

Bachelor's thesis

International Business

2018

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THE EFFECT OF BRAND VALUES ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

– The case of outdoor clothing industry

BACHELOR'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

TURKU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

International Business

2018 | 49+6 pages in appendices

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THE EFFECT OF BRAND VALUES ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

- The case of outdoor clothing industry

It is a trend among outdoor clothing manufacturers to focus increasingly on ethics in their brand values. Brand values tell the stakeholders about the company's identity, purpose and where the company is heading. Brand values can be seen increasingly in marketing and especially in social media.

This thesis will find out if brand values have an effect on consumer behavior within Finnish consumers, and if they do, how can it be seen. Further study will show what are good brand values according to consumers.

A survey was conducted online on several Facebook pages dedicated to various outdoor activities, based on literature about brand values and consumer behavior. The questionnaire measured the respondents' buying behavior and interest towards brand values. The author shares his own views as well, with the experience of five years at the retail store Stadium. Besides general findings, the survey also studied if there are differences between genders, educational and income groups.

The results show that values play a role in consumer behavior. The majority say it would affect their buying behavior if they were informed about companies' brand values. Consumers are willing to pay a higher price for a product manufactured according to their personal values and they are also willing to learn more about their favorite company's brand values. However, quality, price and looks are still the most important purchase criterias.

KEYWORDS:

Brand values, Consumer behavior, Ethics, Environment.

OPINNÄYTETYÖ (AMK) | TIIVISTELMÄ

TURUN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

International Business

2018 | 49 sivua, 6 liitesivua

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BRÄNDIARVOJEN VAIKUTUS OSTOKÄYTTÄYTYMISEEN

- Eettisyys ulkoiluvaatteiden valmistuksessa

Ulkoiluvaatevalmistajien keskuudessa on trendinä tuoda esille eettisiä arvoja brändiarvojen yhteydessä. Brändiarvot kertovat asianomaisille yrityksen identiteetistä, tarkoituksesta ja mihin yritys on suuntaamassa. Brändiarvot ovat lisääntyvästi esillä yritysten markkinoinnissa, sekä sosiaalisessa mediassa. Tuotteiden lisäksi yritykset koittavat saada kuluttajia rakastumaan myös yrityksen arvoihin.

Tämä opinnäytetyö ottaa selvää onko brändiarvoilla vaikutusta ostokäyttäytymiseen Suomalaisten kuluttajien keskuudessa, ja jos on, niin minkälainen vaikutus. Lähempi tarkastelu kertoo mistä muodostuu hyvät brändiarvot kuluttajien mukaan.

Tutkimus tehtiin kyselyllä internetissä usealla eri ulkoilu-aktiiviteettiä omistetulla sivustolla. Kysely pohjautui kirjallisuuskatsaukseen brändiarvoista ja ostokäyttäytymisestä. Opinnäytetyön kirjoittaja tarjosi myös omat näkemyksensä viiden vuoden kokemuksella urheiluliike Stadiumissa. Yleisten löydösten lisäksi tutkittiin myös onko sukupuoli, vuosituloilla ja koulutuksella vaikutusta vastauksiin.

Tulokset näyttävät, että brändiarvoilla on merkitystä ostokäyttäytymiseen. Suurin osa vastaajista kertoi, että sillä olisi vaikutusta heidän ostokäyttäytymiseen, jos brändiarvot olisivat tiedossa. Kuluttajat ovat valmiita maksamaan enemmän tuotteista, jos ne olisivat valmistettu kuluttajien omien arvojen mukaisesti. Myös kiinnostus suosikkibrändien arvoja kohtaan oli selkeä.

ASIASANAT:

Brändi, Brändiarvot, Ostopäätös, Ostokäyttäytyminen, Eettinen yrittäjyys.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (OR) SYMBOLS

OIA Outdoor Industry Association

PHD Masters/Doctorate

PS Primary Schooling

SS Secondary Schooling

UNI University

1 INTRODUCTION

Most outdoor clothing brands base their operations on a set of missions, visions and values. These are the factors that create the soul for the brand. It is that soul which essence is then marketed to the consumers. (Davis, 2002) The goal for the company is not to only sell as many products as possible to the consumers but to make them fall in love with the company's values as well (Grant, 2007). Values themselves can vary depending on the field of business but many times some type of environmental friendliness is involved. Outdoor clothing brands, such as Patagonia and The North Face, are ones who have really adopted this approach to their value building. For the interested individual the values can be found easily but in marketing you might need a keener eye to run into them, even though they appear there as well. This topic is currently relevant because it is impossible to read or watch the news and not run into issues about pollution, global warming or oceans being trashed with plastic. People are more and more interested in global environmental issues and companies are taking action accordingly. Being "green" is becoming ever more popular so there would be a chance for the companies to use their values as tools for marketing. Therefore, this thesis will study the effect of brand values on consumer behavior in the Finnish market. In the following chapters brand values (how are they build, what are they, how are they communicated, etc.) and consumer behavior (purchasing motivation, influence of marketing, etc.) will be examined through literature on the subjects. The main body of literature consists of books and articles. For curiosity a few bachelor level theses are also investigated for their closeness to the topic, even though they do not carry the same relevance as sources. As a sales person, with a five-year experience in various duties in the retail store Stadium, the author will offer his personal views on the subjects as well. Based on the literature a questionnaire was conducted, which tested the respondents' buying behaviors and views on different aspects of values. The goals of this thesis are to find out if brand values have an effect on purchasing outdoor clothing, are consumers interested in brand values, what are good values according to the consumers and are they willing to pay more for an ethically manufactured product. The questionnaire was conducted through several outdoor sports related Facebook pages and gathered 265 responses. The gathered data was analyzed and then the responses were cross-referenced with three themes that could have an impact on responses: men vs. women, education and income. The conclusion section at the end

of this thesis will reflect the questionnaire findings to the literature review and see if there are any similarities or differences between them.

1.1 Motivation and importance

It was around ten years ago when the author saw a quote online by Marshall McLuhan that said "There are no passengers on spaceship Earth. We are all crew." Despite its obviousness, the quote really made an impression with its eloquence. It also motivated the author to make more environmentally conscious decisions and find ways how he can be a better crewmember. Since reading the quote ten years ago environmental issues have increased popularity. Today they rise into conversations in many forms. Most clearly this can be seen in politics as many countries are taking actions to lower greenhouse emissions in efforts to build a greener future. Besides countries, a great number of companies have taken action as well. The author has witnessed the growing trend first hand through his work as a sales person in the retail store Stadium, as well as through his hobbies. It is also through his hobbies he has grown more interested towards this topic. Spending time in the nature makes you want to preserve your surroundings more. With reckless behavior and careless actions the playground people love to roam in will eventually disappear. Therefore it could be argued that people who engage in outdoors sport have a higher level of concern towards environmental issues. Since clothing industry creates the second most pollution out of all industries it should raise awareness among outdoors people (Sweeny, 2015).

2 BRAND VALUES

This chapter will explain what are brand values, what is their purpose, how they affect businesses and how are they communicated.

Brand values in this thesis will consist of a company's mission, vision and values, all compressed into one. These are all really important factors for both the company and its consumers because they make a statement about the company's identity, growth and the direction they are heading (Davis, 2002). They are the personality of the company and should communicate a clear message to the customer of the brand's qualities and values (Groucutt, 2005). Even though this thesis will handle mission, vision and values as an collective entity, it is important to recognise what are the differences between the three parts. A company's brand *mission* tells the reason for its existence. It highlights the business of the organization, the level of service and what principles guide the company. (Post, 2017) For example, The North Face's mission statement has been since 1966: "*Provide the best gear for our athletes and the modern day explorer, support the preservation of the outdoors, and inspire a global movement of exploration.*" (The North Face, 2016) Brand *vision's* purpose for management is to draw guidelines of the companies growth goals. For stakeholders it communicates the company's vision for the brand while making a commitment of how and where the company is heading. (Davis, 2002) Brand *values* are the instriect values that companies communicate to its customers. These usually include quality, trust and reliability, or they can be a combination of those. (Groucutt, 2005)

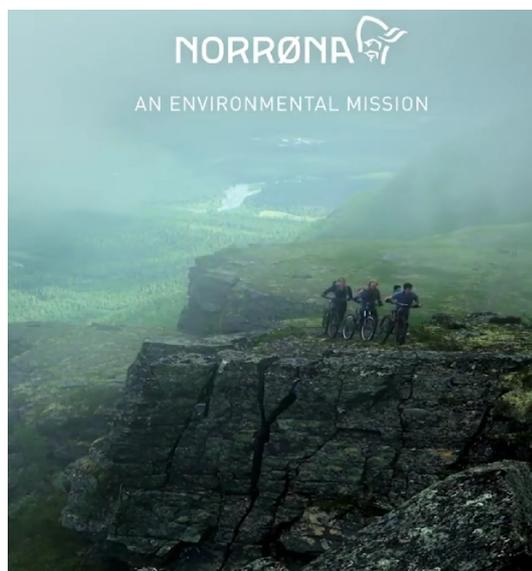
I have witnessed through my work and personal interest that outdoor clothing manufacturers generally have preserving the nature as their biggest values. The literature also shows that many brands use ecology and ethicality in values as a competitive advantage. This can work for a while until other companies see the benefit and gains of this approach. Once enough companies market themselves as green the environmentally friendly aspect becomes a norm in the market. Then it is not anymore a factor that separates one company from another but a standard that the majority of consumers expect from the brands. (Haapala & Aavameri, 2008) I have witnessed this personally through my job as a salesperson at Stadium. The vast majority of outdoor clothing manufacturers will claim themselves being green in one way or another on the info tags.

As eco-friendliness becomes a norm in the market, the pressure for a company to be green can have dire consequences. This can lead to false marketing where ordinary procedures are turned into something more than what they are. In this case claiming green values in a form of for example: manufacturing, use of raw materials or recycling. This is know as 'green-washing.' (Grant, 2007) In a nutshell green-washing refers to an action where a company claims to do environmentally friendly actions to polish their company image, but do not really do anything or in worst cases just the opposite. (Watson, 2016) The risks of getting caught of green-washing do not generally exceed the benefits of gained from it, so companies should not market themselves as green until they have really incorporated sustainable methods in to their operations (Könnölä & Rinne, 2001). Consumers tend to be suspicious when companies market themselves green. However, they are also willing to listen and full trust is build when claims are met with actions. (Grant, 2007)

There are many cases where companies have turned their brand value statements into actions to show that they do not only talk the talk but walk the walk as well. A lot of companies put a lot of effort in their business to do environmentally conscious business decisions. (Esty & Winston, 2006) This is a growing trend among brands that create products for outdoor activities. One of the pioneers of this trend is Patagonia, which has given 1% of all it's yearly revenue since 1985 to grassroots organizations fighting to preserve nature's well-being (Patagonia, 2017). The North Face has partnered with Bluesign Technologies to reduce water and energy usage in manufacturing, and to lower harmful chemicals used in fabrics. In 2015 39% of all of The North Face's clothes were Bluesign approved. (The North Face, 2016) Also, the whole outdoor industry itself has shown a high level of collective activism as well. When newly elected US president Donald Trump stated that he would cut the size of several national monuments to make way for mining, drilling and development, many outdoor manufacturer brands stood up to protest and made their voice heard (Flitter, 2017). Again, brands like Patagonia and The North Face were at the forefront with retail store REI and Outdoor Industry Association (OIA). Not only were they reminding the environmental damage this would do but the number of jobs and wages this action would diminish as well. (Cama, 2017)

2.1 Communicating Brand Values

Just having well established brand values is not enough. The values need to be communicated successfully to consumers in order to have any real life benefit from them. There are many ways for companies to bring out their values, especially in the modern digital era. Besides magazine and TV ads, the vast majority of companies are now using social media as well. The common goal for the advertisements is to build loyalty, belongingness and ideology. Price is usually a secondary (if non-existent) factor in the advertisements because companies are trying to build friendship instead of directly selling something to the viewer. (Leiss, et al., 2005) Two examples of social media communication can be seen below in photos 1 and 2, from Norrøna and Patagonia's Instagram accounts.



7 070 näyttökertaa

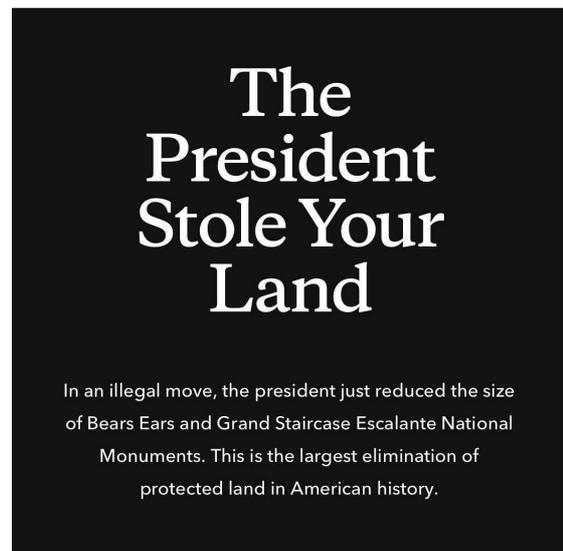
norrøna Without nature, there's no us. As a family-owned outdoor company established on our love for nature, high quality and long lasting products, environmental responsibility has been in our DNA since the beginning in 1929. We believe the only way to run a company is with a sustainable platform and every day we strive to improve, explore and inspire to protect our home. Through a six-part mini-series launching this spring/summer, we would love to welcome you behind the seams and take part in our most important mission yet. Watch full episode 1 - Link in bio.

Picture 1. Screenshot, Norrøna

Instagram account (@norrøna), posted

16.5.2018

patagonia
Patagonia (clothing)



233 979 tykkää tästä

patagonia "We've fought to protect these places since we were founded and now we'll continue that fight in the courts." — Rose Marcario, President and CEO, @patagonia

Picture 2. Screenshot, Patagonia

Instagram account (@patagonia), posted

5.12.2017

Photo 1. is a good example of good brand value communication. The picture is from Norröna's official Instagram page and it was published on the 16th of May 2018. The picture and the caption do not try to sell any particular product but focus on providing the core values of the company instead. By clicking the link provided on the account page you will be redirected to their website where you can watch videos of manufacturing processes and learn more about the company's environmental philosophy (a look "behind the seams" as they say in the caption). Photo 2. is from Patagonia's campaign to fight back the lands President Trump privatized (same case as mentioned earlier). The same theme was brought out in several channels by Patagonia and it urged the readers to sign a petition to reverse Trump's action. A prime example of Patagonia's ongoing environmental activism, which is a strong part of their image. A successful communication message understands the consumer's values, has quality, reliability and creativity. The main principal is that the brand message's content should be in unison no matter which communication channel is used. (Taipale, 2007) These two photos provide examples of using multiple communication channels (social media feed directing to a website), allows the reader to act on his values if he/she wants, ensuring reliability by providing further information and using visual creativity to capture the viewers interest.

So why is it important for companies to have their values heard and cared? Having potential customers care for a company's values have many benefits. First of all, the company will build a loyal customer base because they will buy the products not only for their quality but because they believe in the same values as the company. Having the same mindset can lead to deepened relationship and co-operation between the company and the customer. A good example of this can be seen in retail business. Partioaitta has a membership program where 1% of total purchases made by members will go directly into different charities. The members can vote themselves which charities will receive the donation. (Partioaitta, 2017) Even though the example is from retail world the same can be applied to single businesses. In fact, Patagonia donates 1% of their yearly sales to support environmental groups. Also, in 2016 they donated every dollar from Black Friday sales to support grassroots organizations working in local communities to help protect the environment. (Marcario, 2016)

What I have witnessed personally at my work is that brand values can raise interest but it is hard to make a sale based on them. The customers are often willing to listen and

usually comment positively when they are told about a different company values. Brand values are not either a thing that is often asked about. Some customers ask how, out of what material and where the products are made but quite rarely ask what the company values are. Some customers read the info tags but it is usually to find out about the materials or garment features. If they find out that recycled materials are used they sometimes ask if it shows in the quality of the product (usually if it is inferior). I think this is where it is the seller's responsibility to ensure that quality is still good and tell more about what is done in modern manufacturing and what companies are aiming for. There is usually quite a lot to read in the info tags, especially with the big brands. For the interested individual links to a website are provided for further information.

2.2 Brand name connotations

One way companies bring up their brand values and personality are through the name of the company. Besides these two benefits, naming the brand will also help to separate it from others and bestow the company in the brain's memory reservoirs. (Danesi, 2006)

In a broad sense a brand is built through five steps: (1) Naming the brand, (2) logo design, (3) slogan creation, (4) package design and (5) advertisement. The first two steps are there to build a mental image of the company for the customer. The other three will compliment what is built on first two steps. (Danesi, 2006) This can widely be seen among outdoor clothing manufacturers. Patagonia (wilderness area on tip of South-America), The North Face (the northern side of Mount Everest, hardest route to the top), Halti (tallest mountain in Finland), Fjällräven (an arctic fox), Viking (ancient scandinavian warriors) and Columbia (a famous river in Portland, Oregon) are among the many outdoor companies named after places, animals or trades/qualities. The names project values and/or qualities that the companies want to highlight. For example, when Yves Chouinard was deciding a name for his new outdoor clothing company he came up with the name Patagonia because it resembled something wild and exotic, and he wanted the clothes to match those rugged environments (Chouinard, 2016).

Naming the brand correctly helps to raise intrigue within customers. The name itself can encompass the range of beliefs and behaviors that the customers have (Davis, 2002). There fore, with all these elements combined, you get a better total concept of

the company when you can just say Patagonia, instead of "the brand with some sort of mountains and colors on the logo."

3 CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR

It is often stated that consumer behavior is affected by the Maslow's five step hierarchy of needs which affect human behavior. At the core is the psychological need in which the person seeks to cover all basic needs for survival. Then comes safety (the feeling of being safe and financial independency). Third need is the feeling of belonging and love (relationship, family, friends, part of a group and society). Fourth need is self-esteem, in which the person tries to different him- or herself from others and gain the respect of others. The fifth step is self-actualisation where the individual feels to have reached his or hers top potential. The fifth level is said to be the hardest to achieve. (Groucutt, 2005) The need to belong is possibly the strongest factor that can be linked with consumer behavior. When a brand has reached a certain status through what they represent (products and services), some consumers will strongly bond with the brand and can even feel a sense of ownership (Laitinen, 2012). This had lead to the development of "tribal brands", where the users of the brand get an identity and become a tribe through ideology and/or symbolism (Grant, 2007). Brands, after all, can be seen as mental constructs. By wearing a certain company's clothes the consumers can "brand" themselves and that way link them to cultural traditions, show specific values, rituals and so on. This way the individual can signal the others of his personality and what is meaningful to him. (Danesi, 2006)

Besides the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the consumer (a.k.a buyer) behavior can be a result of numerous other factors. The buying decision can be affected by people (relatives, friends, etc.), culture, lifestyle, financial and economical influences, fear, media, and of course necessities. (Groucutt, 2005) Buying outdoors clothing is no different than any other purchasing process. It can be affected by any one of the above-mentioned reasons but this thesis will focus most on culture, lifestyle and financial influences. These are the most likely factors that can make the buyer pay a higher price for environmental qualities or a green image (Esty & Winston, 2006).

Simply by marketing products as "green" does not guarantee good sales. Quality, price and service need to be in order before values come in to play. (Esty & Winston, 2006) The value for customers comes from the difference between perceived gained benefits of buying the product and the cost of the product (Kotler & Keller, 2006). As an example, this was the case with Timberland's organic cotton t-shirt, which is 25% more

expensive to manufacture than a regular t-shirt. The customers did not see any added functionality with the shirt and the “greenness” was not communicated well enough to the customers, so Timberland had to sell them with a discounted rate, and basically without any profit. (Esty & Winston, 2006) This again leads to the importance of good communication from the brand to the consumer. In order for the consumer to be willing to pay a higher price, the brand needs to establish what are the gained benefits from doing so (Taipale, 2007).

If the marketing message of greenness is successfully delivered to customers it can create so called ‘positive shopping.’ This means that customers receive the message and adjust their buying behavior accordingly. They will likely choose more ecologically manufactured products and favor quality and durability over cheapness and quick purchases. The customer is also willing to pay more for a product that is ecological/ethical. The studies show that 75% of Finns would be willing to pay more for a product if they knew the product has been manufactured in ethically sustainable way. (Haapala & Aavameri, 2008) Even in the infancy of green marketing, in 1993, three-fourths of Americans were ready to pay more for products that do not harm the environment (Shimp, 1993).

Just marketing your company as green is not enough. There has to be some element(s) to back it up as well. Companies caught green-washing will do a great deal of harm for the brand and their sales. Consumers will shy away and to build up the brand reputation again will cost a lot of time and money. (Grant, 2007) This is especially true in the modern era as the consumer profile has changed in the past decades. The modern generation, especially the millennials, is much more aware of what companies are doing. They emphasize green and social values when comparing companies with each other much more than the previous generations. Before, consumers bought what was offered to them without any criticism and they had no real knowledge of what companies were doing, besides what the marketers wanted to tell. The modern consumer is much more in contact with the companies and can even affect their business models. If the modern consumer cannot find what he/she wants to buy they will look elsewhere. (Lampikoski & Sippo, 2013)

At the moment of purchase there are various factors that decide which product is taken. Generally brand is not on top of the list but top priorities seem to be quality, performance and price-value relationship (Davis, 2002).

Chovanová, Korshunov & Babčanová (2015) did a research where they studied impact of brand on consumer behavior. Their main finding was that brand awareness and loyalty was affected mostly by the age of the consumer. 52% of all respondents preferred to buy name brands. Out of the all age groups (18-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 60+) the most brand loyal group was the 31-40. They did not give a clear assessment why this was. However, these findings can help this thesis. At a quick glance it could be thought that the reason why age group 31-40 would be the most brand loyal is the combination of income and awareness. They have been in work life for several years and gained some disposable income and therefore can buy name brands. In this thesis' case not only do they have the income but might have been informed through several sources about environmental issues.

Valtanen (2017) researched in his bachelor thesis if Finnish customers put any emphasis on ethics when purchasing clothing. The missing aspect of this study was that he had not clearly identified what type of clothing the research is talking about. Still, the findings were interesting. Valtanen found out that ethics or brand were not important when buying clothes. Quality, price and aesthetics were on top of the list. However, the research also showed that Finns would not buy clothes if they were 100% sure that they had been unethically manufactured. Unethical practises in his thesis meant the use of child labor, environmental destruction and using the cheapest subcontractor as possible. Some of the elements of Valtanen's thesis can be used in this thesis. The focus will be deeper with the outdoor clothing subject. Another factor that Valtanen's thesis did not cover was the differences between educational and occupational groups. These are factors that will be looked in my thesis.

Seppänen (2013) also studied the effect of business ethics on buying behaviour in her bachelor's thesis. Her thesis' findings showed that consumers want more information about ethical clothing and that there are not enough possibilities to buy ethical clothing in Finland. Further findings showed that consumers would like to see more information about ethical issues in marketing and that they would be willing to pay more if they knew the clothes were ethically produced. Seppänen's research findings are in touch with my thesis hypothesis, that some customers hold good brand values in high regard and would be willing to pay more if they were properly informed.

Slawomir (2017) studied whether or not consumers care about business ethics when making purchase decisions. He found out that only 10% of people from developing countries and 17% from developed countries cared about business ethics when making

purchasing decisions. Slawomir's thesis focused on four different product types: coffee, shampoo, clothes and cars. This can create confusing among respondents since different factors might influence each category. On the demography side, Slawomir's thesis got responses from 29 different countries. Even though he got a fair amount of responses (227) it does not give a good total value per country. My thesis will focus purely on the Finnish market to get significant data.

My personal experience is that customers are usually looking for a particular feature when they come to shop for a new article (for example: waterproofing, a hood that goes over skiing helmet or a specific pocket placement). When the proper options are found, the next points of review are fit, look and quality, in varying order. Only then is price taken into a consideration. Like I stated earlier, when talking about materials the seller can tell about environmental considerations in the manufacturing but it is hard to make a sale based on them. I think that info's effect comes to play in later purchases as the customer has now been informed and he/she has had time to consider them. However, if the customer has zero interest towards environmental issues the sales pitch will not have any effect and is just a waste of time. To my experience there are not big differences between different economic or gender groups when it comes to buying a new item. First and foremost they all are primary driven by need. However, it takes less talking to get a (presumably) wealthier customer to buy an expensive jacket (which environmentally conscious products usually are). All in all, need is the primary motivator and customers are willing to pay the price if the the product has a specific purpose.

4 THE RESEARCH

The research was done in a questionnaire format. Questionnaire format was chosen because it is an excellent way to turn attitudes and behaviors into analyzable numbers and produce quantitative data. Quantitative data is best used when the researcher wants to do statistical analysis, test hypothesis, focus on facts and have a controlled measurement (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). The research questions were based on secondary data. Secondary data means findings from previous literature, articles and book publications and research reports, to name a few (Saunders et al, 2009). In this thesis secondary data was collected from various books and articles about brand values, buyer behavior and a few bachelor thesis that touched the subject. Even though bachelor level thesis' are not generally recommended, they offered interesting results from similar subjects. Together all the literature build a structure for the questionnaire. Theory before data is an efficient way to test assumptions (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). Assumption in this thesis was that avid outdoors people make more environmentally friendly purchasing decisions when choosing a brand. A first draft of the questionnaire was sent to five specifically selected people. The selected people consisted of fellow students and a few highly educated individuals who have personal experience in conducting surveys. They answered the questionnaire and gave feedback on what is good and bad with it (structure, relevance, clarity, etc.). The resulting version was sent to my teacher tutor who made the last correction suggestions. After adjustments were made, a final version was crafted.

After the final version of the questionnaire was completed, the survey was executed using the SurveyMonkey webpage. SurveyMonkey allows the user to build a custom made questionnaire and able to create cross-referencing. By using simple random sampling method the questionnaire was promoted through several Facebook groups dedicated to different outdoor activities. Simple random sampling allows all people in the target group to take part, so no one is hand picked or excluded (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). This helps to widen the respondent pool and also generates more responses, while allowing all group members to respond.

The questionnaire consisted of 19 questions and it received 265 responses. The language used in the questionnaire was Finnish. Finnish was chosen because the target audience in the questionnaire were Finns, and this allowed every willing

participant to voice his/her opinion without the fear of bumping into language barriers, not understanding the questions or have inadequate English skills to answer open ended questions. The responses were gathered through Facebook. Facebook was chosen because it reaches wide audience and has several dedicated groups for different sports and interests. The questionnaire was shared on the author's personal profile as well as on several outdoors related groups, such as trail running, hiking, crossfit (because within the crossfit community there are vast number of enthusiasts of outdoor sports, even though the sport itself is not directly outdoors related), canoeing and hunting. It was important for the questionnaire to gather data from large audience of different sports because this would help to see if athletes of one discipline to be more ethically aware than others, even though it was not the main focus of the thesis. The main disadvantage of conducting the survey online was that only the people interested in the topic were probably the most likely to answer it.

The aim was to get at least 150 responses for the questionnaire in order to see dispersion in the responses. In the end the questionnaire received 265 responses. Not only did the number of responses exceed the the intended target but the demographical spread was quite even. There were respondents from each given age, educational and income groups. Also the male-female ratio was quite good, so one gender did not over dominate the other. This was good for the reliability of the survey since each category was represented.

When a satisfactory number of responses was collected, the gathered data was analyzed. By using cross-referencing, patterns were found out. The aim was to find out if and how the respondents are truly affected by brand values by using the primary data generated from the responses. Primary data is generated when questionnaire findings are gathered and analyzed (Saunders et al, 2009). The primary data collected from the responses was used to test the literature's findings.

The questionnaire was to test the connection between brand values and purchasing behavior. Three main themes were studied in order to build an overall understanding when data was collected. First of all the respondent profile was be studied: age, sex, education, occupation, income and hobbies. Second theme of questions focused on buying behavior: how often purchases made, how much money spent and possible interests when purchasing new clothing. Last set of questions studied values: what are good values, the harmony of different manufacturing processes and how values affect purchasing.

The first five questions mapped out the respondent demography. These questions asked the respondents' sex, age, education level, yearly net income and hobbies. All of the five factors were important for the survey because each component could possibly affect the purchasing behavior.

Questions 6-10 measured the respondents' buying behavior. Question 6 asked how many times per year does the respondent buy clothes for his/her hobbies. Question 7 measured the amount of money spent yearly on the afore mentioned purchases. Question 8 asked the respondent to rank the given motivations for buying new clothes. Question 9 asked the respondent to rank the given factors, which affect buying behavior. Question 10 inquired how much does the respondent pay attention to the manufacturing methods when purchasing a new item. These questions were made to see what kind of buying habits and motives the respondents have for their outdoor activities in general.

Questions 11-14 were created to measure the respondents' views on different aspects of value. These included: the amount of attention put into companies' values; ranking aspects in manufacturing in order; would they be willing to pay more for a product if it had been manufactured according their values; and if they would be willing to pay more how much would it be? Even though these questions seem to vary in their perspective, they give a good overall view of what kind of a value base active outdoors people have.

Question 15 measured the respondents' attitudes towards claims over companies and their values. Question 16 asked if the respondents would be affected if they had more knowledge of the company's values and how the product is manufactured. Question 17 offered multiple options of product categories and asked the respondent to choose ones that he/she studies the production methods. This question was made to see how interested the respondents are towards ethical manufacturing of other products and if those interest have carry over to outdoor clothing.

Question 18 asked the respondent to choose every clothing-manufacturing standard they are familiar with. A lot of brands mention used standards in their price labels so this question had a double mission: to see if any standard has become generally well known, and what kind of variety of known standards there are. The options were chosen based on the standards used by the biggest and/or "greenest" companies. These are the brands that the average consumer purchases because of their availability, and therefore they might have also taken a look at the labels provided.

Question 19 was an open question where the respondents could leave their comments on the subject. This question was made in hopes of people commenting their own genuine views on the subject because all the other questions were close ended. This was also the only open ended question because the goal was the gather more quantitative data.

4.1 Research Limitations

The biggest limitation of the survey was how the respondents were gathered. Even though the research reached around 2000 people (the combined number of members from all Facebook groups), it received 265 responses. This most likely means that only the people interested in the topic answered the questionnaire. An optional approach would have been to do face-to-face interviews, which is recommended for future studies.

5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 General findings

The following chapter will highlight the general findings of the research. A conclusion and analysis of the findings will be made at the end.

5.1.1 Respondent demography

The questionnaire received 265 responses. 59% of the respondents were women and 41% men. The respondent age spread was wide with responses from each age category. Age groups 31-35 (27%) and 36-40 (23%) had the most responses but outside of those groups the spread was quite even.

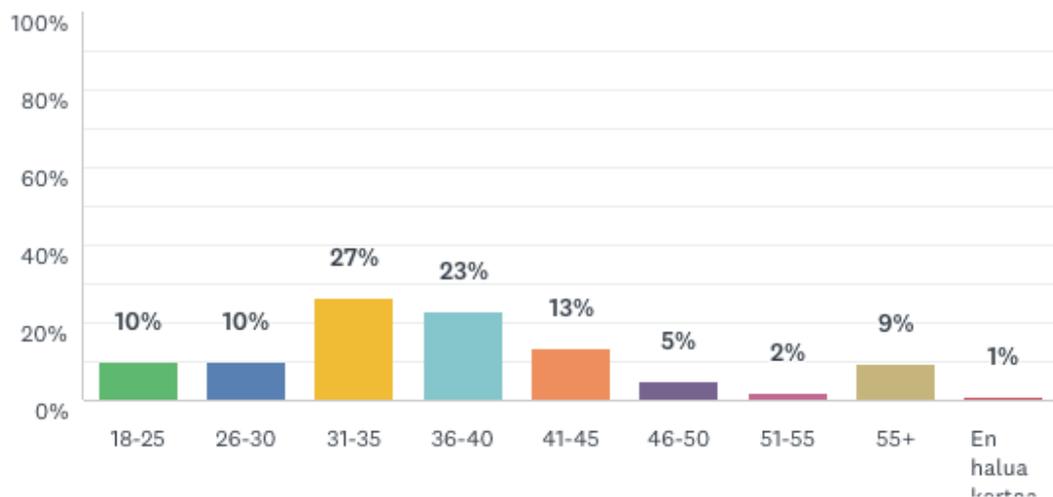


Figure 1. Respondent age spread

A clear majority was seen in the education level. 44% were university level educated, 32% had a masters/secondary level education and 22% had a doctorate level education. Only 2% had finished just minimum schooling and 1% of respondents did not want to state their education level.

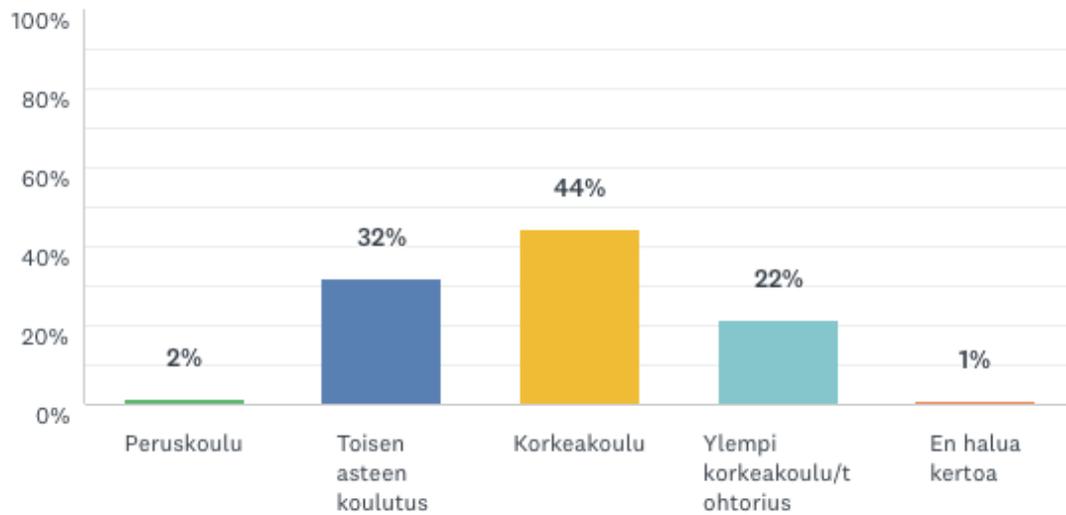


Figure 2. Respondent education level

The largest income group was the ones who earned 35 001-50 000 euros annually. They were followed by the 25 001-35 000€ group with 22%. Then 0-25 000€ with 19%, 50 001-75 000€ with 16%, 75 000+€ with 6% and 6% of the respondents did not want to state their annual net income.

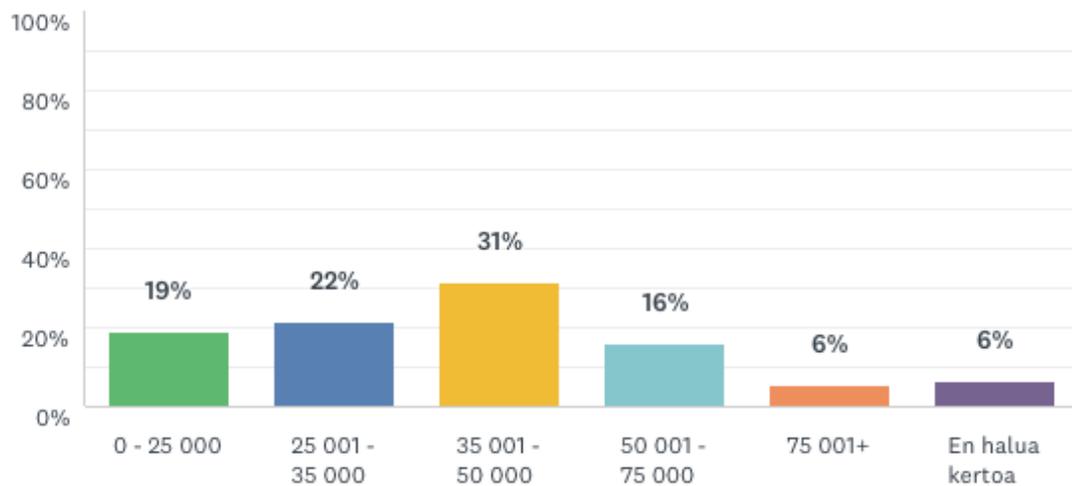


Figure 3. Respondent annual net income level (€)

Running (54%) and hiking (39%) were the most popular outdoor activities. Cross-country skiing (22%) and downhill skiing (18%) dominated the winter sport activities in popularity. Paragliding and waterskiing were the only given activities that did not get any responses. The question had the possibility to write an additional activity if the

respondent did not find a suitable one from the given activities. Walking was a popular response and in hindsight it should have been a provided option in the questionnaire. Walking got 10% of responses.

5.1.2 Respondent buying behavior

A clear majority (58%) of the respondents said buying clothes and gear for hobbies 0-2 times annually. 27% answered buying 3-4 times and 15% said to buy 5 times or more.

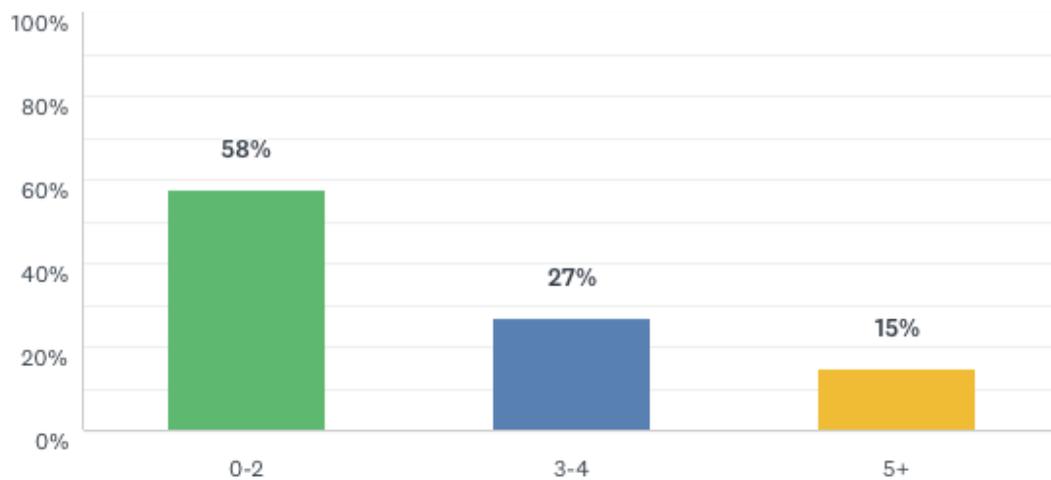


Figure 4. Number of times new items bought annually

42% of the respondents said they spend 201-500€ annually. 41% answered to spend 20-200€. 15% spend 501-1000€ and 2% spend 1001-2000€.

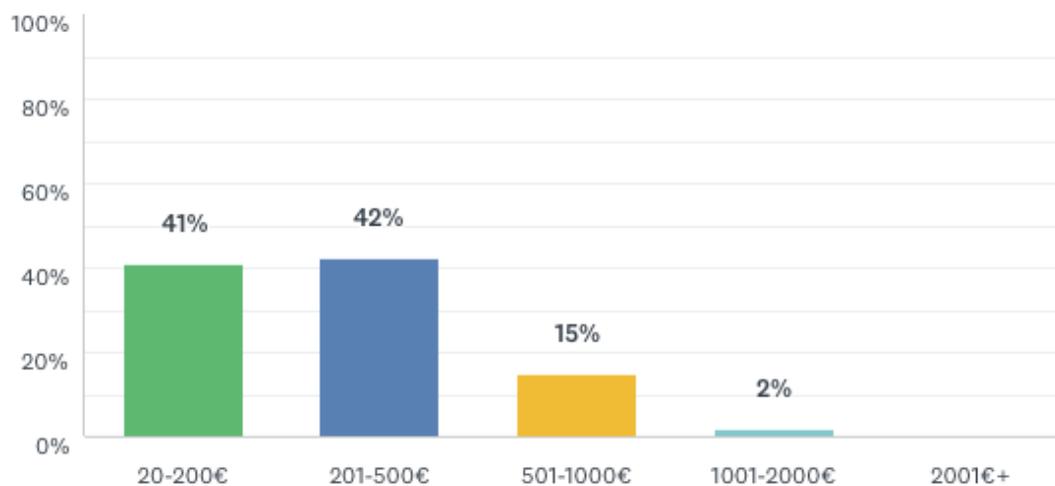


Figure 5. Money spent on purchases annually

The most popular reason to buy a new product from the gives choices was to replace a broken or a worn out product. Second most popular reason was the need to fill a missing feature compared to other products. Offers was the third motivation. Fourth motivation was updating the wardrobe. Least motivating reason was the release of new models.

The most popular factor, when making a purchasing decision, was the quality of the product (used materials, product reviews, past experiences, etc.). The second most popular reason was the price. Third factor was the product's appearance (colors, design, personality, etc.). Fourth factor was ecology/ethicality (if mentioned/known) of the product. Fifth came the brand. The least motivating purchasing criteria was the company image.

5.1.3 Interest towards Brand Values

Majority of the respondents, with 58%, said they sometimes pay attention to the manufacturing methods of the products. Quarter of the respondents said they pay attention almost every time they buy a new product. 17% of the respondents said they never pay attention.

56% of the respondents said they somewhat pay attention to company brand values, meaning they can read info tag if one is provided. 31% said they pay hardly any attention because it would not most likely have any effect on their buying decision. 7% answered that they pay a lot of attention and that they seek actively information. 5% said they do not pay any attention at all because it would not affect their buying decision.

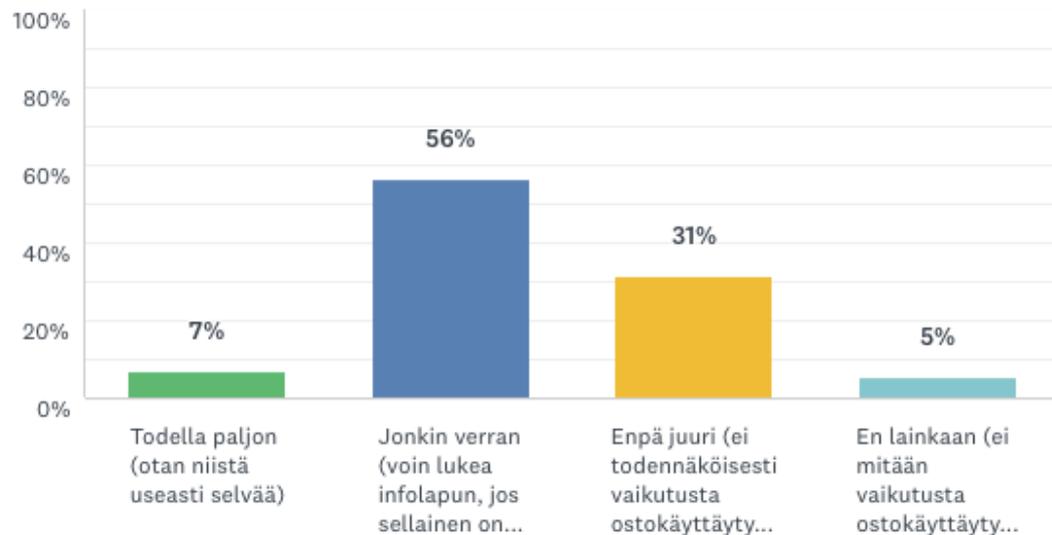


Figure 6. Likelihood of reading an info tag on brand values if one was provided

Question 12 asked the respondents to rank given manufacturing methods according to the respondent's value system. The most prestigious manufacturing aspect was that child labor has not been used. The second most important aspect was the ethical treatment of animals (plucking feathers only from dead animals, careful shedding, etc.). Third most respected aspect was the protection of waters from chemicals. Fourth was the use of recycled materials in manufacturing. Fifth came the use of renewable raw materials. Sixth was water saving dyeing methods. Seventh and last was the preferred use of organic materials.

Question 13. asked if the respondent was willing to pay more for a product if he/she would know it had been produced according to his/her beliefs. The majority of respondents (47%) answered that they would be willing to pay more. Even 45% of the respondents said they might pay more. Only 8% said they would not pay more.

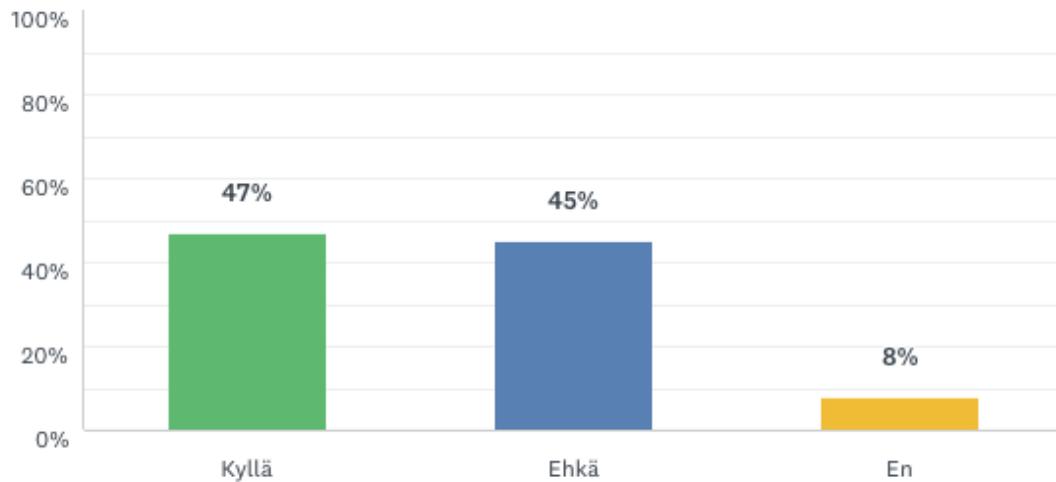


Figure 7. Willing to pay more for a product manufactured according to personal values

The follow up question for question 12 asked those, who would or might pay more for a product manufactured according to their values, how much more would they pay percent wise. 34% of the respondents were willing to pay 6-10% more. 23% were willing to pay 11-15%, 20% were willing to pay 16-20%, 15% were willing to pay 0-5%, 5% were fine with 26-35% increase and 4% would pay 21-25% more.

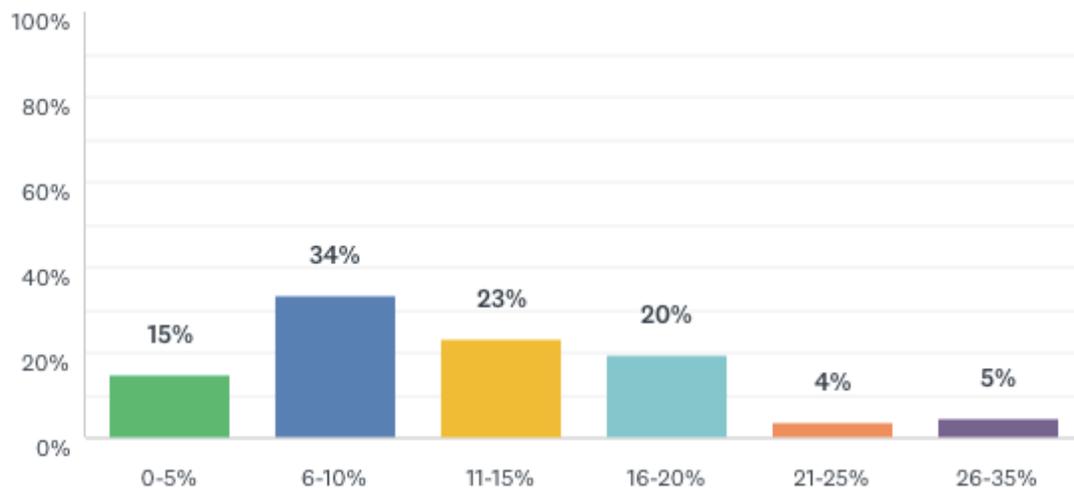


Figure 8. The percentual amount to pay more for a product manufactured according to personal values

Question 15 tested the respondent's beliefs towards various stated claims. First claim was 'Companies act in general according to their values.' 44% of the respondents answered that they somewhat agree with this claim. The second claim was 'Green values are just a marketing trick.' Interestingly enough, 43% answered that they also

somewhat agreed with this claim as well. The third claim was 'Green values end if they inhibit growth.' The most popular belief, by whopping 52%, was that the respondents somewhat agreed. Fourth claim, 'Companies listen to their customers' opinions', got a 63% response rate for *somewhat agree*. Fifth claim stated 'Manufacturing certificates are only used to increase prices.' The response spread for this claim was quite evenly wide but 38% though that they somewhat disagree with it. 'Companies should take environmental aspects into more consideration' was a claim that majority of the respondents saw eye to eye, with 62% stating that they fully agree and 32% stating they somewhat agree. The last claim was 'I would be interested in learning more about my favorite company's values.' 40% said they somewhat agree and 35% said they fully agree.

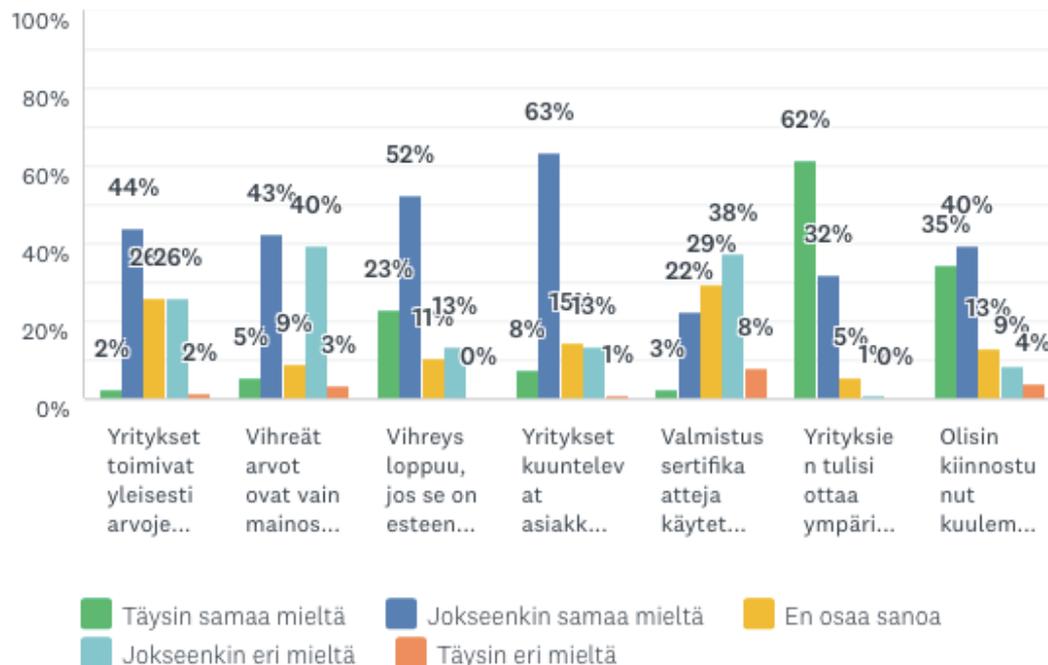


Figure 9. Beliefs towards values and their effect on business

Question 16 asked the respondents if they thought it would affect their purchasing behavior if companies would expose their values and manufacturing methods more openly. The results were clear, as 77% of the respondents said yes, 11% of the respondents said maybe and the rest 11% said no.

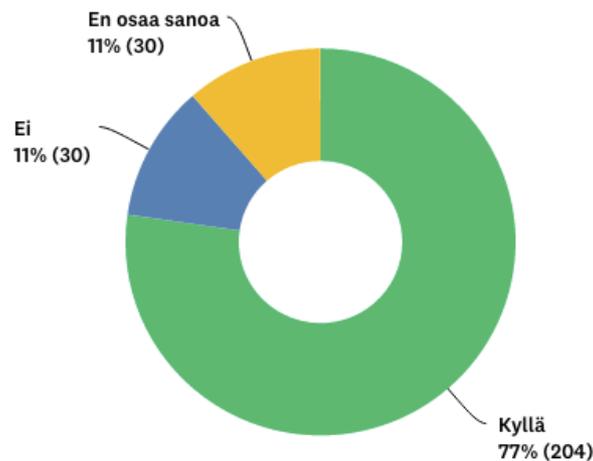


Figure 10. Possible effect on purchasing if brand values were known.

Question 17 asked the respondents to mark the product categories that they actively seek information about (manufacturing processes, used materials, etc.). Food was a clear winner in this, with 76% of respondents. Other notable products were cosmetics (39%) and household detergents (33%).

Last part of the questionnaire was the free speech section, where the respondents could voice their ideas and opinions. The reoccurring theme was that many respondents saw it as an important thing for companies to bring out their values. The respondents were also willing to listen what the companies are up to. This supports the gathered data quite well. Many respondents also said they had not really thought about clothing purchases to have impact on nature. Some thought it is hard to believe in the info tags on clothing since there are “rotten apples” in the market, so it is hard to know who to trust and not to trust.

5.1.4 Conclusion of general findings

It seems that the average responder of this survey does not buy very often nor spend a lot of money annually to his/her hobbies. As the results show the main motivations to buy a new product are based on need instead of want. It can be assumed that the few purchases that the average respondent makes are carefully thought and strategically executed. For future studies it would be helpful to ask how planned the purchases are,

for example how much background research is done and how many times the store or online site is visited before actual purchase is made.

Ethical aspects that raise the most concern are related to well being of people and animals. The interest and paid attention towards company values are moderate, however the respondents seemed to be eager to learn. Therefore it could be said that people are uninspired to learn by themselves but have open ears if companies are willing to educate. One sign of this is the appraisal that people give to companies that operate with ethical values.

The respondents seemed to appreciate ethical values but were also a little skeptical that they could be used just to raise prices. However, if and when convinced they would be willing to pay a higher price for a product that is ethically manufactured compared to a one that is not.

5.2 Men vs. Women

In order to dig deeper into the data and see more patterns besides the general findings, this thesis takes a closer look at different aspects through cross-referencing. The following chapter will analyze the differences between men and women. Also later on the effect of how income and education levels affect the responses will be analyzed. Findings of the following chapters can help companies on how to raise awareness, see how different groups can be contacted, what kind of pricing strategies are available and what type of values are important. The idea is not to help companies base their activities around respected values in order to make most money, but to find out what and how to spread information to customers.

The buying frequencies for both were virtually identical. 58% of men and 57% of women buy 0-2 times clothes for their activities annually. 27% of men and 28% of women buy 3-4 times, and 15% of men and 15% of women buy 5+ times. The same trend continued with the amount of money spent on the purchases. 41% of men and 40% of women spend 20-200€ euros annually. 42% of men and 44% of women spend 201-500€. 15% of men and 16% of women spend 501-1000€. 3% (3 respondents) of men and 0,65% (1 respondent) of women spend 1001-2000€. There were not any respondents who spend more than 2000€.

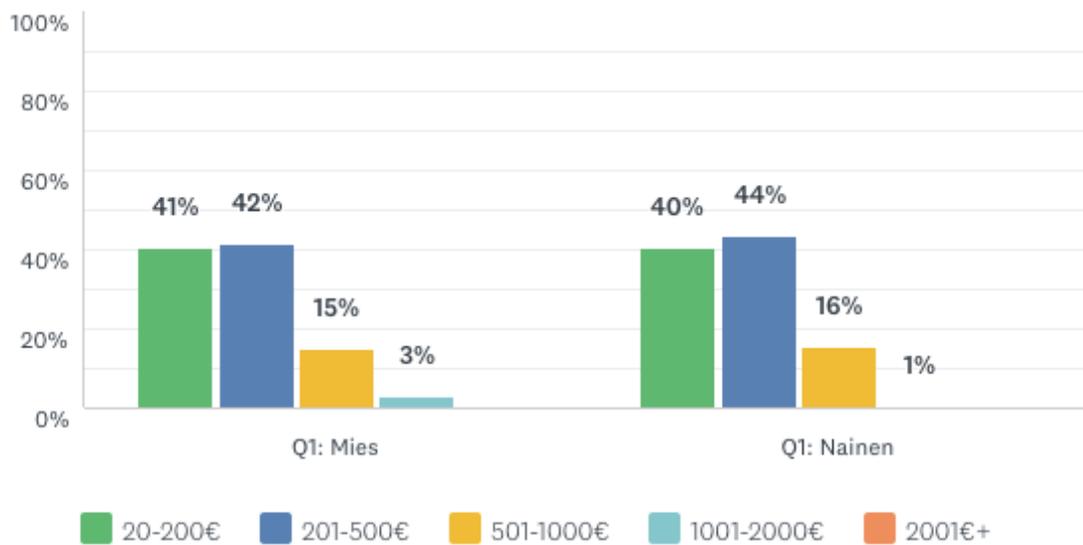


Chart 14. Men vs. Women annual spending on new clothing

Question 8 asked the respondents to rank given reasons why they buy new products. This was the first question in which the first little differences between men and women started to show. *Replacing a broken or a worn out product* was the most popular reason to buy a new item with both sexes (54% of men and 59% of women). Both sexes ranked *need (additional feature compared to other owned items)* as the second most common reason to buy a new product (23% of men, 24% of women). After this some differences could be seen, as women ranked *updating the closet* as the third most likely reason with 10% and men ranked *offers (no real need, but “now that the price is right”)* as their third with 10%. *New models* was the fourth choice for both sexes (women 6% of total responses, 8% for men). The fifth choice for women was *offers (no real need, but “now that the price is right”)* with 5%. For men the least likely reason to buy a new product of the given options was *updating the wardrobe* with 8%.

In question 9 the respondents were asked to rank the given factors in order regarding criteria when making a purchase. Yet again men and women seemed to have quite similar views on what is important when they go shopping for a new item. The three most important factors were quality, price and appearance. Men seemed to slightly favor brand over ecology/ethics, and women vice a versa. Both sexes said company image was the least important criteria.

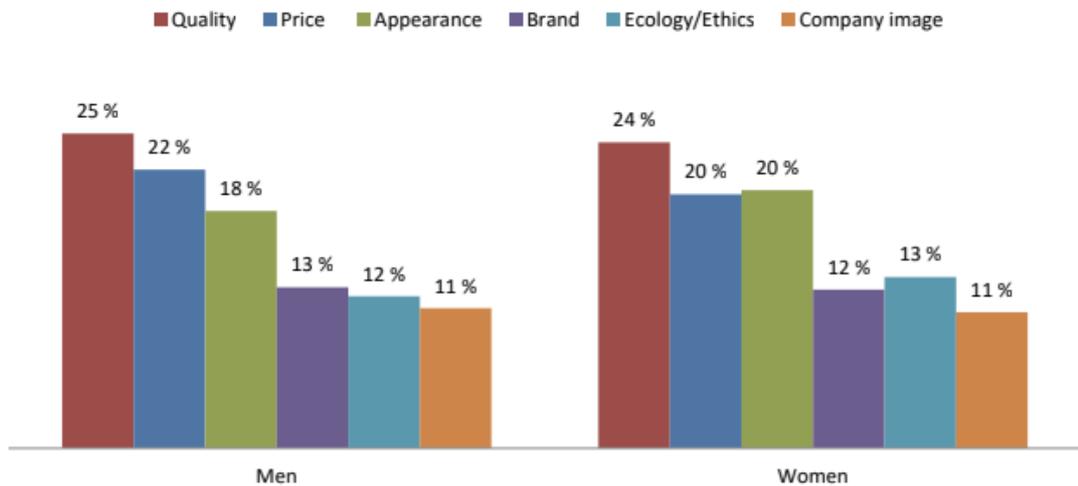


Chart 15. Men vs. Women criteria rank for purchase

Question 10 asked how often does the respondents pay attention to the manufacturing aspects of the product they are buying. The options were *never*, *sometimes* and *almost every time*. This question showed some variance between men and women. *Sometimes* was the most popular response with both sexes (53% of men and 61% of women responding it as their first choice). Women were more likely to research the products *almost every time* with 29%, while men had 20% likelihood. 27% of men *never* pay attention to production methods, while only 10% of women were likely to do the same.

Question 11 asked how much does the respondents pay attention to companies' values. Men and women had the same order in the given responses but the margins were drastically different. Both sexes answered *somewhat (I will read the info tag, if one is provided)* with 45% of men and 65% of women. *Not too much (not likely any affect on buying decision)* got 44% from men and 22% from women. Third most responses received *a lot (I actively seek information)* with 6% from men and 8% from women. *Not at all (no effect on buying behavior)* was the least responded choice with 5% from men and 6% from women.

Women seemed to be much more willing to pay more for a product that has been manufactured according to their personal values. 54% of women said they would be willing to pay more. Even 42% of women said they might pay more. Only 4% were not ready to pay more. The majority of men (49%) said they might pay more. Gladly, 37% of men said they would pay more. This left 14% of men not willing to pay more.

Of those men who would or might pay more, 32% said 6-10% would be tolerable increase in price. Women also thought 6-10% was a fair amount with 35% of the respondents. Women were willing to pay a higher price in general, as 25% said they would be fine with 11-15% price increase and 20% fine with 16-20% increase. 22% of men thought 11-15% price increase would be tolerable and 20% said 0-5% would be the limit. Then again, still 19% of men would be 16-20% more.

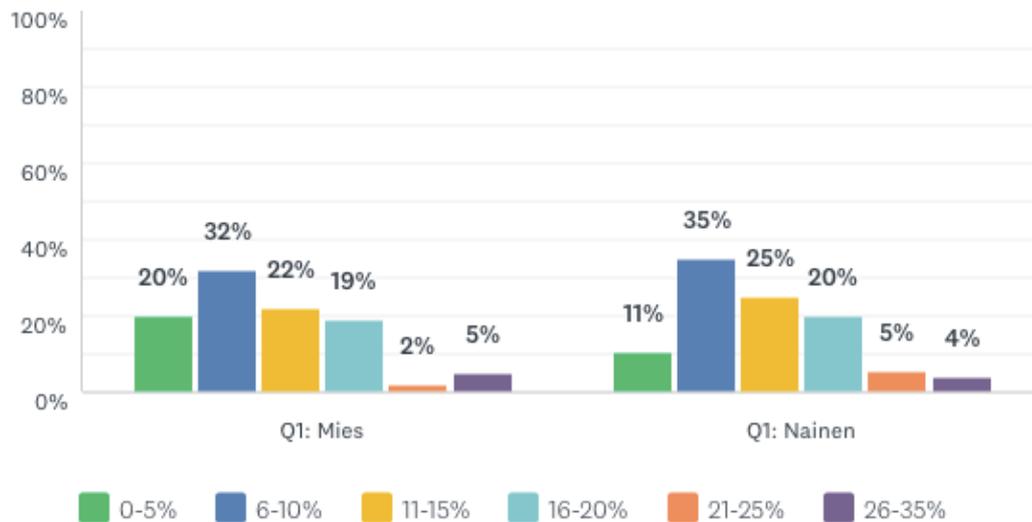


Figure 11. Men vs. Women, percentual increase in price for a product manufactured according to personal beliefs

Question 16 asked if it would affect the respondents' buying behavior if companies would bring up their values and manufacturing methods. The results were quite clear as 66% of men and 85% of women said it would. Even though men's eagerness was not on the same level as women's, 20% still said it might have an effect. Only 6% of women thought it might. 15% of men and 9% of women said it would not.

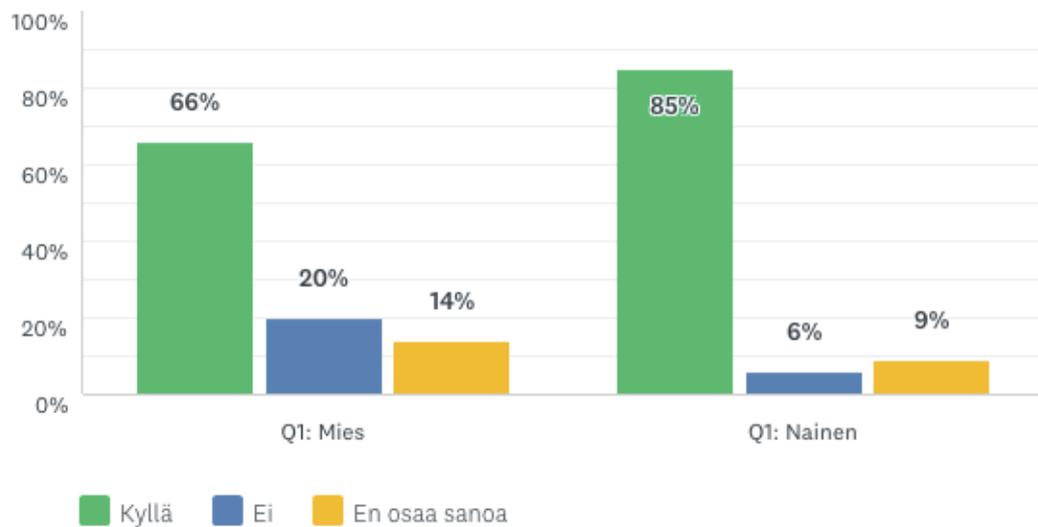


Figure 12. Men vs. Women, effect on purchasing if brand values and manufacturing methods were brought up

Both sexes seemed to seek information on food related ethical issues, with 71% of men and 79% of women. Besides food, the interest towards other given options with men was quite low and 27% said they do not seek information about anything. Women on the other hand seemed far more interested in other product group's ethical issues as well. Not necessarily surprising, but 59% of women said they seek information on cosmetics and 42% on household detergents.

5.2.1 Men vs. Women Conclusion

The buying habits of men and women do not seem to be that different based on the results of this survey. Both sexes buy new items with the same regularity per year and spend the same amount of money. One thing that might cause this are the hobbies. Since the most popular hobbies for both sexes were running and hiking, the costs stay pretty much the same. The biggest difference in buying habits, and even that was not so big, was the motivation to buy a new item. Even the criteria that determine the purchase decision are quite similar for both.

The biggest differences between men and women can be seen in the interest towards ethical issues. While both sexes thought that learning more about their favorite company's values might affect their purchase decisions, women seemed more

interested towards ethical issues overall. Women are more willing to learn about values, they saw values more important and they are willing to pay more to make sure ethical issues are done properly (for example in manufacturing).

It seems that convincing ethical issues to households seem to be the same as selling a car to a household. Convince the woman, and you have convinced the whole family.

5.3 Education's effect on brand values and purchase behavior

By cross-referencing education and received responses the essay seeks out to see what type of effect education has on purchase behavior and values. The education levels are primary school (PS), secondary school (SS), university (Uni) and masters/doctorate(PHD). It should be stated that PS-group consisted only of four respondents, therefore it is suggested that PS-group's results should be viewed more as a curiosity and not as statistical facts.

The results showed that the PS-group group was the least enthusiastic when it came to purchasing frequency. 100% of the PS-group bought new items 0-2 times annually. As the general findings hinted, the majority from all other groups as well bought new items 0-2 times annually. In general it could be noted that the higher the education level rises the higher the buying frequency rises percentually.

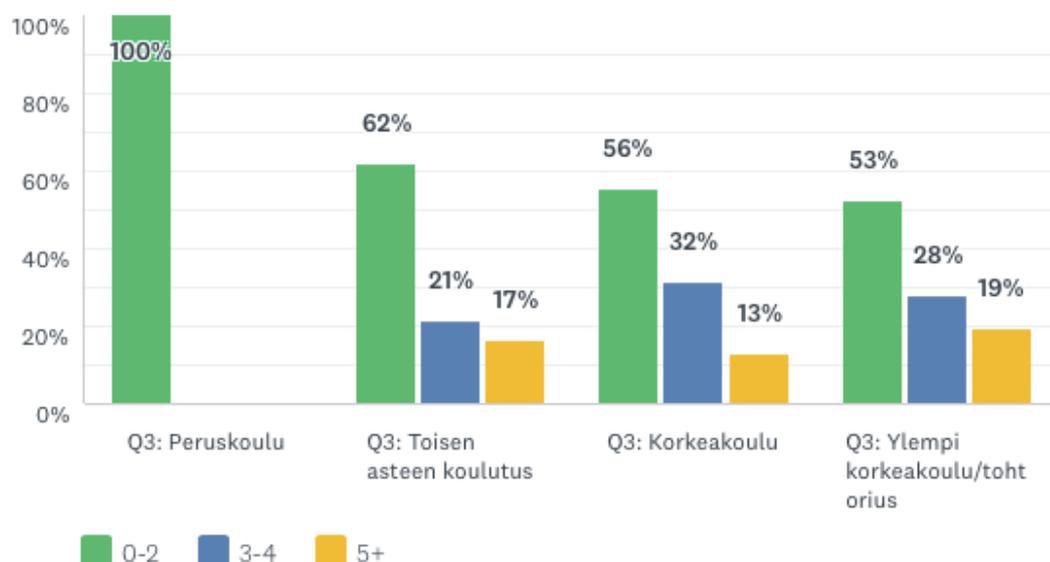


Figure 13. Education level, number of times purchased annually

The same trend could be seen also in the money spent for the purchases. It seems that not only was the PS-groups buying frequency low but the money spent was low as well. Also, again, the higher the education level rises the money spent rises as well. This does not mean that those with higher education spend more per purchase but the spending is higher because of the higher purchase frequency.

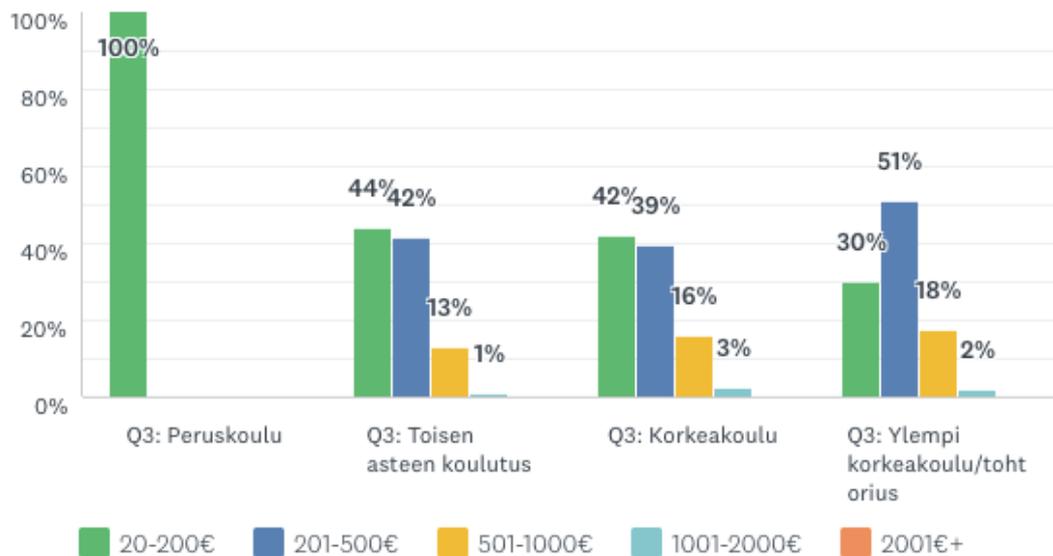


Figure 14. Education, money spent annually

As for the reasons to buy a new item, all groups had similar motivations. Replacing a broken or a worn out item was the first one everyone's list. The second factor was need (additional feature compared to previously owned models). There were not big differences in motivations between the groups. The least important reason to buy a new item was new models.

The criterias that determine the purchase decision were quite similar as well. The PS-group seemed to favor price over quality, the other groups the other way around. Other than that, the order was quite unanimously appearance, ecology/ethics, brand and the company image.

When it came to attention paid to manufacturing methods, the PS-group seemed to be the only radical one. 100% of the PS-group answered that they *never* pay attention. Interestingly enough, the higher the education level went the less likely the respondent was to pay attention *almost every time*. However, the probability for paying attention *sometimes* rose.

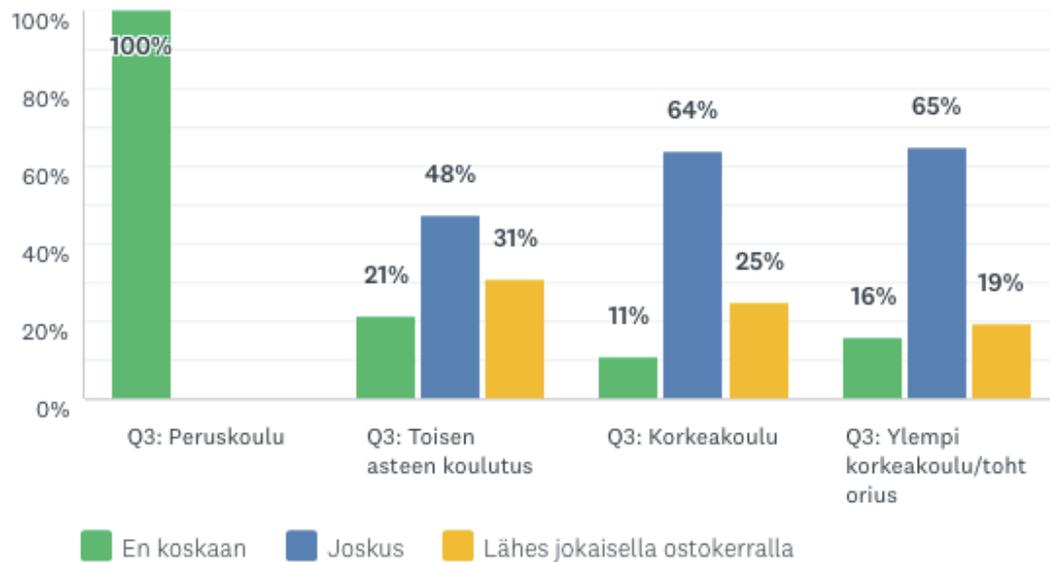


Figure 15. Education, attention paid to manufacturing methods

With attention towards company values the same pattern continued as with the previous parts. Half of the PS-group said they never pay attention to company values. 25% said they do not pay attention that much (most likely would not have impact on buying behavior) and 25% said that they somewhat pay attention (would read an info tag if one was be provided). A little more than a half of each of the rest education group said they somewhat pay attention. About a third said they do not pay attention that much.

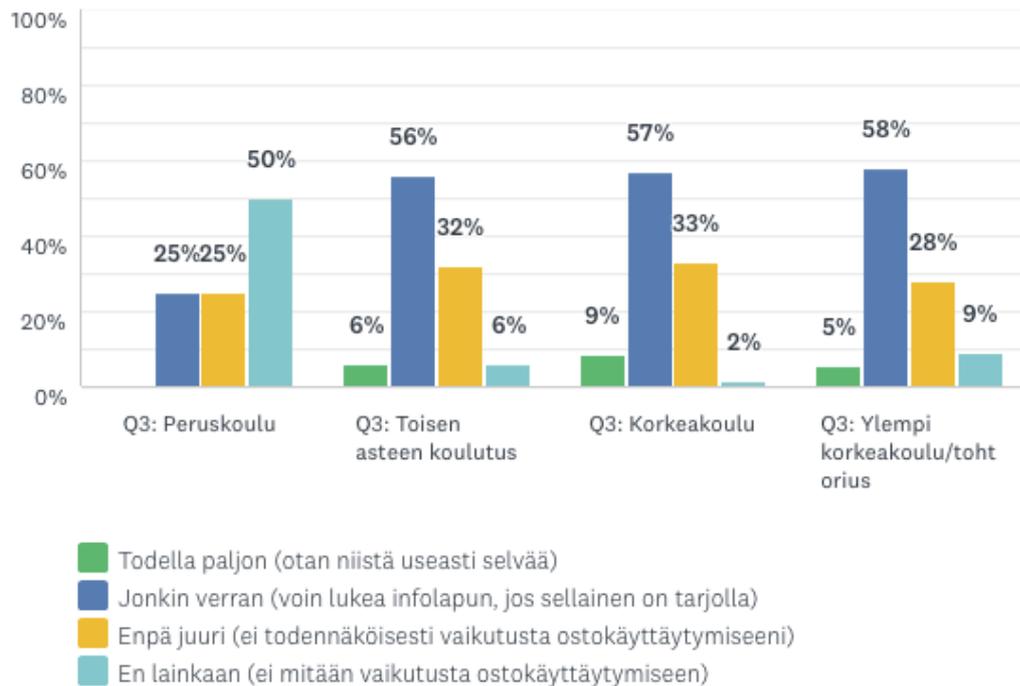


Figure 16. Education, attention paid to company values

Each education group, besides the PS-group, seemed to value not using child labor the most. The PS-groups valued the most the protection of waters from chemicals. Second most valued manufacturing factor overall was the ethical treatment of animals, except for the PS-group who had it ranked as their second lowest valued factor.

Rank	PS-group	SS-group	Uni-group	PHD-group
1.	Protection of waters from chemicals	No child labor used	No child labor used	No child labor used
2.	No child labor used	Ethical treatment of animals	Ethical treatment of animals	Ethical treatment of animals
3.	Use of recycled materials	Protection of waters from chemicals	Use of recycled materials	Use of recycled materials
4.	Use of renewable materials	Use of recycled materials	Protection of waters from chemicals	Use of renewable materials
5.	Water saving dyeing methods	Use of renewable materials	Use of renewable materials	Protection of waters from chemicals
6.	Ethical treatment of	Water saving dyeing	Water saving dyeing	Water saving dyeing

	animals	methods	methods	methods
7.	Use of organic materials			

Table 1. Education, rank of manufacturing procedures

There were not great differences between the SS-, Uni- and PHD-groups with likelihood of paying more for a product that has been manufactured according to their values. Generally all groups were either *willing* (44-53%) or *maybe willing* (41-47%) to pay more, and only a low percentage was *not willing to pay more* (6-10%). The PS-group was not that different in this case with 75% saying they *might be willing* to pay more and 25% saying they *would not*, but no respondents willing to *definitely pay more*.

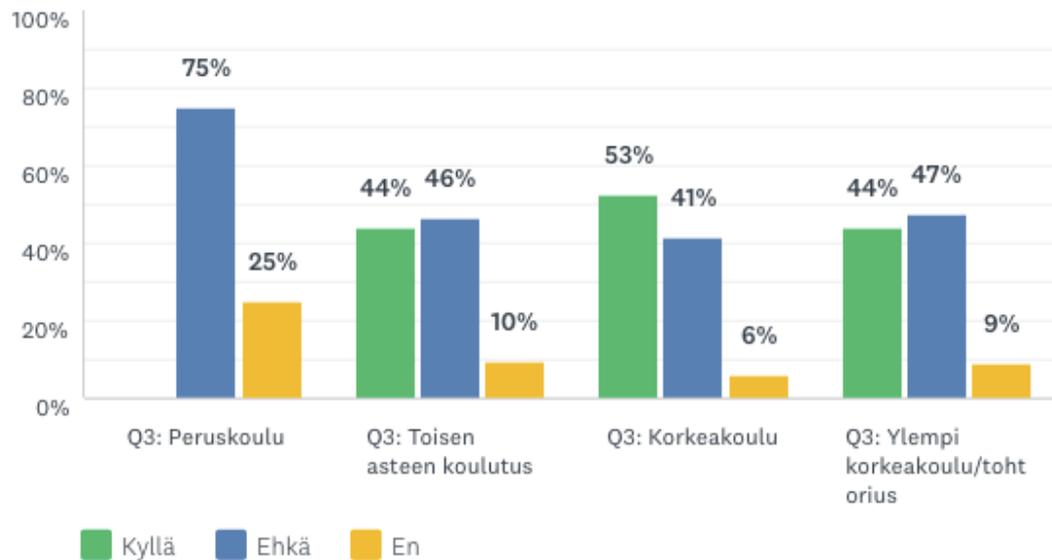


Figure 17. Education, willingness to pay more for a product manufactured according to personal values

The trend with those who would be willing to pay more seemed to be that the higher the education level the greater chance of paying a percentually higher price. The differences were not that big however. 6-10% seemed to be most tolerable increase in price for every group. 11-15% and 16-20% were the next most favored increases. The PS-group was divided into two price ranges but that is only because of the low number of members belonging in the group.

Question 15 asked the respondents to answer the given claims about companies' green values. First claim was *Companies generally act according to their values*. The PS-group could not say or slightly disagreed with the claim. Other groups generally

somewhat agreed with this claim. Only the PHD-group showed some dispersion, with 40% saying they somewhat agree and 35% saying they somewhat disagree. The next claim was *Green values are just a marketing trick*. The PS-group seemed the most skeptical as 75% said they somewhat agree with this. The other three groups seemed to be divided into three camps. From the SS-group 47% said they somewhat agree with this and 33% saying they somewhat disagree. 44% of the Uni-group said they somewhat disagree and 41% somewhat agree. The PHD-group seemed the most convinced as 51% said they somewhat disagreed and 30% somewhat agreeing. *Green values end if they inhibit financial growth* was the next claim. Half of the PS-group could not say and a little over a half from each of the other groups said they somewhat agree with this. The majority of each group somewhat agreed with (PS 50%, SS 60%, Uni 68% and PHD 63%) *Companies listen to their customers' opinions*. *Manufacturing standards are only used to raise prices* received 75% of somewhat agrees from the PS-group. The majority of responses from each of the other groups went to somewhat disagree (SS 36%, Uni 41% and PHD 39%), even though rest of the response percentages leaned towards more skeptical views. One claim that each group saw eye to eye was *Companies should take environmental factors in manufacturing into a more consideration*. Every group's highest answer percentage was in *fully agree* (PS 50%, SS 58%, Uni 62%, PHD 67%). Excluding the PS-group, majority of the rest of the answers went to *somewhat agree*. All groups were willing to learn, by majority vote, more about their favorite company's values either by fully agreeing or somewhat agreeing. Only a small percentage was not that interested.

When asked, if it would likely affect their buying behavior if companies would bring out more their values and manufacturing methods, the results were clear. 71% of the SS-group, 83% of the Uni-group and 79% of the PHD-group said it would likely have an effect. 75% of the PS-group said it would not likely have an effect.

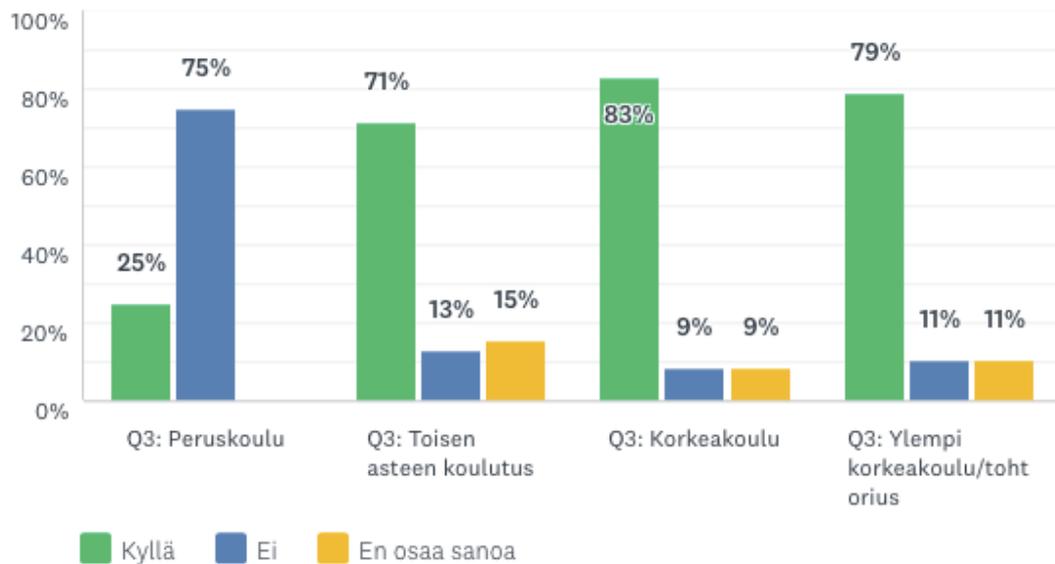


Figure 18. Education, effect on buying if brand values were known.

5.3.1 Conclusion of Education's effect on brand values and purchase behavior

As stated in the beginning of the chapter 5.3, the PS-group consisted only of four respondents so that group's results should not be treated with high statistical value. However these are the observations made of the results. The PS-group seemed less enthusiastic about values in general compared to other three groups. The PHD-group was slightly most willing to learn about values and had the highest appreciation for them. The margins in responses were still minimal between the SS-, Uni- and PHD-groups. The buying frequency and money spent, motivation to buy new items, the factors that decide the purchase decision and methods considered in manufacturing were almost identical.

For future research it would be beneficial to get more responses from the people belonging to the PS-group. Also, if education would be the main aspect of study, it would be good to separate the type of education done. Even two highly educated people might have varying views depending on the field of study.

5.4 Income's effect on brand values and purchase behavior

Income as a factor for studying purchase behavior and value views needs to be looked out as well. Change in income and its effect on spending is called the 'Income effect'.

In a nutshell it means that when a person's income increases he/she is willing to spend more. (Investopedia, 2018) The following chapter will study what kind of effect income has on consumer behavior and values. The income groups in the questionnaire were divided as following (abbreviation in brackets): 0-25 000 (25), 25 0001-35 000 (35), 35 001-50 000 (50), 50 001-75 000 (75), 75 001+(75+).

In general the trend with buying frequency seemed to be that the higher the annual net income raised the higher the buying frequency became. However, the margins were almost identical. The biggest exceptions could be seen with group 50 who was the most eager to buy 5+ times and with group 75+ who was the most likely to buy 3-4 times.

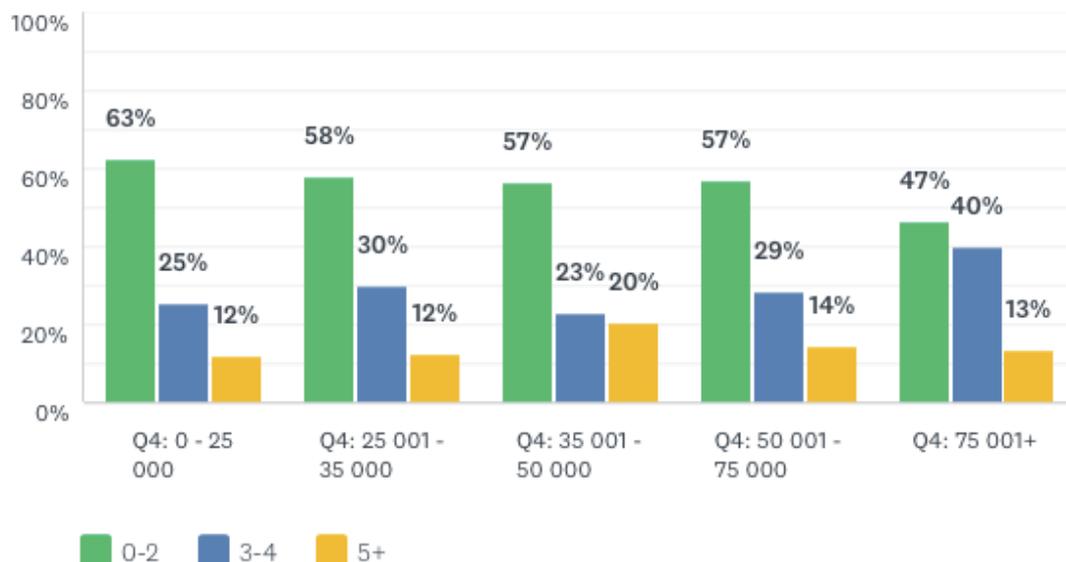


Figure 19. Income, number of purchases annually

The same trend continued with amount spend with those purchases. The 25 group the least eager to spend money of the purchases. The eagerness to spend rose with the income but even the 75+ group had quite calm spending, even though they were the only group who had a significant number of respondents willing to spend 1001-2000 euros annually.

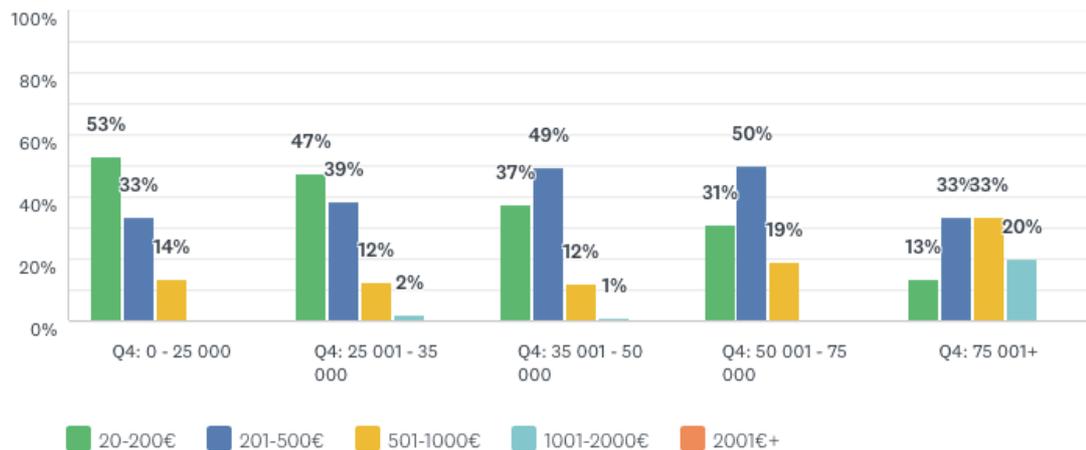


Figure 20. Income, amount spend on annual purchases

The motive to buy a new item was quite similar with each group. Three of the lowest income groups rated the given factors as following: 1. Replacing a broken or a worn out clothing, 2. Need (additional feature compared to already owned products), 3. Offers (no real need but “now that the price is right”), 4. New models, 5. Updating wardrobe. Groups 75 and 75+ had the same order with first three factors but had updating the wardrobe as number 4 and new models as number 5.

The factors that decide the purchase were yet again almost identical with each group. The four lowest income groups had the same order, which was: 1. Quality (materials used, reviews, past experiences, etc.), 2. Price, 3. Appearance (colors, personality, etc.), 4. Brand (recognizability, awareness, etc.), 5. Ecology/ethics, 6. Company image (what the company represents, news exposure, etc.). The 75+ group quality as the most important factor but appreciated appearance over price, and brand over ecology/ethics and company image.

With attention paid to manufacturing methods when buying a new item, it seemed that the lower the income was the likelier the respondent was to pay attention with every purchase time. At the same time, the higher the income was the likelier the respondent was to never pay attention to manufacturing methods, especially among the 75 group (38%).

It seemed that income played a role with interest towards company values. Just like with attention to manufacturing methods, the trend was that the lower the income the more interest the respondents gave to company values.

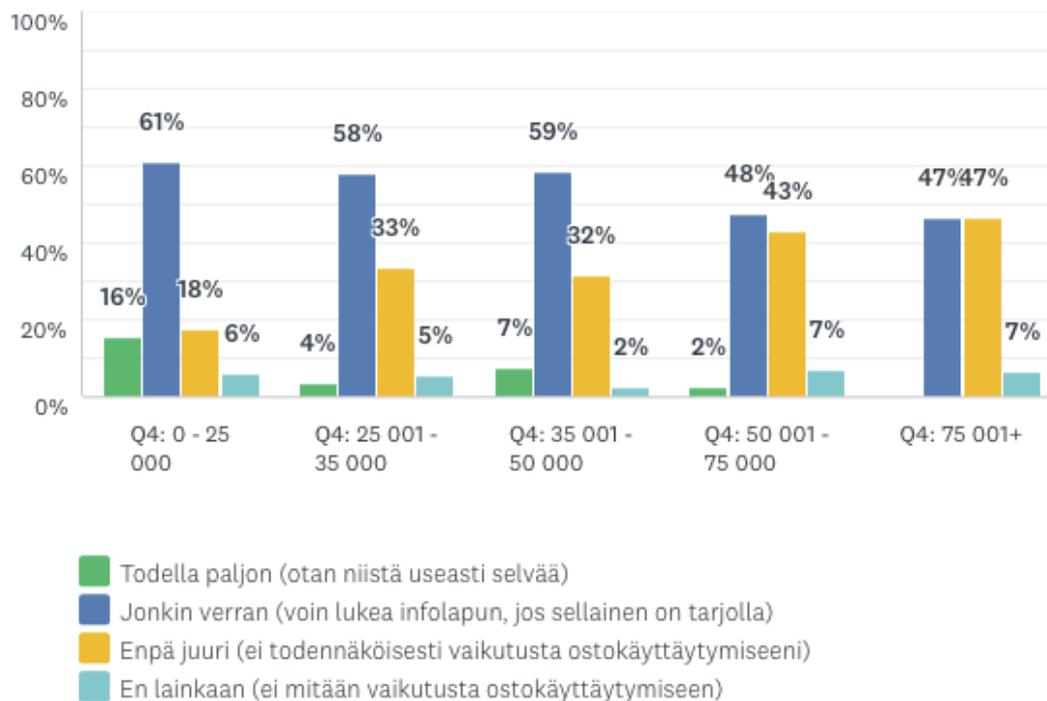


Figure 21. Income, interest towards brand values

There was not that much differences between the value rank of manufacturing methods either. Each group appreciated the most of not using child labor in manufacturing. The second most important factor was the ethical treatment of animals with each group. The next two aspects of manufacturing, the protection of waters from chemicals and the use of recycled materials, seemed to share ranks three and four but changing randomly by group. After those the three remaining aspects were seen in the same way with each group: the use of renewable raw materials, water saving dyeing methods and the least important aspect being the use of organic materials.

The clear majority from each group was willing or possibly willing to pay more for a product that they knew would have been manufactured according to their values. The only group that had a slight dip in numbers was the 75-group. 19% of that group said they would not be willing to pay more. The same numbers from other groups varied between 4-7%. As an overall, with a small margin, more respondents would be willing than maybe willing to pay more.

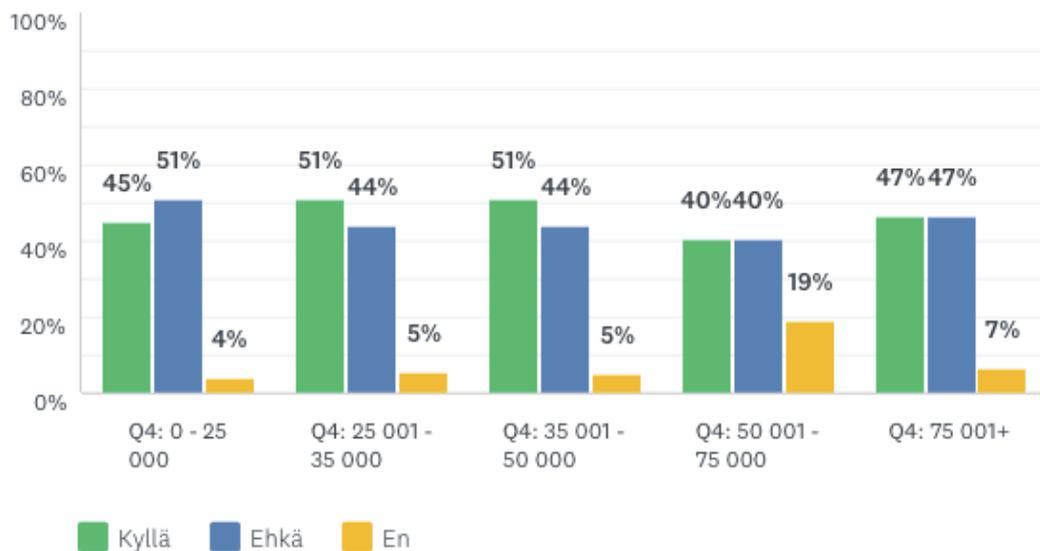


Chart 34. Income, willingness to pay more for a product manufactured according to personal values.

For those who were willing or maybe willing to pay more, there were no great differences in how much they would pay regardless of the income. The common ground seemed to be that almost all groups were more likely to pay even 16-20% than just 0-5% more. The highest percentages per group were: 25-group 11-15%, 35-group 6-10%, 50-group 6-10%, 75-group tie between 6-10% and 11-15%, and 75+-group 6-10%.

The results from the question, where respondents had to give their views on given statements, did not provide great variation between the groups. The majority of each group somewhat agreed that companies generally act according to their values. The only exception in this was group-35 who somewhat disagreed with this statement. Next claim was *green values are just a marketing trick*. This divided each group within themselves as the majority of each group's responses were split between *I somewhat agree* and *I somewhat disagree*. Groups 35 and 75+ seemed to more somewhat agree and other groups somewhat more disagreeing, besides group 25 who had even responses with these two. All groups seemed to somewhat agree with statement that claimed *greenness ends if it inhibits financial growth*. All groups also seemed to somewhat agree with *companies listen to their customers*. A little difference in views could be seen with the statement *manufacturing certificates are only used to raise prices*. All the other groups somewhat disagreed with this, except for the 75+-group who somewhat agreed with this. The result for claim *companies need to take*

environmental factors in manufacturing into a more consideration was quite clear. In general all groups seemed to fully agree. All groups also seemed to fully agree or somewhat agree with *I would like to hear more about my favorite company's values*.

The clear majority from each group said it would affect their the purchasing behavior if companies would bring out more their values and manufacturing methods.

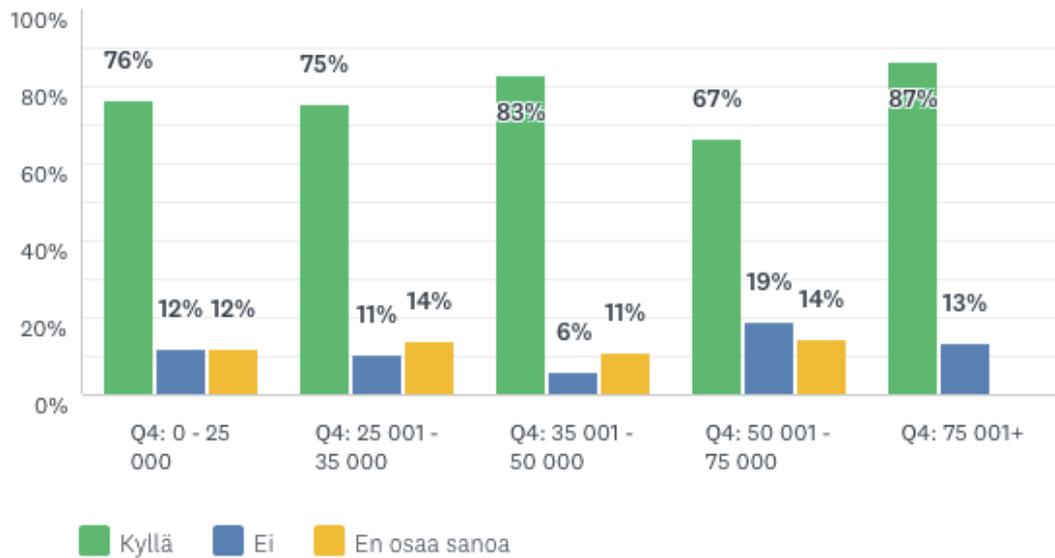


Figure 22. Income, possible effect on buying decision if values and manufacturing methods were known.

5.4.1 Conclusion of income's effect on purchase behavior and brand values

The results show that income does not make a huge difference for the respondents' buying habits. The differences that appeared were quite small. However, people who had higher income made purchases more frequently and therefore had also higher spending. Income does not either change the main motivations to buy a new item. The motivation for all income groups was mainly driven by need instead of want. Also the main criteria that decide the purchase were the same. All groups appreciated quality and cost over other factors. Value given to manufacturing was quite the same, theme being that all living things should not suffer, then direct environmental impact should be avoided and lastly came the ethical manufacturing methods.

The lower income groups seemed to be more interested in green values and what companies are doing. They were also willing to pay more for an ethically manufactured product. Each group thought it would have an effect on their purchase behavior if companies would tell more about their values and manufacturing methods.

Based on this research it can be said that income does not significantly affect purchasing behavior value wise.

6 CONCLUSION

The goals of this thesis were to find out if Finnish outdoor clothing consumers are interested in brand values, what are good values according to the consumers and are willing to pay more for a product that has been ethically manufactured.

The literature reviews on brand values and purchasing behavior and the results of this survey showed that people are interested in green brand values. The results of this survey go quite hand in hand with Haapala & Aavameri's (2008) findings that the majority of consumers would be willing to pay more for an ethically manufactured product. This will only happen if the marketing message is delivered successfully and customers can see the benefits. The chance to communicate brand values is open as the majority of the respondents said they would be interested in hearing more about their favorite company's values and that learning about them would most likely have an effect on their purchase behavior. This could be seen in willingness to pay more for a product manufactured according to personal beliefs. Over all, the respondents agreed that companies should take environmental aspects in manufacturing into a more consideration. This further shows that consumers who participate in outdoor activities care about the environment and companies that use that in their values are on the correct path. After cross-referencing it can be concluded that income, education or gender do not have dramatic effects on how values are perceived, interest towards them and purchases made. However, it needs to be noted that small differences could be seen (for example: lower income groups having higher appreciation for green brand values than higher income groups) but the marginals were so small that in order to verify these findings a bigger sample needs to be gathered or more detailed survey conducted. In general the brand values that consumers appreciate are the ones where the company avoids exploiting people or animals. Environmental considerations come next and raw material usage was the least valued aspect. The results on purchase behavior also support the literature and the author's personal experiences as a sales person. Consumers are primarily driven by need, no matter the gender, income or education. Purchases are most likely made with great consideration. Ethicality, image of the company and the brand itself are the least likely factors to decide the purchase. Quality, price and looks are the most important factors. Brand values alone will not make a sale. However, it could be argued that they can make or break a sale if the customer is on the fence with two otherwise equal products. All in all, consumers are

interested in green brand values and are willing to pay more for them. To support quality products, brands can use their values to build brand loyalty and to create "tribes" within consumers.

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Appendix 1: Research Questions

1. Sukupuoli

- Mies
- Nainen
- En halua kertoa

2. Ikä

- 18-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- 46-50
- 51-55
- 55+
- En halua kertoa

3. Koulutus

- Peruskoulu
- Toisen asteen koulutus
- Korkeakoulu
- Ylempi korkeakoulu
- En halua kertoa

4. Vuositulot

- 0-25 000 euroa
- 25 001-35 000
- 35 001-50 000
- 50 001-75 000

- 75 000+
- En halua kertoa

5. Pääasialliset ulkoiluharrastukset (voit valita kaksi)

- Vaellus
- metsästys
- (maasto)juoksu
- maastopyöräily
- melonta
- kiipeily(vuori-, kallio-, bouldering, etc)
- laskettelu
- hiihto
- retkiluistelu
- surffaus(esim. Lauta-, leija-)
- vesihiihto
- purjehdus
- suunnistus
- ratsastus
- varjo-/riippuliito
- muu(mikä?)

6. Kuinka usein ostat vaatteita ulkoiluharrastuksiisi keskiarvolta vuodessa?

- 0-2
- 3-4
- 5+

7. Kuinka paljon käytät keskimäärin rahaa edellämainittujen ostosten tekemiseen vuodessa?

- 20-200€
- 201-500€

- 501-1000€
- 1001-2000€
- 2000€+

8. Laita seuraavat vaihtoehdot järjestykseen, asioista mitkä saavat sinut ostamaan uuden ulkoiluvaatteen? (1=todennäköisin, 5=vähiten todennäköinen)

- Vaatekaapin päivittäminen
- Uudet mallit
- Tarve (esim. lisäominaisuus verrattuna muihin varusteisiin)
- Rikkoutuneen tai kuluneen tuotteen korvaaminen.
- Tarjoukset (ei varsinaista tarvetta, mutta “nyt kun halvalla saa”)
- Muu. Mikä?

9. Laita seuraavat kriteerit järjestykseen tehdessäsi ostopäätöstä. (1=tärkein, 6=vähiten tärkeä)

- Hinta
- Merkki (tunnistettavuus, tunnettavuus, jne.)
- Laatu (käytetyt materiaalit, testien tulokset, aiemmat kokemukset, jne.)
- Ekologisuus/eettisyys (jos tiedossa / mainittu)
- Ulkonäkö (värit, leikkaus, persoonallisuus, jne.)
- Yrityksen imago (arvot mitä yritys edustaa, yleinen käsitys yrityksestä, yritys uutisissa, jne.)

10. Kuinka paljon kiinnität huomiota tuotteiden valmistusmenetelmiin tehdessäsi ostoksia (materiaalit ja niiden hankinta, eettisyys, eläinten hyvinvointi, jne.)?

- En koskaan
- Joskus
- Lähes jokaisella ostokerralla

11. Kuinka paljon kiinnität huomiota yrityksen arvoihin?

- Todella paljon (otan niistä useasti selvää)
- Jonkin verran (voin lukea infolapun, jos sellainen on tarjolla)
- Enpä juuri (ei todennäköisesti vaikutusta ostokäyttäytymiseeni)
- En lainkaan (ei mitään vaikutusta ostokäyttäytymiseen)

12. Pistä seuraavat valmistukseen liittyvät menetelmät tärkeysjärjestykseen omien arvojesi mukaisesti (1=tärkein, 7=vähiten tärkeä)

- Ei käytetty lapsityövoimaa
- Vettä säästävät värjäysmenetelmät
- Vesistöjen suojelu kemikaaleilta
- Eläimien eettinen kohtelu (esim. Höyhenet vain kuolleilta eläimiltä, huolellinen keriminen, jne.)
- Kierrätettyjen materiaalien käyttö valmistuksessa
- Luomumateriaalien suosiminen
- Uusiutuvien raakamateriaalien suosiminen

13. Olisitko valmis maksamaan enemmän tuotteesta, jonka tietäisit olevan arvojesi mukaisesti valmistettu?

- Kyllä
- Ehkä.
- En

14. Jos vastasit kyllä tai ehkä, niin kuinka paljon enemmän olisit valmis maksamaan?

- 0-5%
- 6-10%
- 11-15%

- 16-20%

- 21-25%

- 26-35%

15. Vastaa seuraaviin väittämiin näkemyksiesi mukaan. (Täysin samaa mieltä – jokseenkin samaa mieltä – en osaa sanoa – jokseenkin eri mieltä - täysin eri mieltä)

Yritykset toimivat yleisesti arvojen mukaisesti

Vihreät arvot ovat vain mainoskikka

Vihreys loppuu, jos se on esteenä yrityksen kasvulle/tuotolle

Yritykset kuuntelevat asiakkaidensa mielipiteitä

Valmistussertifikaatteja käytetään vain hintojen nostamiseen

Yrityksien tulisi ottaa ympäristötekijät paremmin huomioon valmistuksessa

Olisin kiinnostunut kuulemaan enemmän suosikkiyrityksieni arvoista

16. Luuletko että sillä olisi vaikutusta ostopäätöksiisi, jos yritykset toisivat enemmän arvojaan esille tai kertoisivat miten tuotteet ovat valmistettu?

- Kyllä

- Ei

- En osaa sanoa

17. Otan selvää eettisistä valmistusmenetelmistä ja yrityksistä seuraavien kulutustuotteiden osalta.

- Ruoka

- Kosmetiikka

- Juomat

- Pesuaineet (kotitalous)

- Muu _____

- En minkään

18. Rastita kaikki valmistukseen liittyvät standardit, jotka ovat tuttuja sinulle

- Bluesign
- Responsible Down Standard
- Fairtrade
- Oko-tex
- Eco-label
- SAM
- Global Recycle Standard
- Better Cotton Initiative
- Muu _____

19. Tähän voi kirjoittaa mahdollisia ajatuksia aiheesta. Sana vapaa.