, leading consumers to not be interested in them as they see them as something that is too expensive. They also found that the consumer does not have sufficient knowledge of sustainable fashion, and thus doesn’t necessarily understand that buying hand made products (such as artisanal and made-to-order products) is a part of sustainable fashion. (Shen, Richardson & Liu 2013, 144.)

A big part of the talk around sustainable clothing is how the workforce is treated. This is also a big player in consumers thoughts when they think about sustainable fashion. Hanss and Böhm (2012) found that social fairness was a strong element in what consumers found important when it came to sustainable products, with fair payment to producers being an important attribute (Hanss & Böhm 2012, 685).

Shen, Zheng, Chow and Chow (2013) state that companies are encouraged to provide more detailed and transparent information about production of sustainable fashion, because it is beneficial for the consumption of sustainable fashion as well as stimulating the consumers purchasing decisions. It could be stated that companies that have an ethical and sustainable workforce should market such practices, as this could highlight the ethicality of said brand in the minds of the consumers. (Shen, Zheng, Chow & Chow 2013, 976.)

There is a lot of talk about what psychological factors drive the purchase decisions of consumers, with Niinimäki (2012) stating that in fashion, the main driver for change is the consumers' desires, not guilt. Harris, Roby and Dibb (2016) stated in their study, that in spite of encouraging developments in sustainable clothing, focusing on sustainability alone will not drive the necessary changes in consumers' clothing purchase, care and disposal behavior. (Niinimäki 2012, 161; Harris, Roby & Dibb 2016, 316.)

These statements drive home the fact that the product needs to be desirable first, and sustainable second, the outcome being that if the product itself doesn't fit the desires of the market, the sustainability in itself will not make the product a winner in the market.

Much of the literature mentions that while sustainability is a thing that consumers value, things like color, fit and price are much more of a force in purchasing decisions. As Niinimäki (2012) stated, the eco-aspect can only add value to the product when the product is otherwise attractive, and thus the eco-aspects give the final reason to buy the garment. The ethical and eco-issues seem to be drivers only to ethically committed consumers who are still a niche in clothing markets. This stance was also emphasized by Berchicci and Bodewes (2005) who stated that successful green products can't just meet environmental demands, but must also meet market requirements. (Niinimäki 2012, 160; Berchicci & Bodewes 2005, 278.)

2.4. Trends in the market

Raymond (2003) stated that customers will be more active and influential in the future, stating that future markets are going to be fragmented, and won't follow logical patterns. Raymond saw that in the future consumers will be smaller groups of people behaving irrationally, emotionally and chaotically, instead of there being one coherent mass of consumers. This can be seen in today's trends, as there are more and more people that are conscious of their purchasing, we have also seen the birth of such things as SHEIN, a fast fashion company that makes H&M and ZARA look like the good guys. This ultra-fast-fashion company has been extremely popular, with there even being trends on social media where people buy tens of articles of clothing, showing off their "SHEIN hauls" for the audience to see, while on another side of social media other people are highlighting their sustainable shopping and second-hand finds. This is exactly the type of splintering that can be seen in the consumer, as these two types of consumers' behave extremely different from one another (Raymond 2003).

As found by Sajn (2019) only about 5% of household expenditure in the EU goes towards clothing in 2020 (Sajn 2019, 2).

From going through the material, it seems that there is a shift in consumers' interest in sustainable fashion, as the newer research tends to show more positive outlooks. For example Castro-Lopez, Iglesias and Puente (2021) concluded that there is a change in consumer consumption habits, with consumers' being increasingly oriented toward sustainable fashion as a tool to preserve the environment (Castro-Lopez, Iglesias & Puente 2021, 8).

Mandaric, Hunjet and Vukovic (2022) found that the Covid pandemic has brought a new wave of hope for sustainable fashion, although their research also found that there is a gap in thinking and acting (Mandaric, Hunjet & Vukovic 2022, 14-15).

Granskog, Lee, Magnus and Sawers (2020) in their research on how the covid pandemic has affected consumer behavior, found that 65 percent of respondents were planning to purchase more durable fashion items, and 71 percent were planning to keep the items they have for longer. At the same time this research found that younger consumers were willing to purchase cheaper versions of products they normally buy. The same research also found that within younger European consumers' there is a growing interest of buying secondhand clothing, with about 50 percent of Gen-Z's and millennials expecting to purchase more items secondhand. (Granskog, Lee, Magnus & Sawers 2020.)

2.5. Gaps in research and main goals

Yip (2010) argued that there are five main criteria of sustainable fashion.

1. Is it locally made?
2. Is it ethically produced?
3. Does it incorporate recycled materials?
4. Does it use organic and naturally processed materials?
5. Is it made to last?

(Yip 2010)

Ultimately these five can be focused to four categories, those being country of origin, ethicality of production, materials and quality. These are also going to be the main pillars from which the majority of questions are going to be pulled for the questionnaire. The questionnaire is also going to have some questions about price sensitivity and other factors, but the majority is going to focus on what factors consumers find valuable when it comes to sustainability in clothing, with these four main themes being the driving force.

In light of the findings in the literature, it seems that participants have usually been asked how much more they would be willing to pay for garments without much context. In this questionnaire the questions around price are going to be formed differently, by asking the consumers what the consumers think the value of different products are for them, it is easier to come to a more accurate percentage, as it is likely easier for a person to understand what they are willing to pay when given a set of information instead of how many extra per cents they are willing to pay for something to be sustainable. This way the results can be calculated as a percentage, as well as in euros. Because there will likely be a large skew in the amount people are ready to pay for clothing in general, having the ability to see the differences in euros and percentages will be helpful.

There were no questions that were found, that were focusing on the consumers' idea on what sustainable manufacturing (or any manufacturing for that matter) costs. It would be interesting to see how much consumers believe the manufacturing prices to be for example on a t-shirt that is made in Finland using organic cotton (this is the way False Dilemma makes its t-shirts, which also means there is data on the actual manufacturing price). There also seemed to be no real questions about the whole of the manufacturing chain. There was no information to be found whether or not people care about where the fabric is manufactured, and where the raw materials come from. Even a t-shirt made in Finland cannot be very sustainable if the cotton comes from China and is made into a fabric in Bangladesh, it would be interesting to see if consumers give this thought, and if they were to have the information, do they think it would make a difference in their purchasing decisions, or their view of certain brands.

There seems to be a consensus that there is an attitude-behavior gap when it comes to sustainable clothing. While this may very well be true, that there are many people that think about sustainability as important and are interested in sustainable fashion yet don't purchase it, it may also be that lots of these people buy second-hand clothing, trade clothes on online forums etc. in order to be sustainable with their purchases. Maybe the questioning of these people has been slightly too narrow sighted in part, as it is possible to be a sustainable shopper without purchasing sustainable first-hand clothing.

The distinction of this research - in addition to points made earlier - compared to the ones referred to above is going to be the fact that this research is going to be fixed on Finnish consumers. Niinimäki also researched the Finnish market, but seeing as her research was done in 2010, and only 8 per cent of her respondents were male, there is definitely a chance that the findings will be significantly different. In the past twelve years there has definitely been a shift towards young people understanding the importance of sustainable habits, with shopping being one of them. Simply looking at H&M's stock price which has come down over 70% from its peak in 2015, and Inditex trading sideways during the same period, this could be seen as a decent indicator that fast fashion is not a booming industry. This of course gives hope to more sustainable brands (Niinimäki 2010, 156).

The main things that will differentiate this research from the ones referred to in this chapter, is going deeper into the consumers thoughts on country of origin, fair wage, the consumers thoughts on how much locally made clothing actually costs, as well as – of course – have people started making meaningful changes to their clothing purchasing habits, do they actively think about their choices, and do they see themselves making different choices in the future.

The literature review made it quite clear that it is very likely that the findings will be that people are interested in sustainable fashion but are not actually willing to purchase it, or at least they are not willing to buy sustainable fashion purely for it being sustainable, but it may be a driving factor in purchasing decisions. It will be interesting to see how much of the sample population has purchased or regularly purchase sustainable clothing, as it is something that is readily available nowadays. It will also be interesting to see how much overlap there is between people who buy second-hand clothing and those who buy sustainable clothing, this is something that none of the literature dug into. If the data shows that the people buying second hand are also those purchasing – or at least those interested in purchasing – sustainable fashion, there could be a hole in the market, where bringing quality second-hand clothing, and sustainable brands under the same roof could benefit the sale of second-hand items as well as the sustainable brands clothing.

It will also be beneficial to see what the demographic most likely to purchase sustainable fashion looks like. Having this information, as well as understanding what drives their purchases, will be a key information for any sustainable fashion brand implementing a marketing strategy in Finland.

The main ways that this research differs from the previously done research, and gives value to False Dilemma, is the fact that it gives insight into the exact customer base of False Dilemma. No previous research has captured this demographic.

Also, conducting the brands’ own research lets the brand ask the things that are important to it, and not be subject to the information gathered by others. For example, information on consumers attitudes towards materials, manufacturing countries, Finnish manufacturing and second-hand clothing.

The information gathered from these questions can be used in a multitude of ways. For example, the attitudes towards material can be used when choosing which materials to put an emphasis on or try to stay away from, manufacturing countries can be used when looking at where to make accessories, information about attitudes towards Finnish-made clothing can be used when marketing and pricing clothes, and information on second-hand clothing could be vital in opening a new concept which sells sustainable clothing and second-hand clothing under one roof.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction to methodology

The following chapter will go through what kind of methodology was used to gather data for this research, why the data was collected this way, and how the data was analysed.

This chapter will also go through the limitations in data collection, and how they have affected the study.

3.2. Research design

3.2.1 Research philosophy

The research philosophy for this study was positivism. The goal was to let the data show how the consumers in the target audience thinks and let the data dictate the findings.

According to Business Research Methodology, while positivism is hard to explain in a precise matter, it adheres to the view that only factual knowledge gained through observation, including measurements, is trustworthy. They also state that in positivism studies, the researcher is limited to data collection and interpretation (Business Reseach Methodology).

The paragraph above accurately describes how this research was conducted. Although the writer is heavily invested in what the data shows, and the data has real world consequences on the actions of the writer moving forward, the writer believes that the data is very valuable, and wants the data to show what people think, without influencing the answers or trying to sway the findings in any direction.

According to Saunders (2009), positivism relates to the philosophical stance of the natural scientist and entails working with an observable social reality to produce law-like generalisations (Saunders 2009, 135).

This is exactly what the philosophy is when going into this research, and thus this philosophy was chosen for the conducting of this thesis.

3.2.2 Research type

The research type in question is quantitative research. The goal is to get quantitative data from a set of people that give as good a representation of False Dilemma's target audience as possible.

3.2.3 Research strategy

The research strategy in this case is a case study. The goal is to find out how a set of people answer questions in the research. As stated earlier the goal has been to find a set of people that represent the target audience of the writer's brand.

3.2.4 Time horizon

The answers to the questionnaire were gathered between 19.9.2022 and 21.9.2022.

3.2.5 Sampling

The answers were gathered via social media. There were three separate posts that had a link to the questionnaire. These posts were made on a Facebook group called Hypend, on the writers personal Instagram stories section, as well as the writers LinkedIn.

The reason these three ways to distribute the questionnaire was chosen is due to the ease of posting on the writers own social media, and because Hypend is the easiest and best way to gather data from a sample of people that is a decent representation of False Dilemma's target audience. Hypend is a 22000 member Facebook group, which is focused on culture and clothes. The demographic of Hypend is mostly young adults, which is also False Dilemma's target audience, hence this platform was chosen as a key way to get answerers.

As the questionnaire was anonymous, there couldn't be any prizes given to those that participated, and this couldn't be used as a driver to get more responses, instead, there was a small giveaway of a hoodie to those that commented on the Hypend Facebook post, as the more likes and comments a post gets the more people are going to see it and this will lead to more people filling out the questionnaire.

3.2.6 Data collection

The chosen data collection method was quite clear, and the information was gathered via questionnaire. The questionnaire was done and distributed through Survey Monkey.

As stated by Taherdoost (2016), once target population, sampling frame, sampling technique and sample size have been established, the next step is to collect data (Tanderhoost 2016, 26).

The questionnaire had twenty-nine questions. Of those, five were open questions, where the answerer can answer with text answers. Twenty questions were single choice questions, and the remaining four questions were grid questions, where the answerer was asked to rate their opinion on multiple variables under the same subject on a scale of disliking to liking something, or something having no impact to having a big impact on their purchasing decisions.

The questionnaire received 224 answers. The multiple-choice questions all received at least 221 answers. The open-ended questions received 168, 167, 207, 208 and 205 answers respectively.

The questionnaire was written by the writer (see appendix). The questions were formed based on the information that the writer deemed important in his brands progression moving forward, as well as possible business ventures that he may embark on in the future.

3.2.7 Analysis methods

The data was analysed by finding how the group answered questions as a collective, as well as what kinds of correlations could be found.

The goal was to find out correlations between demographics. For example, finding out if there are differences between which things different age ranges and genders appreciate. Finding out women 24-35 really like local manufacturing whereas men 35-50 really appreciate long lastingness could have a big impact on optimizing social media marketing.

The goal of the analysis was to find out which variables the respondents received the best, as well as if there were differences in different demographics. For example, those that had bought and think they will buy Finnish made clothing in the future, are of higher value to a brand such as False Dilemma, than someone that has not and do not think they will. Thus, their answers were analysed more detailed.

3.3. Limitations

There are some limitations that could skew the results and should be taken into consideration.

The questionnaire was distributed through the writer’s own social media, where some people follow him due to their interest in the clothing he produces. The questionnaire was also distributed through the Facebook group “Hypend” which is a group that is mostly for buying and selling clothes and other collectibles, as well as some things about culture etc. this means that the people in the group are likely more interested in clothing than an average citizen. Although this does not necessarily mean the group members are more skewed towards sustainability, it is something to be taken into consideration.

To limit any reason for people to feel the urge to answer in a certain way, which would likely skew the responses towards more sustainable, the questionnaire was conducted anonymously.

It should also be noted, that given False Dilemma's products price range, they are mostly geared towards people that are more interested in clothing than the average person, thus, gathering information from this type of consumer is more valuable as well.

The distribution channels also skew towards a younger audience, which in this case was also by design, since the target audience of False Dilemma is mostly people under the age of 40.

As the questionnaire is quite focused on sustainability, and it asks those answering to answer questions on their own perceived sustainability, there is a lot of room for variation in what people feel is sustainable, how well they understand the topic, how critical they are on the topic etc.

It is possible that one person feels an action is sustainable, while another thinks that the exact same thing could not be deemed sustainable, and in fact would not do the same thing due to the unsustainable nature of it. Some people may be more easily misguided by corporations telling them their products are sustainable, without thinking further, while others do research on brands, materials etc. and base their decisions on their own research. Given this, one person may feel that purchasing H&M/ ZARA/ Primark clothing that states it is from a "sustainable" line, is sustainable, while another, thinks that it is impossible for these brands to be sustainable, and thus deems these products unsustainable.

Also given the questionnaire was conducted in English, there is the possibility, that even though the questionnaire was written in a way that was meant to be easily understandable, that some of the people answering the questions do not fully understand the question because it is not in their mother tongue. This shouldn't be very likely, as the level of English language in Finnish people (especially younger people) is very high, as well as the fact that someone that knows they are not very good at English, are likely not going to answer a detailed questionnaire in English.

3.4. Summary

In summary, the research is quantitative. The data was collected through similar ways as False Dilemma's products are marketed, to get a population of answerers that are as good a representation of the brands target audience as possible.

The questionnaire was filled out by 224 people in under two days, and these answers came through a Facebook group, as well as the writers own Instagram story and LinkedIn post.

The questionnaire was in English but was written in a way that most everyone should be able to understand, but it should be taken into consideration. A big limiting factor is that it is impossible to know what individual people view as sustainable, and this is something that needs to be taken into consideration when considering the results.

4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

As stated earlier, the data was created with Survey Monkey and the data was collected through social media.

The data collection was successful, as 224 entries were gathered in less than two days. This was deemed to be a large enough population to give quite meaningful data.

4.2. Showcasing the most interesting data

In order to make the following chapter as legible and easily digestible as possible, the chapter is only going to focus on the few most important questions and those questions which gave the most meaningful answers.

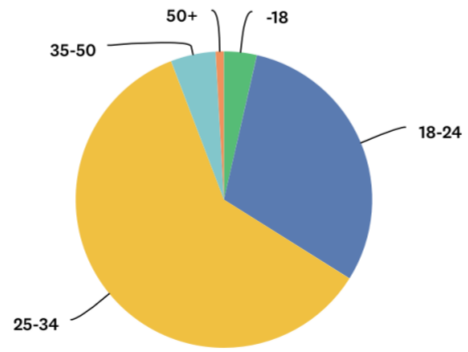
All questionnaire questions can be found in the appendix, as well as all answers except the answers to the open-ended questions.

The questions and answers which are highlighted in this chapter were those which were deemed to have the most value to False Dilemma, have the most unexpected/ interesting answers, or were otherwise deemed important enough to be highlighted in this chapter in addition to being available for viewing in the appendix.

4.3. Demographics

Age

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0

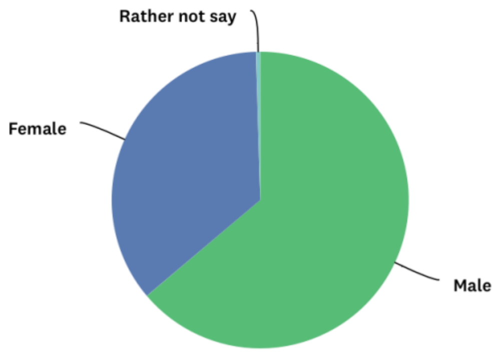


VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
-18	3,57 %	8
18-24	30,36 %	68
25-34	60,27 %	135
35-50	4,91 %	11
50+	0,89 %	2
YHTEENSÄ		224

Table 1 Age demographics

Gender

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0

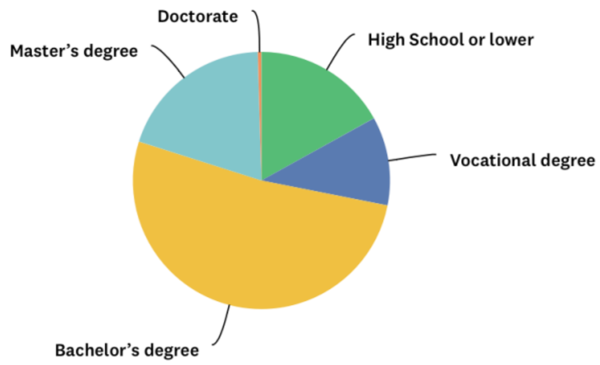


VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Male	63,84 %	143
Female	35,71 %	80
Other	0,00 %	0
Rather not say	0,45 %	1
YHTEENSÄ		224

Table 2 Gender demographics

Education

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0

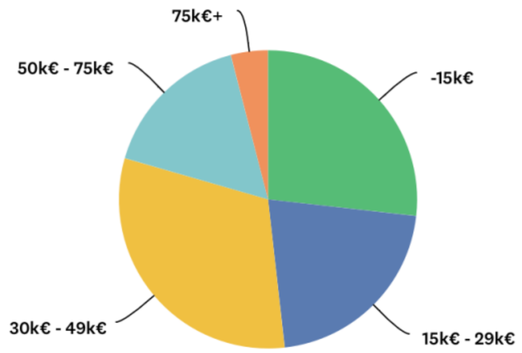


VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
High School or lower	16,96 %	38
Vocational degree	11,16 %	25
Bachelor's degree	51,79 %	116
Master's degree	19,64 %	44
Doctorate	0,45 %	1
YHTEENSÄ		224

Table 3 Education demographics

Yearly income

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
-15k€	26,79 %	60
15k€ - 29k€	21,43 %	48
30k€ - 49k€	31,25 %	70
50k€ - 75k€	16,52 %	37
75k€+	4,02 %	9
YHTEENSÄ		224

Table 4 Income demographics

The demographics of the respondents was very representative of False Dilemma's customer base. As False Dilemma makes unisex clothing, getting such a good split between genders is nice. The clothing is also mostly geared toward a younger audience so 94+% under 35-year-olds is also a good thing.

Seeing as how the questionnaire was distributed through the same means as False Dilemma marketing, it was expected for this to be the result.

4.4. General sustainability

In the open-ended question of what kind of choices people base on sustainability, the five most common themes were clothing, food, transportation, second hand and recycling.

The question got 168 responses. Out of those, the most mentioned were:

1. Clothing (60 mentions)
2. Food (50 mentions)
3. Transportation (39 mentions)
4. Recycling (34 mentions)
5. Second-Hand (34 mentions)

4.5. Clothing sustainability questions

The open question of if the person answering knows of any sustainable clothing brands received 167 answers. The most answered brands were:

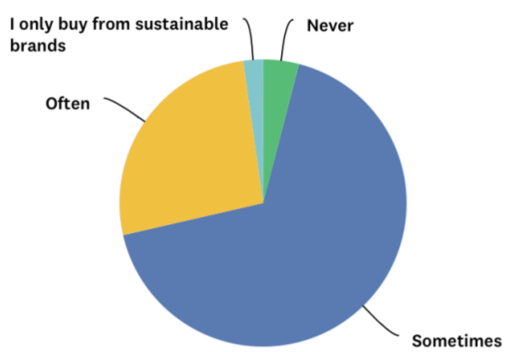
1. Patagonia (51 mentions)
2. False Dilemma (30 mentions)
3. Pure waste (16 mentions)
4. Marimekko (6 mentions)
5. Globe Hope (5 mentions)

It would be interesting to see what the same people would have answered to this question if they had filled out this questionnaire a few weeks earlier, and if it had not come from someone that they (likely) know has their own clothing brand (False Dilemma). About a week before the questionnaires were answered, it was big news that the owner of Patagonia was giving away the company and the profit of the company from here on out would be used to fight climate change.

There was quite a big drop off in the mentions after the two biggest ones, with the two biggest ones highly likely largely impacted due to the means with which the questionnaire was distributed, as well as the news that had just made the rounds.

Do you buy clothing from sustainable brands?

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	4,02 %	9
Sometimes	67,41 %	151
Often	26,34 %	59
I only buy from sustainable brands	2,23 %	5
YHTEENSÄ		224

Table 5 Answers to question: “Do you buy clothing from sustainable brands?”

The large majority (about two thirds) of respondents stated they purchase sustainable clothing sometimes, with a very small number of respondents stating they don’t buy clothing from sustainable brands.

The fact that such a large percentage of respondents make purchases from sustainable brands was slightly unexpected, but a positive finding.

	DISLIKE	SLIGHTLY DISLIKE	NOT GOOD OR BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD	YHTEENSÄ
Cotton	0,45 % 1	6,31 % 14	25,23 % 56	53,60 % 119	14,41 % 32	222
Organic cotton	0,00 % 0	2,25 % 5	14,86 % 33	49,55 % 110	33,33 % 74	222
Recycled cotton	0,00 % 0	0,45 % 1	20,72 % 46	45,50 % 101	33,33 % 74	222
Polyester	17,19 % 38	37,56 % 83	31,22 % 69	14,03 % 31	0,00 % 0	221
Recycled Polyester	6,82 % 15	23,64 % 52	40,45 % 89	26,82 % 59	2,27 % 5	220
Viscose	10,86 % 24	21,27 % 47	44,34 % 98	23,08 % 51	0,45 % 1	221
Wool	1,80 % 4	4,50 % 10	7,21 % 16	51,35 % 114	35,14 % 78	222
Silk	4,05 % 9	13,06 % 29	18,47 % 41	42,79 % 95	21,62 % 48	222
Leather	9,50 % 21	18,10 % 40	19,91 % 44	31,67 % 70	20,81 % 46	221
Leather from population control hunting (eg. Finnish elk leather)	9,05 % 20	14,48 % 32	23,98 % 53	28,96 % 64	23,53 % 52	221
Vegan Leather	11,31 % 25	9,05 % 20	43,44 % 96	23,53 % 52	12,67 % 28	221

Table 6 Answers to question “How much do you like/dislike the following materials in clothing?”

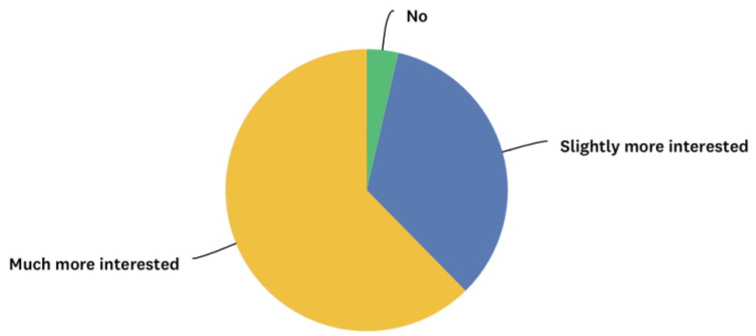
The chart above shows how wool received the best response from the answers, followed by organic cotton, recycled cotton, and cotton. The least liked choice was polyester.

False Dilemma uses organic cotton in the majority of its products, and different types of wools are also used quite a bit, so this was a nice affirmation that those choices are supported by the respondents as well.

4.6. Clothing production questions

Would you be more interested in buying a piece of clothing if you knew the person who made it received a fair salary for their work?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
No	3,59 %	8
Slightly more interested	34,08 %	76
Much more interested	62,33 %	139
YHTEENSÄ		223

Table 7 Answers to question: “Would you be more interested in buying a piece of clothing if you knew the person who made it received a fair salary for their work?”

Respondents were asked if they’d be more interested in purchasing a piece of clothing if they knew the person who made it received a fair salary for their work. 62% stated they would be much more interested, with 34% stating they would be slightly more interested, and 4% stating they wouldn’t be more interested.

This is something that brands such as False Dilemma, which pays 30€+/h to subcontractors for sewing and pattern work, could use as a selling point and share this information publicly, in order for the consumer to better understand the cost which goes into making a piece of clothing.

The respondents were asked if knowing that a piece of clothing was made in a certain country would positively or negatively affect their purchasing decision. The scale on which the respondents were asked to answer was: negative, slightly negative, neutral, positive, very positive.

This answer really split nations into two categories in the answers. As three countries received a total of two responses of “positive”, with no responses of “very positive”. Those countries will be ranked here based on how negatively they were perceived, based on how big the percentage of negative/ slightly negative answers were. Ranked from most negative to least negative those answers were as follows:

1. Bangladesh 82% (37%/45%)
2. India 82% (34%/48%)
3. China 77% (33%/44%)

Basically, all three of the above countries were in the same category of being perceived as negative. Given that out of the other six countries, the total amount of answers in the negative/ slightly negative category was 74 answers, compared to the 536 these three countries received.

The mostly positively perceived countries ranked from most positive to least positive according to how many positive/ very positive answers they received, were as follows:

1. Finland 96% (24%/72%)
2. Italy 83% (60%/23%)
3. Estonia 63% (48%/15%)
4. Spain 57% (52%/5%)
5. Portugal 53% (45%/8%)
6. Japan 43% (32%/11%)

The information gathered from here is truly fascinating. The ones that stand out as most interesting are how Estonia and Japan are ranked. Given how unlikely it is that people have the perception that Estonia could produce better quality clothing than Spain and Portugal, the fact that Estonia was ranked above them likely speaks to the fact that respondents feel that something that has been made close by is valuable.

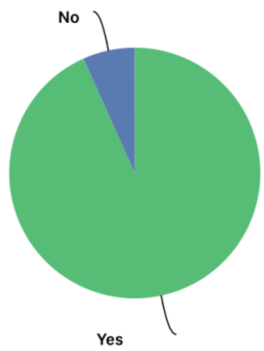
Also, Japan, which was ranked noticeably different than other Asian countries, was still ranked clearly the worst out of these countries. Japan is in fact a country with very high labour costs and produces (for example) some of the most expensive and sought-after denim in the world.

These two facts - Estonia ranking so high, without necessarily having long roots in clothing production – and Japan, which (while the information might be niche, and not well known among the general public) makes some of the most sought-after fashion items in some departments, such as denim and eyewear, being ranked the lowest of the developed nations, leads to believe that the proximity of the country has a big role in this.

As could be gathered from the high rating of Finland in the previous question, when asked if respondents were interested in clothing which is made in Finland, 93% of respondents answered that they are. This is high, but as found in the research, there is high interest in sustainable things, but not so much in the way of making those interests purchases. This is the attitude-behaviour gap that was discussed earlier.

Are you interested in clothing made in Finland?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



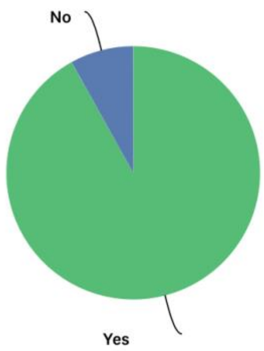
VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	93,27 %	208
No	6,73 %	15
YHTEENSÄ		223

Table 8 Answers to question: “Are you interested in clothing made in Finland?”

What is actually quite shocking, is that when asked whether or not the respondent has purchased clothing which has been made in Finland, 92% answered that they have. This figure is likely good marketing rather than an accurate representation of what people have bought. A lot of people likely think that for example Marimekko makes their clothing in Finland, when in fact their clothing is made (at least for the majority) in Asian countries and Portugal. In fact, when looking at Marimekko.com, the only manufacturing countries found when looking at random items were China, Lithuania, Indonesia and Portugal. (marimakko.com, accessed 1.10.2022)

Have you bought clothing that has been made in Finland?

Vastattu: 223   Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	91,93 %	205
No	8,07 %	18
YHTEENSÄ		223

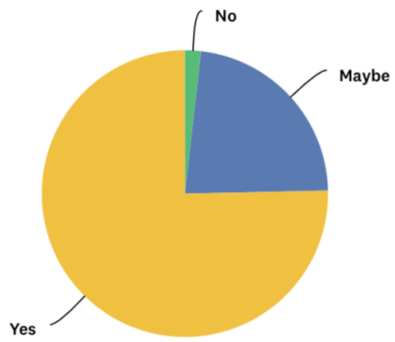
Table 9 Answers to question: “Have you bought clothing that has been made in Finland?”

When asked if the respondent see themselves purchasing clothing made in Finland in the future, 3/4 of the respondents answered yes, while almost all of the rest of the answerers answered maybe. Only under 2% answered that they do not see themselves purchasing Finnish made clothing in the future.

These answers are quite nice to hear from the perspective of a clothing brand which makes its’ clothes in Finland.

Do you see yourself buying Finnish made clothing in the future?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
No	1,79 %	4
Maybe	22,87 %	51
Yes	75,34 %	168
YHTEENSÄ		223

Table 10 Answers to question: “Do you see yourself buying Finnish made clothing in the future?”

4.7. Pricing related questions

When asked an open-ended question on how much the respondents were ready to pay for a 100% cotton basic white t-shirt made in Bangladesh, the average of the answers was 15,8€. About one third answered a number between 11€ and 20€, with almost as many answers in the 6€ to 10€ range.

It is notable to state that 7 out of 207 answers stated they would not buy the t-shirt or stated they would pay 0€ for it.

When asked an open-ended question on how much the respondents were ready to pay for a 100% organic cotton basic white t-shirt made in Finland, the answers were much different from the Bangladeshi variant. The average of the answers was 43,8€. Given these numbers the respondents (on average) were ready to pay 177% more for the more sustainable local t-shirt. This differs a lot from what other research has found.

As speculated earlier in this thesis, the fact that respondents were not asked to state arbitrary percentages when it comes to how much more they are ready to pay for certain products, but instead they were asked to place concrete euro amounts on how much they are ready to pay for these two products, resulted in wildly different answers than other research had found. Other research had respondents stating they were willing to pay maybe up to 50% extra for the sustainable choice.

The results in this research is wildly different, given the following categories and percentages that people were willing to pay extra for the organic cotton Finnish-made t-shirt in comparison to the cotton t-shirt from Bangladesh.

The breakdown of the answers are as follows:

Would not pay more = 7,7%
Would pay 1-50% more = 9,9%
Would pay 51-100% more = 24,3%
Would pay 101-200% more 23,8%
Would pay 201-300% more 12,7%
Would pay 301-400% more 10,5%
Would pay 401%+ more 11%

As can be seen from the above figures, over half of the respondents were willing to pay more than double for the more sustainable local t-shirt, and a whopping 21,5% were willing to pay more than 4x the price.

The final question in the pricing related section of the questionnaire asked the respondents how much they believe it costs to make the t-shirt which uses organic cotton and is made in Finland. The average answer was 27,55€.

The average of the answers was quite close, as it costs False Dilemma about 29€ per t-shirt to have them made. There was quite a wide array of answers, with 53,7% answering they think the cost is 1-20€, 32,3% answering 21-40€ and 13,9% answering 41€+.

Even though the mean of the answers was very close to accurate, the discrepancy in the answers was quite vast. Out of the 201 answers, eight thought it costs five euros or less to produce a t-shirt in Finland using organic cotton, while 26 respondents thought it costs fifty euros or more to produce. Sure, the most common answer was 20€, with 1/5 answering exactly 20€, which is relatively close, but the variation was bigger than expected.

4.8. Questions on material origin

Nearing the end of the questionnaire, there were three questions having to do with the origin of the materials used for making clothes.

The respondents were asked if – when buying clothes – they are interested in knowing where the raw material comes from, next they were asked if they would be interested in knowing where the fabric is made, and lastly if the respondent thinks that the origin of either the raw material or fabric could have an impact on their purchasing decision.

The answers between the origin of raw material and the country where the fabric is made were very similar. 66% would be interested in knowing the origin of raw material, and 69% would be interested in knowing where the fabric is made.

When asked if this information could have an impact on the purchasing decision of the respondent, only 26% stated that it would. 64% stated maybe, and 10% stated no.

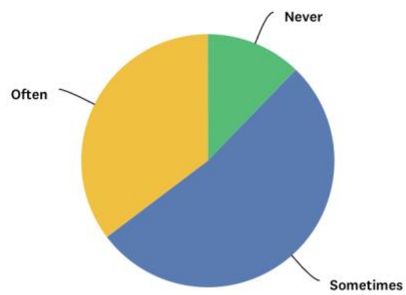
Even though a relatively small amount of people answered that they think it would make an impact on their purchasing decision, it is unlikely to be a bad thing to mention, especially if the countries of origin are ones that a brand can tout with a good conscience.

4.9. Clothing discarding and second-hand related questions

The second-to-last question in the questionnaire was whether respondents purchase second-hand clothing.

Do you buy secondhand clothing?

Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



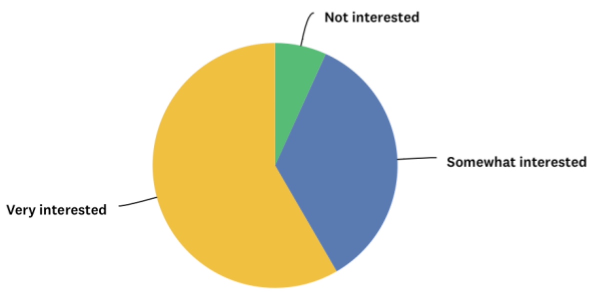
VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	12,22 %	27
Sometimes	52,49 %	116
Often	35,29 %	78
YHTEENSÄ		221

Table 11 Answers to question: “Do you buy secondhand clothing?”

Finally, the respondents were asked if they would be interested in a store that combines second-hand clothing and new clothes from sustainable brands.

Would you be interested in a store that combined secondhand clothing and new clothes from sustainable brands?

Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Not interested	6,79 %	15
Somewhat interested	34,84 %	77
Very interested	58,37 %	129
YHTEENSÄ		221

Table 12 Answers to question “Would you be interested in a store that combined secondhand clothing and new clothing from sustainable brands?”

The answers to this question were quite positive and is something that could be an interesting concept to make happen in the future.

4.10. What does the data tell us, and does it differ from previous research?

As an overlook, the data seems to be quite promising. Basically, all the previous research in the field stated that people are not willing to pay more for sustainability, nor are they making sustainable fashion purchases even though they would like to, but the findings in this research differ from that view quite substantially.

Not only do people think about sustainability when it comes to purchasing clothing, with only 8% stating they never think about it, a whopping 96% of answerers stated that they sometimes, often or solely purchase clothing from sustainable brands.

Also, given that Finnish-made clothing is likely in the more sustainable end of the spectrum, and the fact that a somewhat unbelievable percentage of 92% stated that they have bought clothing that has been made in Finland (this is something to be critical of, as many brands that market themselves as Finnish brands do not have production in Finland and may have consumers believe that they do) makes it clear that an extremely large portion of the people in the population that answered the survey in fact purchase clothing which is sustainable.

Obviously, sustainability is a tough subject, which is often misrepresented and hard to know what is true, but the fact that such a big portion of the people that answered the questionnaire feel that they are purchasing sustainable brands, hopefully in the future, when there are more transparent brands, these consumers will find these brands, which not only look and feel sustainable, but actually are.

Also, the fact that ¾ of respondents stated definitively that they will be purchasing Finnish-made clothing in the future is a beam of hope. Only about 2% of respondents stated that they will not be making these purchases, while 23% were on the fence.

Combining these facts with the fact that the respondents stated they were willing to spend almost 200% more on the more sustainable, Finnish-made t-shirt compared to the Bangladeshi option, the data from this dataset is very promising when it comes to how people are behaving, and what their outlook on clothing is.

4.11. Most interesting findings from the questionnaire

The five most useful and interesting findings from the questionnaire are as follows:

1. 92% of respondents state that they have bought clothing which is made in Finland
2. 96% of respondents feel they would be more interested in purchasing a piece of clothing if they knew the person who made the clothing received a fair wage for their work.
3. The average price the respondents were willing to pay for a simple white t-shirt which was made in Finland using organic cotton was almost 45€, and 177% more than what they were willing to pay for a similar t-shirt which was made in Bangladesh.
4. 93% of respondents would be interested in a store which sold pre-owned clothing and new clothes from sustainable brands.
5. Female respondents were slightly more skewed towards sustainability throughout the responses

4.12. Correlations

When looking at correlations, the most important questions were looked at through comparing how different groups answered the questions.

When it comes to the practical application of this thesis, the most important questions are questions 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 28 and 29.

These questions are:
9: Do you think about sustainability when purchasing clothing?
11: Do you buy clothing from sustainable brands?
14: Do you think local production is important in clothing?
16: Would you be more interested in purchasing a piece of clothing if you knew the person making it received a fair salary for their work?
18: Are you interested in clothing made in Finland?
19: Have you bought clothing that has been made in Finland?
20: Do you see yourself buying Finnish made clothing in the future?
28: Do you buy second-hand clothing?
29: Would you be interested in a store that combined second-hand clothing and new clothes from sustainable brands?

While other questions are also important, knowing how the population as a whole answer these questions, as well as the difference in answers across groups are the most vital information in this thesis.

The group as a whole answered questions quite similarly across these questions.

When looking at these questions especially, the largest differences came in the second-hand purchasing tendencies. This is an important factor when contemplating opening a store that sells new and pre-owned clothing, apart from that it has quite little to do with False Dilemma at the moment, in the future it is possible that there could be some sort of buyback program that sells pre-owned False Dilemma clothes.

All the above-mentioned questions were looked at by dividing the answers to nine groups, with graphs showing all answers:

1. Group that earns under 30k€
2. Group that earns over 30k€
3. Group that has high school degree, vocational degree or lower education

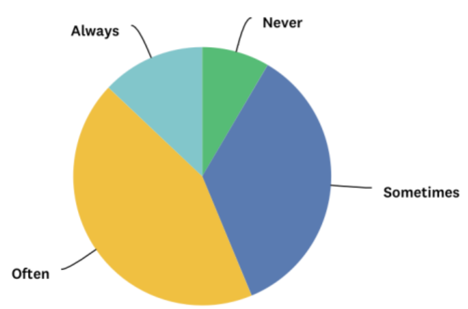
4. Group that has bachelor's degree or higher
5. Group that is under 25
6. Group that are 25 and over
7. Men
8. Women
9. All Answers

In question 9, "Do you think about sustainability when purchasing clothing?", pretty much all eight groups answered similarly. There was no real change throughout the groups, apart from men and women.

Male respondents answered this question with 13% of respondents stating they never think about sustainability when buying clothes, while only 1% of the female respondents said the same. Similarly, 10% of male respondents stated they always think about sustainability, while the same answer got 19% of females answers.

Do you think about sustainability when purchasing clothing?

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	8,48 %	19
Sometimes	35,27 %	79
Often	43,30 %	97
Always	12,95 %	29
YHTEENSÄ		224

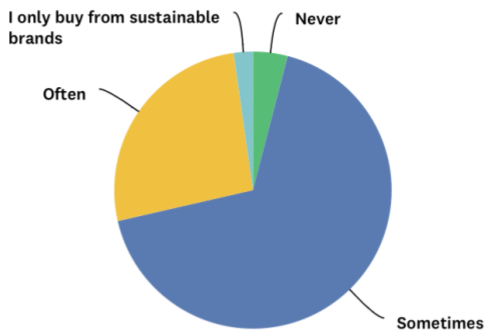
Table 13 All answers for question 9

In question 11: "Do you buy clothing from sustainable brands?" the biggest difference once again can be seen between male and female respondents. There were no other groups that displayed big differences and all in all the difference in answers within these groups were quite small.

Both groups had a low percentage when it came to answering that they never purchase sustainable clothing, at 4% for females and 5% for males, the big difference came in the answers of sometimes and often. With 63% of female respondents stating that they purchase sustainable clothing sometimes, and 31% stating they do it often. The respective numbers with male respondents were 71% and 23%.

Do you buy clothing from sustainable brands?

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	4,02 %	9
Sometimes	67,41 %	151
Often	26,34 %	59
I only buy from sustainable brands	2,23 %	5
YHTEENSÄ		224

Table 14 All answers for question 11

In question 14: “Do you think local production is important in clothing?” less earning, younger and female respondents found it to be more important. Only education was a variation that showed very little difference in answers.

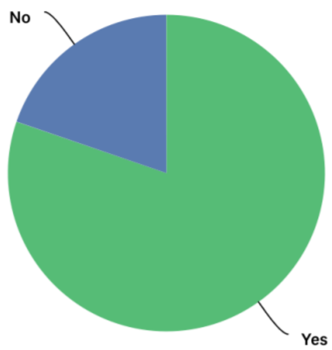
In the earning groups, out of the less earning group, 84% stated they believe it to be important, while 77% stated so in the higher earning category.

In the age groups, out of the younger group 85% answered yes, with the older group answering 78% yes.

Out of male respondents, 76% stated yes, while 88% of female respondents stated yes. Once again, the biggest difference came between male/female with female respondents giving the more sustainable answers.

Do you think local production is important in clothing?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	80,27 %	179
No	19,73 %	44
YHTEENSÄ		223

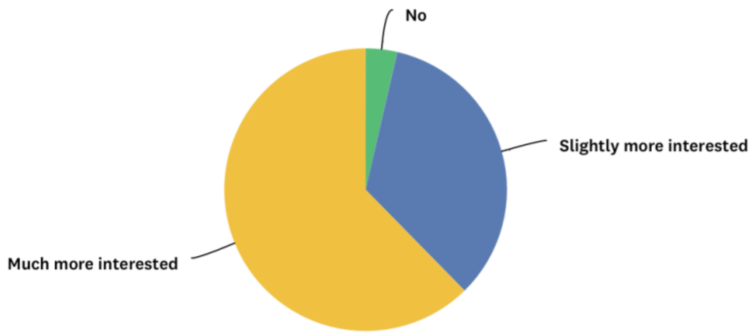
Table 15 All answers for question 14

In question 16: “Would you be more interested in purchasing a piece of clothing if you knew the person making it received a fair salary for their work?” there is once again a massive difference between male and female answers, and very little difference between other groups.

The difference in this question was quite massive. When looking at the answers of “much more interested”, out of male respondents, 54% stated this, while 76% of female respondents stated so. The answers of the less educated category was also almost identical to the male group in this question, with other groups having 60-66% “much more interested” answers, and the population as a whole having 62% on the question.

Would you be more interested in buying a piece of clothing if you knew the person who made it received a fair salary for their work?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



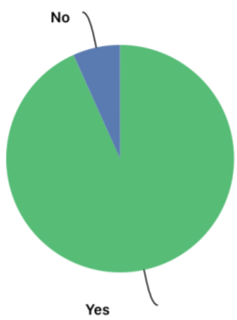
VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
No	3,59 %	8
Slightly more interested	34,08 %	76
Much more interested	62,33 %	139
YHTEENSÄ		223

Table 16 All answers for question 16

In question 18: “Are you interested in clothing made in Finland?” the answers were very similar throughout the groups, with all groups answering between 91 and 96% “yes”.

Are you interested in clothing made in Finland?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



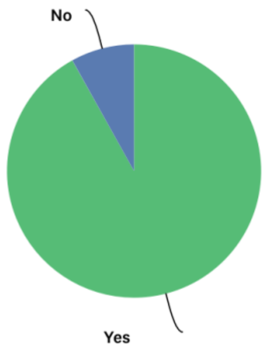
VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	93,27 %	208
No	6,73 %	15
YHTEENSÄ		223

Table 17 All answers for question 18

In question 19: “Have you bought clothing that has been made in Finland?” the answers once again were very close, with all groups answering between 90% and 95% “yes”.

Have you bought clothing that has been made in Finland?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	91,93 %	205
No	8,07 %	18
YHTEENSÄ		223

Table 18 All answers for question 19

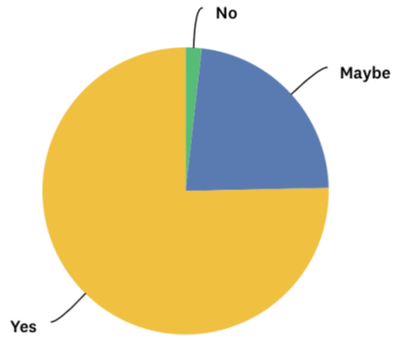
In question 20: “Do you see yourself buying Finnish made clothing in the future?” there were three groups that had a sub-72% answer rate for “yes” those groups being men, the less educated group, as well as the younger group.

Surprisingly, the less earning group actually had more “yes” answers than the higher income group, at 78% vs the 73% of the higher earning group.

Once again, the highest rated answers came from the female group, with 83% “yes” answers.

Do you see yourself buying Finnish made clothing in the future?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
No	1,79 %	4
Maybe	22,87 %	51
Yes	75,34 %	168
YHTEENSÄ		223

Table 19 All answers for question 20

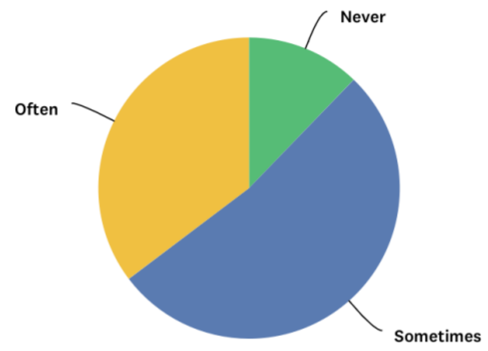
In question 28: “Do you buy second-hand clothing?” there were huge differences between groups. The biggest difference, perhaps in any question asked, was in this question between the under 30k€ and over 30k€ earners.

Out of the group that earns under 30k€, 54% stated that they often purchase second-hand clothing, while from the over 30k€ group only 18% stated they often purchase second hand clothing. Also, only 5% of the lower income group stated they never buy second hand while 18% of the higher income group stated so.

There was also a clear correlation between age and level of education when it came to this question. The older group was less likely to purchase second hand as was the more educated group. Men were also less likely to purchase second-hand compared to the women. The biggest difference in this question was however between the income groups.

Do you buy secondhand clothing?

Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	12,22 %	27
Sometimes	52,49 %	116
Often	35,29 %	78
YHTEENSÄ		221

Table 20 All answers for question 28

And finally, in question 29: “Would you be interested in a store that combined second-hand clothing and new clothes from sustainable brands?” there is a big difference once again between the lower and higher income groups.

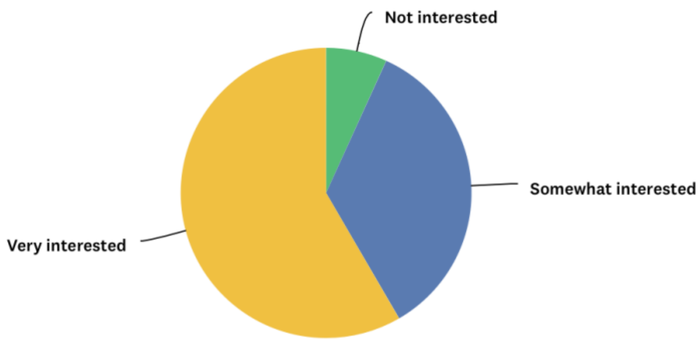
In the lower income group, 70% answered they would be very interested in a store like this, while 47% of the higher income group answered “very interested”. There was very little difference between the education groups.

There was substantial difference between the age groups, with the younger group having 70% very interested, while the older group had 52% very interested.

Between men and women there was a substantial difference in this question, as with many questions. Out of the female respondents, 75% stated they would be very interested in such a store, while only 49% of men said the same.

Would you be interested in a store that combined secondhand clothing and new clothes from sustainable brands?

Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Not interested	6,79 %	15
Somewhat interested	34,84 %	77
Very interested	58,37 %	129
YHTEENSÄ		221

Table 21 All answers for question 29

All in all, when combing through these vital questions when it comes to correlations between groups, there are a few clear trends.

The female respondents were slightly more skewed towards sustainability and answered more sustainable answers throughout.

Younger people, less educated and less earning respondents were much more likely to purchase second hand clothing in comparison to their older, more educated and higher earning counterparts.

In most questions the population as a whole answered quite similarly, and the deviations from the average usually only changed by a few percent depending on which group was answering.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Overview

The data gathered from responses was quite different than the data put forth by previous research of similar topics.

The attitude-behaviour gap that was discussed in much of the literature was not really present here, as the respondents showed interest in sustainable fashion, stated that they have consumed it, said they will consume it in the future.

A great example was how much more value the respondents gave the more sustainable, locally produced white t-shirt in comparison to the less sustainable one. In other research respondents were usually ready to pay 10-50% more for a sustainable choice, while here the average was a whopping 177% more. This is a big tell on how the respondents answered as a whole.

Other fascinating and unexpected stats were – for example – the fact that only four per cent of the respondents answered that they never buy clothing from sustainable brands, 92 per cent of respondents stated they have bought clothing which is made in Finland and only under two per cent of respondents stated they don’t see themselves purchasing Finnish made clothes in the future.

When comparing these numbers to those found by Niinimäki (2010), who found that 90,9% of “ethical hardliners” group valued “made in Finland” and only 33.4% of the “not interested“ group valued the “made in Finland” aspect, it is clear that there is a huge difference. As 12 years ago, even out of the more hardcore group the numbers were lower than they are from the whole respondent population here (Niinimäki, 2010, 156).

5.2. Practical usage

It was clear from the answers that there is interest in knowing more about the clothing that people are buying. Respondents stated that they would be more interested in purchasing clothing if they knew the people making the clothing are properly compensated, they also stated they would be interested in knowing where the raw material and fabric for the clothing is coming from, and that knowing these things may have an impact on purchasing decisions.

Giving customers more information on the supply-chain and how workers are being compensated could drive sales. In addition to it driving sales, when you are one of the forerunners giving the customers this information, it is more likely they will start demanding this information from other companies. Once companies are being asked tough questions, they in turn will have to make their business more sustainable in order to fulfil the standards the customers are receiving from those companies that are happy to give out the information without having to be asked for it.

If this were to become a trend in the fashion industry it could drive real change, but it will only happen if consumers demand it, as paying higher salaries and making more sustainable decisions will hurt the bottom line of large companies.

So, giving out more information on supply chain as well as worker compensation and working conditions could be a big selling point for brands that are going about their business in a sustainable way.

Also, made in Finland products seem to be in high demand in Finland. So, for any brand that is mainly looking to reach the Finnish market, it may be a good idea to look into the possibility of making the products in Finland.

Also, there are many marketing angles that can be gathered from the information gathered from the questionnaire. For example, the fact that female respondents were more receptive toward sustainability throughout the questionnaire shows that when marketing sustainable clothing, women may be a better audience than men.

Also, the tendencies of younger people purchasing more second-hand clothing is something that stood out, which was also quite obvious from the get-go.

5.3. Finland-washing

This is a term that was made up in the making of this thesis, it basically means that a brand makes themselves seem very Finnish even though almost all operations are done elsewhere. This is similar to greenwashing.

The answers when it came to how many respondents have bought Finnish-made clothing was quite baffling. With 92% of respondents stating they have bought clothing which is made in Finland, if this were to be true this number would be extremely high, given the fact that next to no big-name brands have any production in Finland.

It is at least in part likely that some of these respondents think that some of the Finnish brands make their clothes in Finland, since they lean into their Finnish heritage and brand image quite heavily. As an example, Marimekko – which was mentioned earlier in the thesis – and has no clothes on its website which are made in Finland.

This same phenomenon can also be seen in some other fields, for example a lot of traditional Finnish brands which make cutlery, mugs etc. have shipped production overseas, which may be unknown to many consumers.

5.4. Green washing

Large clothing brands have huge marketing teams full of experts that spin their clothing production in a way which turns them the most profit. When reading some of the marketing slogans and statements when it comes to sustainability, you often can’t help but look at the wording and wonder what it actually means.

A good example, Gina Tricot has on their website, that “In order for us to rate a product as “more sustainable”, it must be made from at least 50 % more sustainable fibres. We have established clear targets for materials with a lower impact on the environment. This motivates us to continuously seek out and select better, more eco-friendly materials.” (Gina Tricot).

When reading this statement, “it must be made from at least 50% more sustainable fibres”, it is not very easily digestible what this means. At a glance you may think that it means that over 50% of the product has to be from sustainable choices such as organic cotton, recycled cotton or something similar. When digging deeper into the wording, it also seems quite possible, that as long as the fibre which is used is a blend which is even just slightly infused with more sustainable fibres, it passes this test.

The point is, it is extremely hard for consumers to know and understand wording and know what is indeed true. One thing that is for sure, Gina Tricot is having a sale right now where they sell tops for as little as 2.7€, even if they were using some sustainable fabrics, it is impossible to sell a piece of clothing for 2.7€ and have it be sustainable. (Gina Tricot).

This is just one example, as many big brands have things such as “conscious” or “green” or “sustainable” lines, which promise to be “more sustainable”. The volume of these lines in comparison to the total volume of the brands are often quite low, in addition to the sustainability of these products also being questionable.

The consumer will often take the information they are given at face value, because surely these big brands couldn’t be stating their products are more sustainable just to sell more product and in turn be less sustainable.

5.5. Limitations with the results

The results were so far from the answers gathered by previous similar studies that it is highly likely that the respondents were quite skewed towards sustainability.

The goal of the study was not to get the average consumers thoughts on sustainability, as the average consumers is unlikely to pay 200€ for a False Dilemma hoodie. The goal was to get answers from False Dilemma's core audience, which is mostly the 16–35-year-olds that are more interested in clothing than the average consumer.

Thus, the results were also reflective of those that are into clothing more than the average consumer.

5.6. Final conclusions

The data gathered here is a beacon of light to the industry of sustainable fashion. The fact that respondents were willing to pay almost triple for the more sustainable t-shirt, 93% of respondents stated they are interested in Finnish-made clothing, while only 2% stated they do not intend to purchase Finnish-made clothing in the future, are all things that came as a bit of a surprise.

Throughout the questionnaire answers were quite sustainable, and the open answers showed that a good chunk of people think about sustainability on a decent level.

The consumer of tomorrow seems to be more likely to purchase sustainable fashion, and there will certainly be a place for brand fulfilling these needs.

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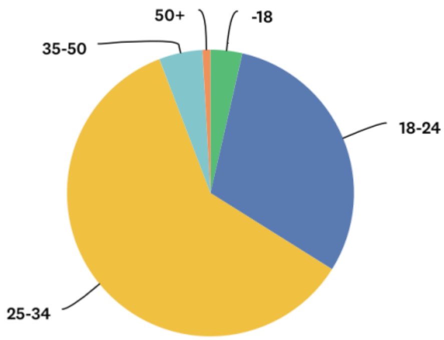
7 APPENDIX

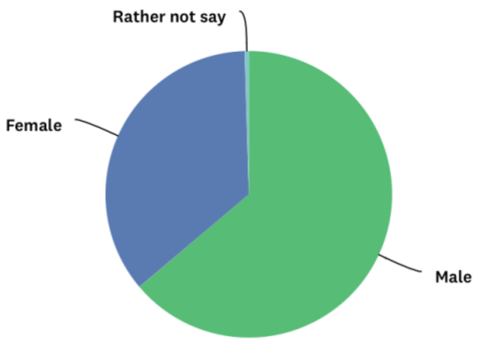
Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
-18	3,57 %	8
18-24	30,36 %	68
25-34	60,27 %	135
35-50	4,91 %	11
50+	0,89 %	2
YHTEENSÄ		**224**

Gender

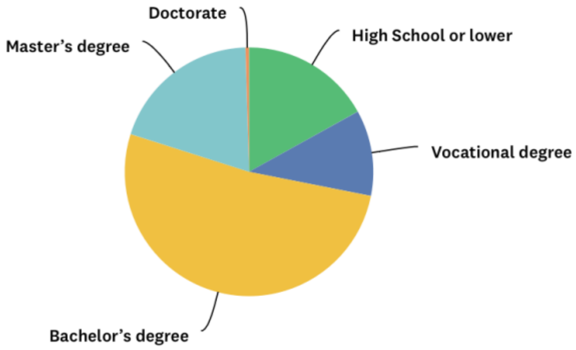
Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Male	63,84 %	143
Female	35,71 %	80
Other	0,00 %	0
Rather not say	0,45 %	1
YHTEENSÄ		**224**

Education

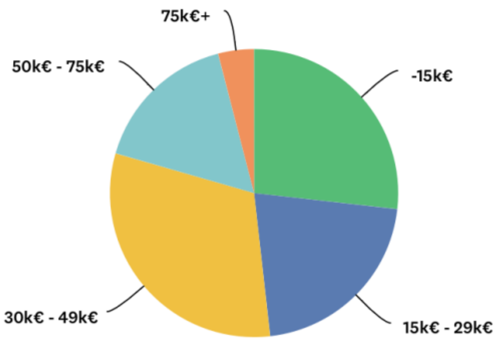
Vastattu: 224   Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
High School or lower	16,96 %	38
Vocational degree	11,16 %	25
Bachelor's degree	51,79 %	116
Master's degree	19,64 %	44
Doctorate	0,45 %	1
YHTEENSÄ		224

Yearly income

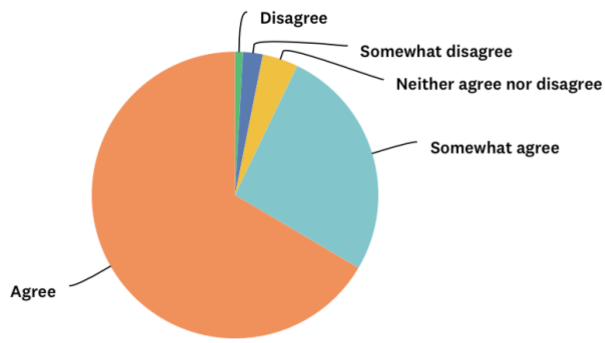
Vastattu: 224   Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
-15k€	26,79 %	60
15k€ - 29k€	21,43 %	48
30k€ - 49k€	31,25 %	70
50k€ - 75k€	16,52 %	37
75k€+	4,02 %	9
YHTEENSÄ		224

Do you agree that climate change is a serious matter?

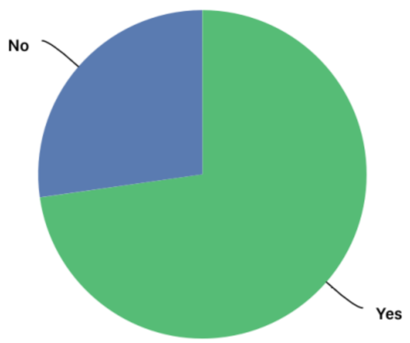
Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Disagree	0,89 %	2
Somewhat disagree	2,23 %	5
Neither agree nor disagree	4,02 %	9
Somewhat agree	26,34 %	59
Agree	66,52 %	149
YHTEENSÄ		224

Do you believe that your choices can have an impact on the climate?

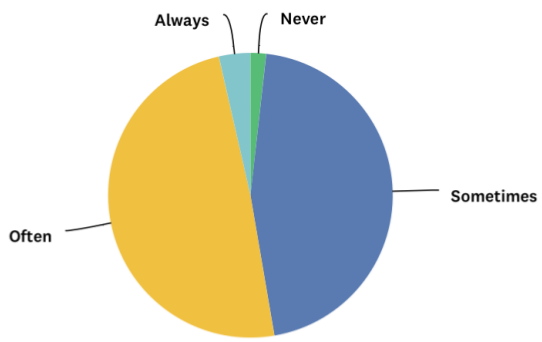
Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	72,77 %	163
No	27,23 %	61
YHTEENSÄ		224

Do you base any of your choices on sustainability?

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



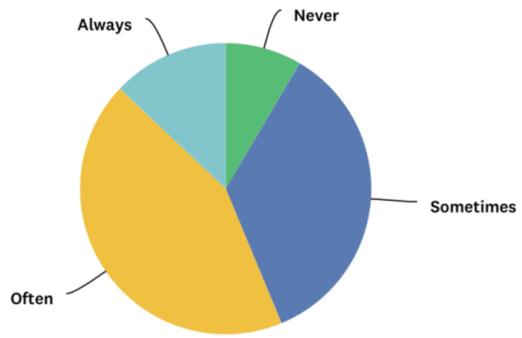
VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	1,79 %	4
Sometimes	45,54 %	102
Often	49,11 %	110
Always	3,57 %	8
YHTEENSÄ		224

What kind of choices do you make based on sustainability?

Vastattu: 168 Ohitettu: 56

Do you think about sustainability when purchasing clothing?

Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



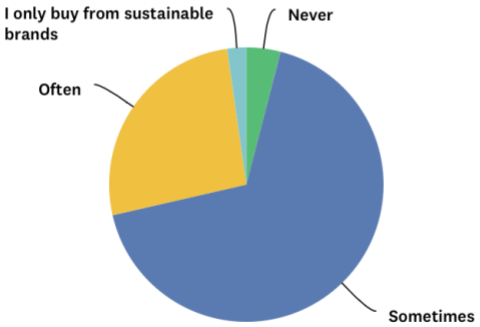
VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	8,48 %	19
Sometimes	35,27 %	79
Often	43,30 %	97
Always	12,95 %	29
YHTEENSÄ		224

Can you name any sustainable clothing brands?

Vastattu: 167 Ohitettu: 57

Do you buy clothing from sustainable brands?

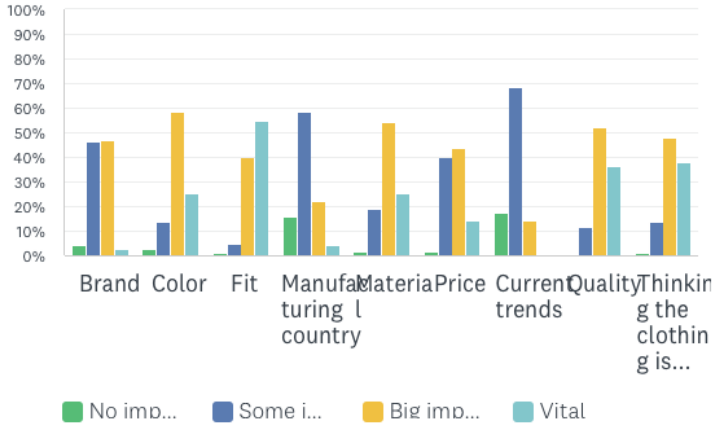
Vastattu: 224 Ohitettu: 0



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	4,02 %	9
Sometimes	67,41 %	151
Often	26,34 %	59
I only buy from sustainable brands	2,23 %	5
YHTEENSÄ		224

When buying clothes, how much of an impact do the following factors have on your purchasing decision?

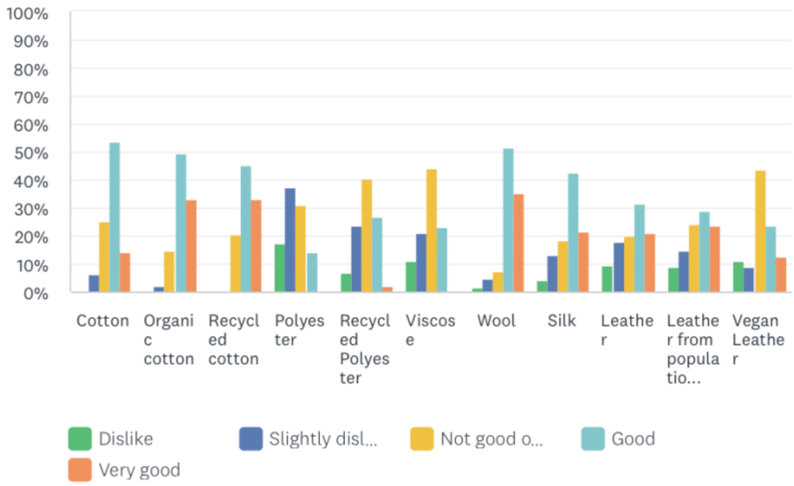
Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



	NO IMPACT	SOME IMPACT	BIG IMPACT	VITAL	YHTEENSÄ
Brand	4,04 % 9	46,19 % 103	47,09 % 105	2,69 % 6	223
Color	2,69 % 6	13,90 % 31	58,30 % 130	25,11 % 56	223
Fit	0,90 % 2	4,48 % 10	39,91 % 89	54,71 % 122	223
Manufacturing country	15,70 % 35	58,30 % 130	21,97 % 49	4,04 % 9	223
Material	1,79 % 4	18,83 % 42	54,26 % 121	25,11 % 56	223
Price	1,79 % 4	39,91 % 89	43,95 % 98	14,35 % 32	223
Current trends	17,49 % 39	68,16 % 152	14,35 % 32	0,00 % 0	223
Quality	0,00 % 0	11,66 % 26	52,02 % 116	36,32 % 81	223
Thinking the clothing is long-lasting	0,90 % 2	13,45 % 30	47,98 % 107	37,67 % 84	223

How much do you like/dislike the following materials in clothing?

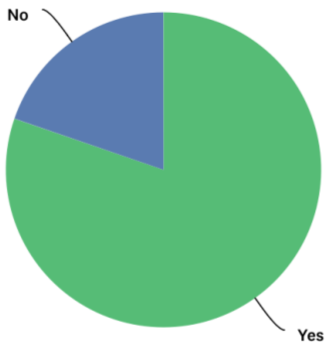
Vastattu: 222 Ohitettu: 2



	DISLIKE	SLIGHTLY DISLIKE	NOT GOOD OR BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD	YHTEENSÄ
Cotton	0,45 % 1	6,31 % 14	25,23 % 56	53,60 % 119	14,41 % 32	222
Organic cotton	0,00 % 0	2,25 % 5	14,86 % 33	49,55 % 110	33,33 % 74	222
Recycled cotton	0,00 % 0	0,45 % 1	20,72 % 46	45,50 % 101	33,33 % 74	222
Polyester	17,19 % 38	37,56 % 83	31,22 % 69	14,03 % 31	0,00 % 0	221
Recycled Polyester	6,82 % 15	23,64 % 52	40,45 % 89	26,82 % 59	2,27 % 5	220
Viscose	10,86 % 24	21,27 % 47	44,34 % 98	23,08 % 51	0,45 % 1	221
Wool	1,80 % 4	4,50 % 10	7,21 % 16	51,35 % 114	35,14 % 78	222
Silk	4,05 % 9	13,06 % 29	18,47 % 41	42,79 % 95	21,62 % 48	222
Leather	9,50 % 21	18,10 % 40	19,91 % 44	31,67 % 70	20,81 % 46	221
Leather from population control hunting (eg. Finnish elk leather)	9,05 % 20	14,48 % 32	23,98 % 53	28,96 % 64	23,53 % 52	221
Vegan Leather	11,31 % 25	9,05 % 20	43,44 % 96	23,53 % 52	12,67 % 28	221

Do you think local production is important in clothing?

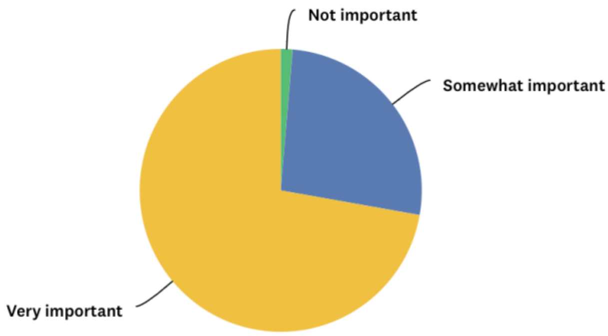
Vastattu: 223   Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	80,27 %	179
No	19,73 %	44
YHTEENSÄ		223

Do you think that it is important that those that make your clothes receive a fair wage for their work?

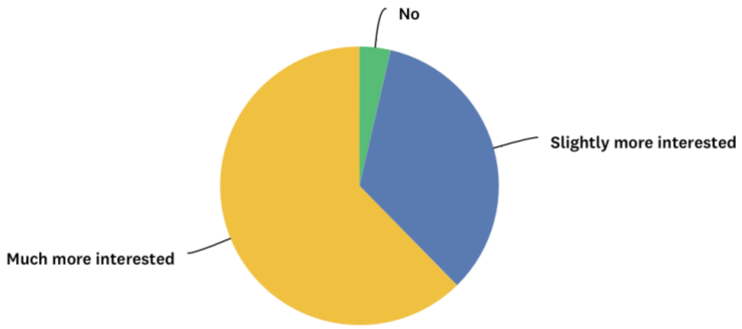
Vastattu: 223   Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Not important	1,35 %	3
Somewhat important	26,46 %	59
Very important	72,20 %	161
YHTEENSÄ		223

Would you be more interested in buying a piece of clothing if you knew the person who made it received a fair salary for their work?

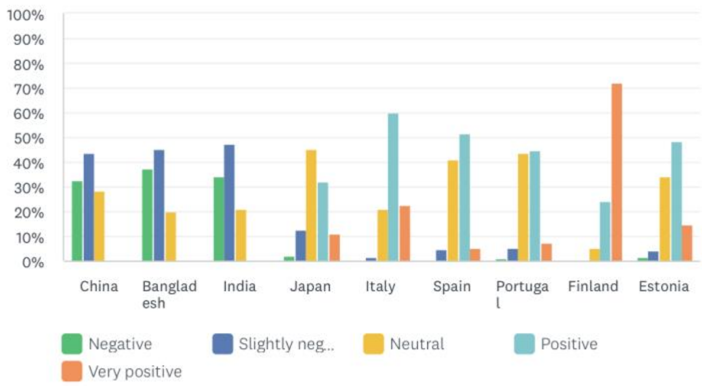
Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
No	3,59 %	8
Slightly more interested	34,08 %	76
Much more interested	62,33 %	139
YHTEENSÄ		223

Would knowing that a piece of clothing is made in the following country have a negative or positive impact on your purchasing decision.

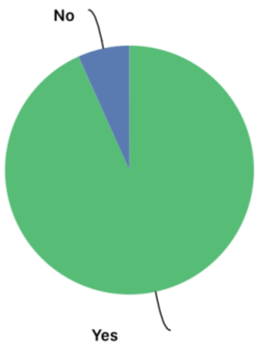
Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



	NEGATIVE	SLIGHTLY NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE	VERY POSITIVE	VASTAAJAT YHTEENSÄ
China	32,74 % 73	43,50 % 97	28,25 % 63	0,00 % 0	0,00 % 0	223
Bangladesh	37,22 % 83	45,29 % 101	20,18 % 45	0,45 % 1	0,00 % 0	223
India	34,08 % 76	47,53 % 106	21,08 % 47	0,45 % 1	0,00 % 0	223
Japan	2,25 % 5	12,61 % 28	45,05 % 100	31,98 % 71	11,26 % 25	222
Italy	0,00 % 0	1,35 % 3	21,08 % 47	60,09 % 134	22,87 % 51	223
Spain	0,45 % 1	4,50 % 10	40,99 % 91	51,80 % 115	5,41 % 12	222
Portugal	0,90 % 2	5,38 % 12	43,95 % 98	44,84 % 100	7,62 % 17	223
Finland	0,00 % 0	0,45 % 1	5,38 % 12	24,22 % 54	72,20 % 161	223
Estonia	1,35 % 3	4,04 % 9	34,08 % 76	48,43 % 108	14,80 % 33	223

Are you interested in clothing made in Finland?

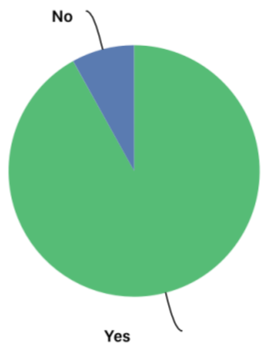
Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	93,27 %	208
No	6,73 %	15
YHTEENSÄ		**223**

Have you bought clothing that has been made in Finland?

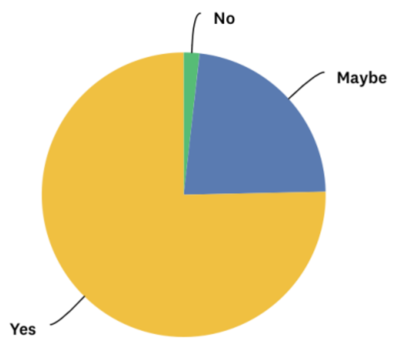
Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	91,93 %	205
No	8,07 %	18
YHTEENSÄ		223

Do you see yourself buying Finnish made clothing in the future?

Vastattu: 223 Ohitettu: 1



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
No	1,79 %	4
Maybe	22,87 %	51
Yes	75,34 %	168
YHTEENSÄ		223

How much would you pay for a basic white t-shirt that is made in Bangladesh using 100% cotton?

Vastattu: 207 Ohitettu: 17

How much would you pay for a basic white t-shirt that is made in Finland using 100% organic cotton?

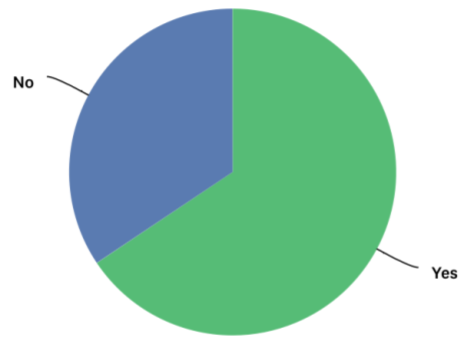
Vastattu: 208 Ohitettu: 16

21. How much do you think it costs to make a t-shirt, which is cut and sewn in Finland, using 100% organic cotton fabric that is also made in Finland?

Vastattu: 205 Ohitettu: 19

When buying clothes, are you interested in knowing where the raw materials came from? (Eg. Where the cotton has been farmed/ origin country of leather, wool etc.)

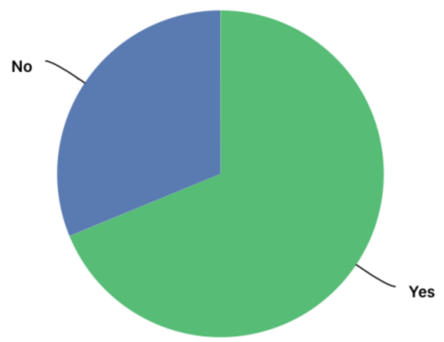
Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	65,61 %	145
No	34,39 %	76
YHTEENSÄ		221

When buying clothes, are you interested in knowing where the fabric is made? (Where the raw materials have been turned into fabric)

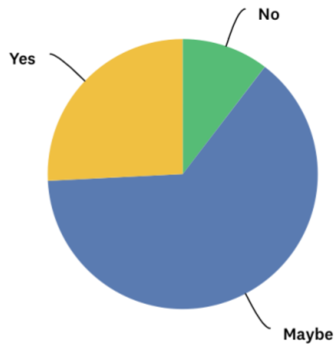
Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Yes	68,78 %	152
No	31,22 %	69
YHTEENSÄ		221

Do you think the origin of fabric or raw material could have an impact on your purchasing decision?

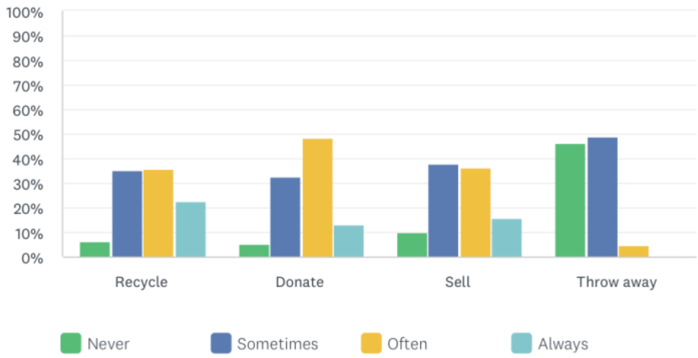
Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
No	10,41 %	23
Maybe	63,80 %	141
Yes	25,79 %	57
YHTEENSÄ		**221**

How often do you do the following with your clothes when you don’t use them anymore?

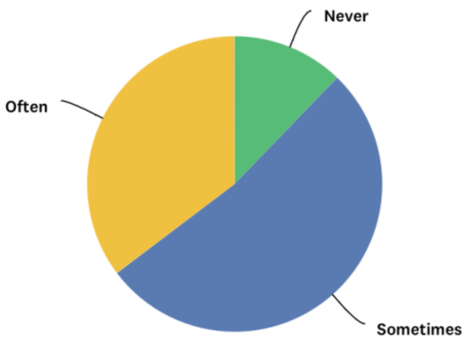
Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS	YHTEENSÄ
Recycle	6,33 % 14	35,29 % 78	35,75 % 79	22,62 % 50	221
Donate	5,45 % 12	32,73 % 72	48,64 % 107	13,18 % 29	220
Sell	9,95 % 22	38,01 % 84	36,20 % 80	15,84 % 35	221
Throw away	46,15 % 102	48,87 % 108	4,52 % 10	0,45 % 1	221

Do you buy secondhand clothing?

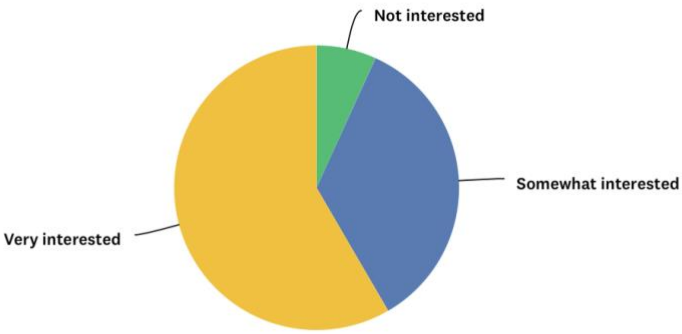
Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Never	12,22 %	27
Sometimes	52,49 %	116
Often	35,29 %	78
YHTEENSÄ		221

Would you be interested in a store that combined secondhand clothing and new clothes from sustainable brands?

Vastattu: 221 Ohitettu: 3



VASTAUSVAIHTOEHDOT	VASTAUKSET	
Not interested	6,79 %	15
Somewhat interested	34,84 %	77
Very interested	58,37 %	129
YHTEENSÄ		221