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## **CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTIONS FOR BUYING ETHICAL CLOTHING**

Case company: Kure

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## ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis is to find out what factors affect consumer's purchase decision when buying ethical clothing, and how the case company can provide information about the brands' ethics. The research is conducted in order to serve the customer better by understanding what kind of information they are interested in acquiring and how. The thesis is commissioned by Kure, a Finnish design store selling clothing, accessories and home décor. The focus of this thesis is on the purchase of ethical clothing.

The theoretical framework is collected from various books, articles and webpages, and begins by introducing main theory behind consumer behaviour and decision-making process, as well as ethical buying. The theory part continues with discussion about ethical clothing, the slow fashion movement, sustainability, transparency and issues in the fashion industry.

In order to find out about the consumer's buying behaviour and opinions, a quantitative research method was chosen by conducting a structured questionnaire. An electronic survey was used to gather information through Kure's Facebook and brick-and-mortar store.

According to the survey there is a lot of interest towards more ethical options in clothing purchasing. The findings indicate that consumers want information about ethics to be easily available while shopping. More transparency and easily accessible information about brands and their products are required by consumers. The topic is very current and when consumers are becoming more informed and knowledgeable on ethical matters, they can require better practices from companies and push the fashion industry to improve its social and environmental impacts.

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Keywords: ethical buying, ethical clothing, slow fashion, sustainability, consumer behaviour, conscious consumption, transparency

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Slow fashion, or “Fashion Revolution”, is a recently born movement that supports ethical clothing and sustainability in the fashion industry, and is the initial inspiration for this thesis. The goal of slow fashion is to bring transparency to the fashion industry, produce quality products over poorly mass-produced goods and ensure safe working conditions for the workers. All these issues are part of ethical buying, which is a current trend that still needs more recognition in many fields of businesses. (Fashion Revolution 2018a, cited 10.7.2018.)

Ethical clothing considers sustainability in the production, as well as the cloth’s life cycle. Sustainability is a long-term goal for people and companies all around the world, where economic, environmental and social responsibility are considered by not causing any harm to these elements due to bad processes and decisions made. To achieve sustainability and transparency in the fashion industry, not only the companies involved in the fashion industry are responsible for the change for better – the consumers are part of this change as well.

In this thesis consumer’s buying behaviour when buying ethical clothing is explored with a quantitative research by conducting a survey for the customers of the case company, and by using secondary data from books, articles and websites. The research will be done by examining what affects the customer’s purchase decision when buying ethical clothing, and what information customers would like to acquire and how. Together with basic theory of consumer behaviour and the survey, the customers’ views and opinions on the matter can be understood and Kure’s service can be improved accordingly.

The first chapter introduces the topic and its purpose and objectives, the research question and the case company. The theoretical part of the thesis starts in the second chapter by introducing main theory behind consumer behaviour and decision-making process, as well as ethical buying of clothing. Moreover, consumer buying behaviour of clothing in Finland is discussed in chapter two to gain some knowledge of the situation of the markets in the target country. The theory part continues with discussion about ethical clothing, the slow fashion movement, sustainability, transparency and issues in the fashion industry.

The third chapter describes the research methodology used in this thesis along with discussion on reliability and validity of the work, following the data collecting process and the analysis of the collected data. The last chapter discusses the research conclusions and instructions for the case company are arranged in a easy-to-read table.

## **1.1 Research questions and purpose of the study**

The aim of the research is to find out what affects the consumer's purchase decision when shopping clothing in Kure. The objective is to find insight of customers buying behaviour and decision making in the process of buying ethical clothing in order to find out how ethicality affects their purchase decision. At the same time the objective is to bring awareness of ethical buying and sustainable fashion to the publics.

Since sustainability of the clothing and transparency of the company play a big role in buying ethical clothing, also these factors are studied to meet the customers' ideal standards. Desirably the information gained from the research gives a perception of the consumer's needs in a way that the commissioner can serve the customer better by offering the right service and information to the customer.

The main research questions of the study are:

**Q1. What affects the buyer's purchase decision when buying ethical clothing?**

**Q2. How can the case company help the customer to gain information about the ethicality of the clothing?**

A quantitative research method is used by conducting a survey for the customers of Kure to find out which aspects affect their purchase decision when taken ethical buying into account. An electric questionnaire form is used to gather information directly from the consumers. The method and the data collecting process is discussed in chapter 4.

## 1.2 Case company – Kure

Kure was founded in 2017 by students of Oulu University of Applied Sciences in Terwa Academy, a degree program of entrepreneurship. The goal of Kure is to bring Finnish design and Finnish brands to everyone and to offer customers ethically and ecologically produced products. Kure sells Finnish design products, which include clothing, accessories and a few home décor items consisting of 50 different Finnish brands from all around the country. In this thesis only the clothing aspect of the company is taken into consideration. (Santaniemi, e-mail message 3.5.2019.)

The idea of Kure is to rent a sales space to brands at a fixed monthly price. Some of the selection is permanent and some changes from time to time. Choosing a new brand to Kure's selection is based on the transparency of the production process and ethical and ecological qualities of the product, which are also important values of the company. A new brand also has to fit with the existing range of products. (Santaniemi, e-mail message 3.5.2019.)

For Kure the concept of slow fashion and sustainability are not unknown. Kure has taken part in the Fashion Revolution campaign #whomademyclothes in 2018 on their Instagram account @kureoulu (Figure 1). More information about this campaign can be found in chapter 3. (Instagram 2018, cited 17.9.2018.)

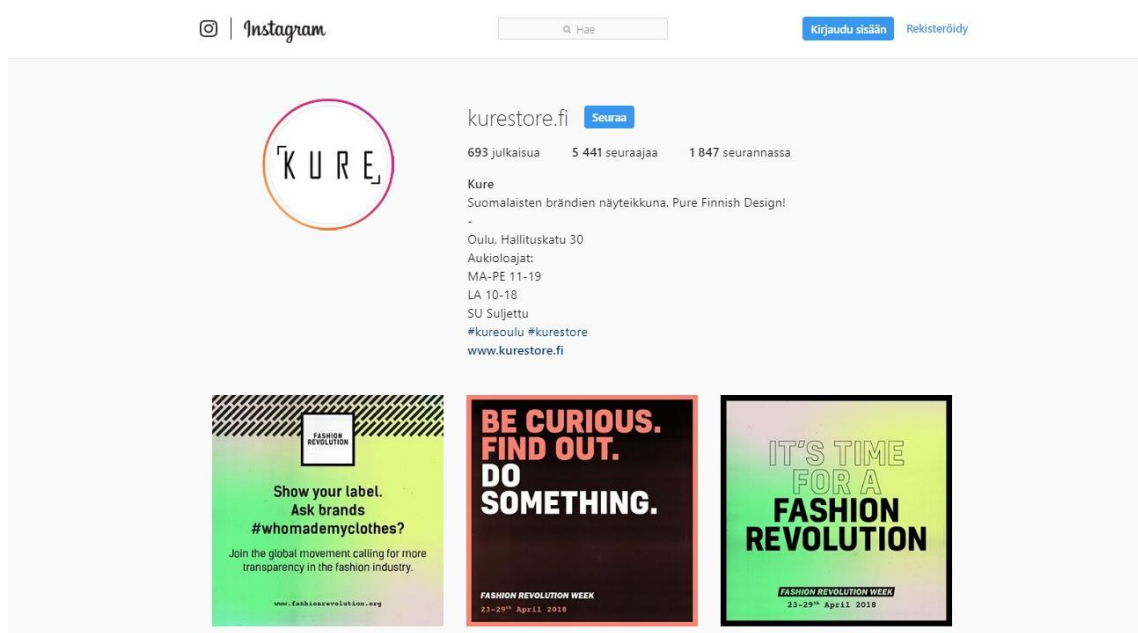


FIGURE 1. Three posts on KURE's Instagram account about the Fashion Revolution. (Instagram, 2019, cited 5.5.2019.)

## 2 CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour is the study of consumers' process of purchase, use and disposal of goods and services. It is an ongoing process that is not limited to the moment the customer makes the actual purchase (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard 2002. 6). When building a relationship with the consumer, it is essentially important to understand the concept of buyer behaviour (Baker 2000. 48). Consumer behaviour studies how to satisfy the consumer's needs and wants, which are influenced by cultural, social, psychological and personal factors (Table 1). (Kotler, Keller, Brady, & Goodman 2009, 224, 260.)

### 2.1 Influencing factors in buyer behaviour

The characteristics influencing buyer behaviour are cultural, social, personal and psychological factors (Table 1). There is no control over these factors by marketers, but it is important for them to understand them and take them into consideration in their efforts. These four aspects will be discussed separately in more detail in this chapter. (Karunakaran 2008, 59.)

TABLE 1. Factors that influence the buying behaviour of consumers. (Karunakaran 2008, 60.)

1. Cultural	2. Social	3. Personal	4. Psychological
- Culture	- Reference group	- Age and life cycle stage	- Motivation
- Subculture	- Family	- Occupation	- Perception
- Social Class	- Roles and status	- Economic situation	- Learning beliefs and attitudes
		- Personality and self-concept	
		- Lifestyle and values	



### **2.1.1 Cultural**

Cultural factors are the fundamental influences on a consumer's behaviour and values (Kotler et al. 2009. 224). Solomon et al. (2002. 442) explains culture as "the accumulation of shared meanings, rituals, norms and traditions among the members of an organization or society." From a company's view, these members are the target customer group. Culture affects both abstract and material aspects of the society, such as values and beliefs or food and clothes. When a group of people within a culture form more specific needs and beliefs, a subculture is born. These could be formed for example from nationality groups, geographic regions or communities that share similar lifestyles. (Kotler et al. 2009. 224.)

Within the society, there are social divisions called social classes, that are hierarchical classes that tend to share the same values and interests. These classes could be identified by for example education, occupation, income or shared values. Individuals within a social class tend to share similar preference in products or services, such as clothing, home decoration or free-time activities. (Kotler et al. 2009. 227.)

### **2.1.2 Social**

Consumer's buying behaviour is influenced by three social factors – reference group, family, and social roles and statuses. People want to belong to groups and fit in, and this is the main motivation to many purchases. Product preferences are formed by other group members and close influencers. (Solomon et al. 2002, 94. 303.)

Reference groups can be any external influencers, from close friends to cultural figures (Solomon et al. 2002, 303). Reference groups can be primary groups (for example family, friends and co-workers) and secondary groups (for example religious, professional and trade union groups). Usually the consumer wants to be consistent with the reference group's expectations, which consequently modifies their consumption behaviour (Solomon et al. 2002, 306). According to Kotler et al. (2009, 229-230) there are three ways that reference groups affect the person's attitudes and behaviour, and therefore their product and brand choices:

- Exposure to new behaviour and lifestyle
- Influence on attitudes and self-concept

- Pressure to be unified with the group's beliefs and actions (conformity).

The most influencing reference group is one's family. The family of orientation (parents and siblings) affect the consumer's religious, political and economic orientation. One's parents have a surprisingly vast influence on the consumer's preference in areas like education, food, drinking and driving or bank choice. The family of procreation (one's spouse and children) affect the buying behaviour more directly, especially due to children's demands, that affect what the parents buy for food, entertainment, clothing, toys and even the choice of the family car. (Kotler et al. 2009, 229-230.)

### **2.1.3 Personal**

Personal characteristics play a role in consumer's decision making, particularly the person's age, stage in life cycle, occupation, economic circumstances, personality, self-concept, lifestyle and values (Karunakaran 2008, 61).

Consumption changes in different stages of life, for example single people, married couples, couples with children, single parents and elderly people all have different needs, wants and demands in life. A person's preferences change at different ages and stages of family life cycle. Also changes in life like illness, moving or career change may change the behaviour of the consumer. (Karunakaran 2008, 61; Kotler et al. 2009, 230.)

Occupation and economic circumstances affect the product choices that the consumers purchase. A salesperson would buy clothes and comfortable shoes for work, whereas the president of a company would buy suits and air travel tickets. The choice of product is in connection with economic situations, that include level of income, savings, debts, loans and attitudes towards use of money. (Kotler et al. 2009. 231.)

Each person has their own personal characteristics, that are a set of personal traits and self-concept. Many brands try to market themselves with a specific trait that matches with the target audience, since consumers tend to go for the brands that match with their personality and how they see themselves (actual self-concept), how they would like to see themselves (ideal self-concept) and how they think others see them (other's self-concept). (Kotler et al. 2009, 231.)

The way of living is expressed in the activities, interests and opinions of an individual, and these patterns form his or her lifestyle. Individuals from the same culture, occupation or for example social group have their own lifestyle, that can vary from the lifestyles of people in the same group (Karunakaran 2008, 61). Marketers are targeting lifestyle groups by finding a relationship between their product and a lifestyle group. One of the latest trends is the lifestyle of health and sustainability – consumers who seek for sustainably produced goods. These ethical consumers worry about the environment and are willing to spend money on alternative products including for instance organic clothing and food. (Kotler et al. 2009, 232-233.)

The decisions made by consumers are also influenced by their core values. Values are a system of beliefs that are a base for behaviour and attitudes. The set of values a person possesses have an important role in their consumption behaviour, since many products are purchased in the hope of reaching a goal related to one's values. Core values are a set of deeper, basic values that determine the choices made by people, and are different from beliefs and attitudes. For example. two consumers might believe in the same behaviour (vegetarianism) but have two different values behind the behaviour (animal activism vs. health benefits). These characteristics are not only personal, but psychological, which will be discussed next. (Kotler et al. 2009, 236; Solomon et al. 2002, 109)

#### **2.1.4 Psychological**

Psychological factors influencing buyer behaviour include characteristics such as motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes (Karunakaran 2008, 62). When the consumer's consciousness is stimulated by marketing efforts and the environment, the consumer's psychological processes together with the consumer's characteristics result in a decision process. (Kotler et al. 2009, 237.)

For the product to meet the needs and wants of the consumers, it is important to find out what the motives of the consumers are. These motives can be driven by the values of the consumer, that give a meaning to the product. The product can be seen as a tool to achieve a certain goal that is linked to a desired value, such as freedom. Needs are born from psychological state of tension, such as hunger, thirst or discomfort (biogenic tension) or for example from the need for belonging

or recognition (psychogenic) (Kotler et al. 2009, 237). When a desired need is aroused enough, the tension drives the consumer to eliminate the need, and thus motivation is born. (Solomon et al. 2002, 93-94. 120.)

The consumer is ready to act once motivation has arisen, but the way the consumer acts depends on her perception of the situation. Perception is the process by which information and stimuli is received, selected, organised and interpreted. People perceive the same stimuli in different ways, for example one might find a talkative salesperson aggressive, but one might find him very helpful. People are more drawn to stimuli that is related to their current situation, or if the stimuli was anticipated or when the stimuli is big in relation to the normal size of it. The information might also be interpreted differently by the consumer than what was originally intended. People also tend to forget what they have learnt and are more likely to remember things that endorse their own attitudes and beliefs. (Kotler et al. 2009, 239-240.)

Consumers learn from their actions, and as a result their buying behaviour changes due to the experience gained. Learning comes from the interaction of drives, stimuli, cues, responses and reinforcement. Drive is an internal stimulus that drives action. Cues determine when, where and how the consumer responds to the drive. If the consumer's experience with a certain clothes brand has been rewarding, their response to the brand's clothes is positively reinforced. Next time the consumer buys clothes, he goes back to the same brand assuming all their clothes are good by generalising the response to similar stimuli. As a result, strong drives, motivating cues and positive reinforcement can be used to build product demand. (Kotler et al. 2009, 240-241.)

Lastly, the consumer's beliefs and attitudes have an impact on the consumer's buying behaviour. One's beliefs can be based on knowledge, opinion or faith in something. To affect the consumer's purchase behaviour, brand and product images are based on the consumer's beliefs. Products are also matched to consumers' attitudes, since it is more difficult to change one's attitude than trying to associate the product with the same attitude. Attitudes are the positive and negative feelings and tendencies towards certain things or products. (Karunakaran 2008, 63.)

The consumer's final product decision is affected by a complicated mixture of all the attributes related to cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. Since many of the factors cannot be changed, they are useful for the marketers in attracting consumer response and in identifying probable customers. (Karunakaran 2008, 64.)

## 2.2 Decision making process

Consumer's purchase decision starts with recognising a problem. After recognizing the need for a product, the consumer starts a process of collecting information, finding and weighting the alternatives, and eventually to choosing from the possible options and finally to making a decision, that follows an evaluation of the outcome. The steps of consumer's decision-making process can be viewed in Figure 2 as an overview. Not all purchase decisions take conscious steps, and the decision might come automatically. On the other hand, some purchase decisions take a long process of information searching and identifying alternatives before a purchase is finally done. (Solomon et al. 2002, 235, 261.)

The first step of the consumer decision making process is *problem recognition*, that arises when the consumer finds a difference in their current state and the desired state. For example, the consumer finds the weather getting too cold and has the need for a new, warmer cardigan to keep him warm. Now he has a problem to be solved, and the next step he takes is *information search* – gathering relevant information for making a reasonable decision. (Solomon et al. 2002, 238, 340, 261.)

Collecting information includes: what data is required, where to find this data and how to acquire it (Bohren 2018, cited 20.8.2018). The sources of information contain both internal and external search. Each individual has gained previous experience about variety of products by living in a consumer culture. When one needs to make a purchase decision, he goes through his internal information to find useful data for making the best decision. Most of the time internal search is not sufficient enough and will be enhanced with external search. External data can be attained from friends, advertisements and observations. (Solomon et al. 2002, 241.)

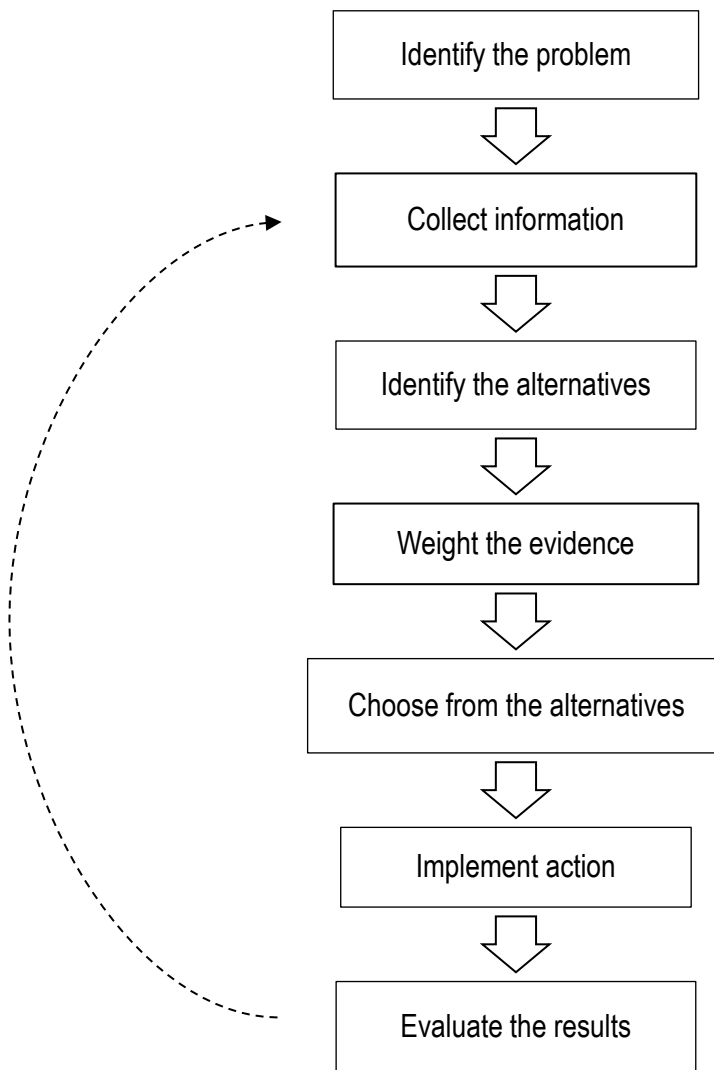


FIGURE 2. Overview of the decision-making process. (Bohren 2018, cited 20.8.2018.)

To continue the previous example, the consumer uses his previous experience to recall his favourite clothing brands. In addition to his own experience, a salesperson in the shop provides him with external information, that give the consumer new alternative choices. He starts *evaluating the alternatives* according to the information obtained to meet his personal needs. He uses two types of information in the evaluation: list of the brands he is planning to buy, and the criteria he has for the product. In this example, the criteria could be price, material, colours or reputation of the brand. After weighting the options, the consumer comes to a conclusion and makes his *purchase decision*. (Solomon et al. 2002, 249.; Kumra 2007, 283)

After the purchase has been made, it is time to *evaluate the results*. The consumer will see how the product has met his perception and if the product has made him satisfied. The knowledge gained about the product will help the consumer with forthcoming decision-making. If the consumer

is dissatisfied with the product, it is unlikely for him to return to the same brand and will change to a different one instead. This is how the cycle of decision-making goes around, and each time the consumer has gained new knowledge to help him with the process. (Kumra 2007, 290-291.)

## **2.3 Ethical buying**

Ethical buying, which can also be expressed as “conscious consumption” or “ethical fashion consumption” in some sources, is an action of making conscious choices when purchasing products, such as favouring fair-trade products or environmentally friendly goods (Carrigan, McEachern & Szmigin 2009, cited 26.7.2018). Ethical Fashion Forum defines ethical fashion consumption as “the practice of consuming such clothing that is designed, sourced and manufactured in a way that maximizes benefits to people and communities while minimizing the negative impact on the environment” (Berberyan, Friedman & Jastram 2018, chapter 2.4). In this thesis ethical buying refers to being aware of the ethical issues in the fashion industry, such as environmental impact, social impact and the lifecycle of the clothes, and making purchase decisions with these issues in mind, and proactively changing one’s purchase behaviour to consume less and/or buy more sustainable garments (Sumner 2018, chapter 2.3).

The activity of ethical buying can additionally include avoiding and boycotting specific companies or products, that do not meet the values of the consumer. This is when the consumers turn into political consumers, and they use their buying power to support companies that match with their own values and boycott the companies that do not. A negative experience can trigger a group of people to a boycott, which means that a product from a certain company or country is discouraged to consume. Although, usually not enough people join a boycott for them to be effective. (Carrigan et al. 2009, cited 26.7.2018; Solomon et al. 2002, 545, 548.)

Another way that consumer’s buying behaviour can change is simplifying one’s life. There are various levels and varieties in simplifying consumption, from anti-consumerism to more casual and occasional ethical choice-makers. McDonald et al. (2006) proposes that most attention in empirical work should be towards the individuals that are not on the extreme end of the spectrum. The extremists voluntarily simplify their lives and find non-materialistic sources for their satisfaction and limit their expenditures to the minimum. This extreme lifestyle might not fit to the majority of people, but a growing number of people are acquiring aspects from this lifestyle. These individuals strive

to lower their consumption levels and find some elements of voluntary simplifying fit to their lifestyle, yet do not want to commit fully to anti-consumerism. (Carrigan et al. 2009, cited 26.7.2018.)

Consumers are increasingly showing their concern about the effect of their buying decisions and indicating interest on consuming ethical fashion. However, consumers do not show as much change in their habits of purchasing as they tend to express, even though there seems to be an increase in motivation to consume more ethically. This “attitude-behaviour gap” indicates that intention of ethical purchase behaviour does not transfer well to action when making the purchase. Situational constraints and more beneficial opportunities might interfere the intention of buying ethically. (Berberyan et al. 2018, chapter 2.4.)

Factors influencing consumer’s decision-making process consists of product-related and consumer-related factors. According to Berberyan et al. (2018, chapter 2.4), the most important product-related factors in buying ethical clothing are:

- *Price* - The price of a product has a big impact on making a purchase decision, and it often outweighs ethical factors, even though readiness to consume more ethically has been expressed by consumers.
- *Quality* - Many ethically produced clothing has a higher price, and therefore it is crucial that the quality also matches the consumer’s expectations and is not neglected by focusing on ethical business behaviour.
- *Style of the garment* - Essentially clothing is used for protection and warmth, but it has also become a cultural indicator and is part of the construction of self-identity and expression of creativity, as well as socio-economic status (Gibson & Stanes 2011, 170-171). Fashion is used to express an individual’s personal identity, and if fashionable ethical clothing is not available, consumers usually choose a more fashionable alternative, and therefore the style of the garment is an important factor.
- *Information* - Robert E. Carter, a professor at the University of Louisville, states in his research that the intention of avoiding unethical purchases is lost if the consumer does not understand the garment’s origins. This happens when enough information is not provided about the garment. Carter claims that when information about the ethics are provided, consumers are ready to pay more for the product.
- *Availability of the clothing* - Consumer’s attitude-behaviour gap is also affected by the availability of ethical clothing. When there is not enough options and availability, it is more inconvenient to purchase ethical clothing and more effort is needed to find those garments.



The most important consumer-related factors in buying ethical clothing according to Berberyan et al. (2018, chapter 2.4) are:

- *Social desirability* - Social desirability is a substantial factor impacting the attitude-behaviour gap, since consumers often answer surveys by choosing a more socially acceptable option, and consequently misrepresenting the actual behaviour.
- *Subjective and social norms* - Subjective and social norms also cause social pressure to behave in a “socially acceptable” way. Consumers are more likely to purchase products that their reference group views as good or acceptable. It is suggested that this is especially relevant factor in fashion purchases, as fashion and clothing express one’s social status and is part of gaining acceptance from peers.
- *Personal interest and relevance* - Personal interest and relevance include the belief that the individual’s lifestyle, value and self-image are reflected in certain type of behaviour. This theory implies that for consumers to care about ethics, it has to be relevant to their values, and reflect their lifestyle and self-image.
- *Values* - Personal values are not easy to change, and since they guide the consumer’s behaviour, values are strongly connected to ethical decisions. If an individual defines their identity and values to be reflected in ethical buying behaviour, a purchase of a certain brand with similar values confirms their desired identity.
- *Habits* - Consumers are prone to repeating their habits, which can prevent consumers from changing their consumption patterns to be more ethical. For example, The European Clothing Action Plan (discussed more in chapter 3.2.4) is trying to change young consumers’ purchasing behaviour to be more ethical before they have developed strong purchasing habits (European Clothing Action Plan 2018, cited 24.11.2018).
- *Perceived authenticity* - Another hindrance on ethical buying is the perceived authenticity of companies. Some consumers are sceptical of the claims that companies make about their ethical practices believing that it is merely a marketing strategy, and these consumers want clear definitions, consistent logic and evidence of these claims. Consumers want honesty from brands instead of “greenwashing”, which is the act of promoting and marketing a product to seem like an eco-friendly choice, but actually not being one (Ferrell & Ferrell 2009, Avoiding greenwashing).
- *Convenience* - Inconvenience is another barrier in ethical buying. In many cases shopping is a way to have fun and break a daily routine. Searching for information about the ethicality

of a product requires extra time and energy, and the consumer does not want to go through the effort of looking into the ethical factors of the garment.

## **2.4 Consumption of clothing in Finland**

In 2017 the sales of Finnish clothing grew by 5%, including both domestic and overseas sales. According to Suomen Tekstiili & Muoti (2017, 19), 4.1 billion euros was used on clothing in Finland on 2017, mostly by women. Even though money spent on clothing has increased, its percentage of all expenditures has reduced. In 2017 Finnish people spent 81 euros more on clothing than people in Europe on average, yet compared to other northern countries and Italy, Finnish people spend less money on clothing (TMA ry 2018, cited 21.4.2019).

In 2018 the number of garments Finnish people bought increased by 1,7%, but sales in Euros decreased by 0,7%. This shows that Finnish people buy more but with cheaper prices, taking advantage of seasonal sales, online shopping and increased competition that has taken prices down. Interestingly, the portion of sustainable and recycled materials have increased for example in Stockmann, and customers are searching for information about these materials, and it has become a trend to consume less and buy second-hand items. (Pantzar 2019. cited 21.4.2019.)

The number one clothing retailer at the moment in Finland is Prisma, and the second K-Citymarket (Pölkki 2018, cited 19.10.2018). Finnish people are favouring cheap clothing, that markets are offering easily while people go grocery shopping. According to a research, women over 50 years old are the biggest consumers of market clothing, men over 50 years old being the second. The purchase of market clothing grows as the age goes higher. Young women (under 35 years old) prefer buying clothes from international fashion retailers, H&M being the first. These statistics show that Finnish people are choosing cheap and easily accessed clothing, and ethical buying is still practiced by the minority of people. (Pölkki 2018, cited 19.10.2018.)

### **3 ETHICAL FASHION**

Many consumers have raised concerns towards environmental issues created due to overconsuming lifestyles. The consumption patterns of these short-sighted consumers have both direct and indirect impact on problems like reduced energy sources, pollution and other environmental problems. First the problem was confronted by encouraging recycling, but later on other environmental impacts of the production cycle were raised. In ethical fashion issues like fair trade, ethical fashion design, sustainable production, working conditions and environmental impacts are taken into consideration to minimize the harm to society and the environment. (Solomon et al. 2002, 541; Tsoleva 2019, cited 26.5.2019.)

In this chapter the birth and meaning of the slow fashion movement is discussed along with a review on sustainability and transparency, which are the core subjects that must be recognised in the fashion industry in order to improve it. Also, the problems in the fashion industry are discussed to understand why the topic is so important and changes in the industry must happen.

#### **3.1 Slow fashion movement**

Slow fashion is a new movement that promotes sustainable, ethical and eco-friendly practices in the fashion industry by emphasizing quality and sustainability in their production (Jung & Jin 2016, 410-412). The movement encourages to slow down and take time to produce quality over quantity, to give value to the product and take environment and fair labour into consideration at the same time. The approach aims to make designers, retailers and consumers more aware of the industry's impact on the workers and the ecosystem by using eco-friendly practices. (Fletcher 2007, cited 17.5.2018). (Modafirma 2018, cited 16.10.2018.)

Slow fashion is an alternative to fast fashion and an eco-friendly way to produce and consume clothing. Fast fashion refers to mass production of clothes and fashion products quickly and with low prices, often neglecting ethics (Azevedo 2018, cited 17.5.2018; Fletcher 2007, cited 17.5.2018). Fast fashion is discussed more in chapter 3.4. On contrary to fast fashion, in slow fashion the cloth is designed to last long in use, produced ethically or even locally, and has lower impact on the environment. Slow fashion garments can also use recycled materials and are often eco-labelled

(see chapter 3.5). Sustainability also has a big role in slow fashion, but it can be difficult to address due to poor transparency in the industry. (Niinimäki 2010.)

Ethical and eco-friendly practices in the fashion industry cover the fabric the cloth is made of as well as the practices used in the production. Making of eco-friendly fabric includes making sure that the practices like growing cotton for the fabric, dying the fabric, and how the wastewater is handled are managed safely without harming the nature and workers. Safe working conditions, fair wage, transparency of the company and quality of the clothing are also included in these practices, as well as how the company offers to recycle the customer's old clothing or fixing a broken garment. (Webster 2017, cited 1.11.2018.)

Fashion Revolution is a worldwide, non-profit organization that re-examines the clothing industry's practices and raises awareness of the issues of the industry by promoting the movement of slow fashion. The aim of the revolution is to encourage change in the fashion industry and help people to realize they have the power to make more ethical and sustainable choices. Fashion Revolution started when the Rana Plaza clothing factory collapsed in Bangladesh on 24th of April 2013 (Hoskins 2015, cited 10.7.2018). The factory floors were built without a permit on top of shops and offices, ending up to a disaster that killed 1134 people and injuring even more (Manik & Yardley 2013, cited 10.7.2018.). The incident encouraged the Fashion Revolution Movement to be created by two fashion designers, Carry Somers and Orsola de Castro (Luxiders 2018, cited 15.11.2018). (Fashion Revolution 2018a, cited 10.7.2018).

Annually on the anniversary of the incident, the movement has a Fashion Revolution week campaign #whomademyclothes, encouraging companies to show transparency in their supply chain by using the hashtag #imadeyourclothes (Korva 2018, cited 11.7.2018). The aim of the campaign is to encourage the consumers to use their power to demand better transparency from the retailers (Fashion Revolution 2018b, cited 15.7.2018). The case company of this study, Kure, also took part in the campaign as was seen in Figure 1. In addition to public campaigns, Fashion Revolution has Fashion Revolution teams in 90 countries including Finland, and mostly these teams are formed by volunteers. The organization gives tools and ideas for the teams to work independently and spread their knowledge to for example schools and the government. (Luxiders 2018, cited 15.11.2018).

## **3.2 Sustainability**

Sustainability can be understood in various ways and from different angles depending on the concept – environmental, economic and social (Henninger, Alevizou, Goworek & Ryding 2017, 3). In this chapter the meaning of sustainability regarding this thesis will be explained and clarified.

The concept of sustainability originates all the way from the 1960's, when impact of consumerism on natural environment began to be a more recognised concern. In the recent years pressure from the consumers' demand for sustainable and environmentally friendly options have encouraged more retailers to promote sustainability, and the change has been quite dramatic. Sustainability has become more of a core operation than an additional initiative. (Henninger et al. 2017. 3-4.)

According to the UN Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, sustainable development is defined as meeting the current needs without forcing the future generation to compromise from their needs due to present choices made (UN Documents 1987, cited 26.7.2018). The core idea of sustainability is the Earth's biophysical environment, especially the use and loss of natural resources (Portney 2015, 4). The three vital elements taken into consideration in the triple bottom line of sustainability are economic, environmental and social responsibility, and the sustainability of each should be considered without surpassing each other. (Barbara I Gongini 2017, cited 25.7.2018; Portney 2015, 16.)

### **3.2.1 Environmental Sustainability**

Environmental sustainability includes the maintenance of natural resources to an optimum state for remaining the ability to support human life and well-being. This means that environmental resources should be used only to the extent that it does not harm the nature. (Portney 2015, 9.)

Mass production made fast expansion of businesses possible, causing the overconsumption of Earth's resources and minerals, that lead to health problems, bad climate conditions and shifts in ecological balance. The amount of greenhouse gases in the air is increased by industrialization, causing climate change that comes with serious changes in weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis. Diseases in the water and air spread fast due to unhealthy living conditions. People's health is affected by the water and food consumed, as well as the air and soil. Therefore, it is crucially

important to make sure the water is drinkable, harmful chemicals are not used in production of food and clothing, and emissions and waste are kept to a minimum. (Environmental Professionals Network 2014, cited 17.10.2018.)

### **3.2.2 Economic Sustainability**

Economic sustainability means that economic growth should not suppress environmental well-being, and there is a limit in the economic growth that natural sources can support. The goal of economic growth is to satisfy human needs, but this should be done in a sustainable way without harming natural resources. Economic growth cannot exist without the ecosystem, such as natural resources, land and labour. These resources must be managed in order to have sustainable economic growth without jeopardising the availability of natural resources from future generations. (Portney 2015, 16; Grimsley 2018, cited 18.10.2018.)

Economic activities cause harm to environment for example by polluting the air, water and land, by making permanent changes to the landscape and weakening of natural resources. Health problems caused by pollution decrease the quality of life of the people, and if the ecosystem fails, people cannot live without it. (Grimsley 2018, cited 18.10.2018.)

### **3.2.3 Social Sustainability**

Managing the impacts of businesses on people is referred to as social sustainability. This includes the customers, employees, workers in the value chain and local communities. Social sustainability involves taking care of education and health of the people, as well as human rights, such as gender equality, women's empowerment, labour rights or impacts on poverty. Everyone should be offered a basic standard of living, social protection and a clean, healthy living environment. (United Nations, Global Compact 2018, cited 19.10.2018; UN Environment 2015, cited 20.10.2018.)

### **3.2.4 Sustainability in the Fashion Industry**

Sustainability issues in the fashion industry have lifted their heads in the media every now and then mainly due to negative reasons, like environmental pollution, campaigns against the use of fur,

labour issues and waste from clothing. And it is not a surprise – the fashion industry is the second most polluting global industry. In order to improve sustainability in the fashion industry, clothes should be produced and designed in a way that protects the world for future generations, along with ensuring safe working conditions for the workers (Barbara I Gongini 2017, cited 25.7.2018). (Henninger, Alevizou, Goworek & Ryding 2017, 3-4.)

Joergens (2006, 361) described sustainable fashion as following: “Fashionable clothes that incorporate fair trade principles with sweatshop-free labour conditions while not harming the environment or workers by using biodegradable and organic cotton.” In contrast to that, the definition has changed to a more flexible form by Goworek et al. (2012, 938): Clothing, which incorporates one or more aspects of social or environmental sustainability, such as Fair-Trade manufacturing or fabrics containing organic-grown raw material.” In the fast fashion sector, the concept of ethics and sustainability seems to lean more towards the flexible definition, and these companies are not truly in the spectrum of ethical clothing companies even though these fast fashion retailers have their own sustainability policies. (Henninger et al. 2017, 14.)

Sustainable clothing takes economic, environmental and social issues into consideration starting from the material used in the clothing, to safe working conditions, employee rights and fair prices, and all the way to recycling and minimizing waste throughout the supply chain (Barbara I Gongini 2017, cited 25.7.2018.) Development of sustainably produced fibres has been a popular topic in the recent years and is one of the most recommended ways to improve the sustainability of clothing. Yet, a rather small amount of the fibres in the current markets are made from natural plant resources. Preferably, the materials used in the garments would be made from natural fibres like cotton, silk, linen, hemp and wool, instead of synthetic ones like polyester or nylon. These synthetic fibres are made with fossil fuels and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are nearly three times higher in the production of polyester than in the production of cotton. Therefore, organic cotton is a good eco-friendly option, but the production still requires a lot of water. Fibres like hemp and linen use less water and are a better alternative to cotton. There are also fibres that are derived from natural materials, like bamboo, but are not so eco-friendly, since a lot of harmful chemicals have been used to soften the fibre. Fibres can also be recycled but repairing and buying second-hand clothing is a less energy intensive option. (Gibson & Stanes 2011, 176-177; Webster 2017, cited 1.11.2018.)

In addition to the production process and use of natural materials and renewable energy sources, sustainability in fashion involves the way people purchase clothing (Webster 2017, cited

1.11.2018). This includes for example fixing broken clothing, buying long-lasting and timeless garments or purchasing second-hand clothing (in charity shops, flea-markets and online auctions). The energy required to produce a new product is about 10 to 20 times more than sorting and reselling second-hand clothing. Therefore, sustainability is not only the responsibility of the producer of the garments, but the consumers themselves. A less apparent option to be more ethical in fashion shopping is to choose long-lasting and timeless pieces that will not be “out of style” quickly. This reduces the consumption of clothing and environmental burden, since new pieces of garments are purchased less frequently. (Gibson & Stanes 2011, 176-177)

Shipping and distribution require the packaging of goods, which on its own already contributes to the creation of waste (Webster 2017, cited 1.11.2018). There is a growing pressure on companies to decrease the use of plastic, and for example the EU commission has banned some plastic products in 2018, and disposable plastics may be banned in the EU in the future. Now companies are looking for alternative, more sustainable options to package their products, such as recycled materials, biodegradable and bioderived plastics (Vella 2018, cited 3.11.2018). (Tikkanen 2018, cited 3.11.2018.)

The European Union is supporting a project called The European Clothing Action Plan (ECAP) with its EU LIFE funding to encourage sustainability in the clothing industry. The project's focus is on the supply chain and waste reduction and recycling of the clothing. The aim of the project is to stop over 90 000 tonnes of textile waste from ending up to the landfill by 2019. Eleven countries have signed up for the plan, including Finland (European Commission 2018, cited 24.11.2018). The project is also encouraging to use recycled textile fibres and make long-lasting garments. In addition to helping the cities in Europe to increase their recycling rates and supporting brands and retailers to acquire more sustainable ways, the project is also trying to change the consumer's habits with campaigns. The target is young consumers, who are still developing their purchasing habits. (European Clothing Action Plan 2018, cited 24.11.2018.)

One good example of taking the initiative to reduce textile waste comes from the French government. Their plan is to ban fashion companies from disposing unsold fashion items. The fashion industry tends to have a very harmful culture of throwing away unsold clothes, and the government wants to stop this practice by making it compulsory for the fashion companies to repurpose the clothing for example by giving them to charity. (Mowbray 2018, cited 24.11.2018.)



In Finland, the recycling of clothing has mainly been taking old clothes to charities or discharging them to the mixed waste. According to a research by TEXJÄTE in 2015, 71.5 million kilograms of textile waste was generated in Finland. 80% of that textile waste was reused for energy, but the rest of it ended up in the landfill. Textile waste could be recycled more efficiently by reusing it as raw material for new products before it ends up being used for energy production. (Talouselämä 2017, cited 22.9.2018.)

Most of the textile waste in Finland is burned with mixed waste, but there are also some companies repurposing textile waste, or selling them second-hand, but the portion is very small. According to the development project manager of Helsinki Reuse Centre, about 50–80 percent of donated clothing are not sellable in Finland. Most of the clothes go to waste, but some of it is also sent abroad to third parties, who repurpose the textile waste. Problem with this is, that the Reuse Centre cannot be sure what happens to the textile abroad and if it is recycled properly. (Roivainen 2017, cited 24.11.2018.)

Recycling has been a hot topic recently after a British clothing brand was caught burning unsold clothes. In an interview with Finnish clothing brands (Marimekko, Halti and Finlayson), the companies told that all of their clothes are sold, and no clothes are filling the landfills. This is made sure by anticipating the sales and by selling the rest of the season's clothes in sales and outlets. Additionally, the clothes are designed in a timeless way, clothes are encouraged to be recycled by selling them as second-hand and broken one's are encouraged to fix. Reusing parts of unusable clothes, like the zipper or buttons, is encouraged as well. The brands are also trying to use more recycled material and organic cotton in their products. (Taleva 2018, cited 23.9.2018.)

### **3.3 Transparency**

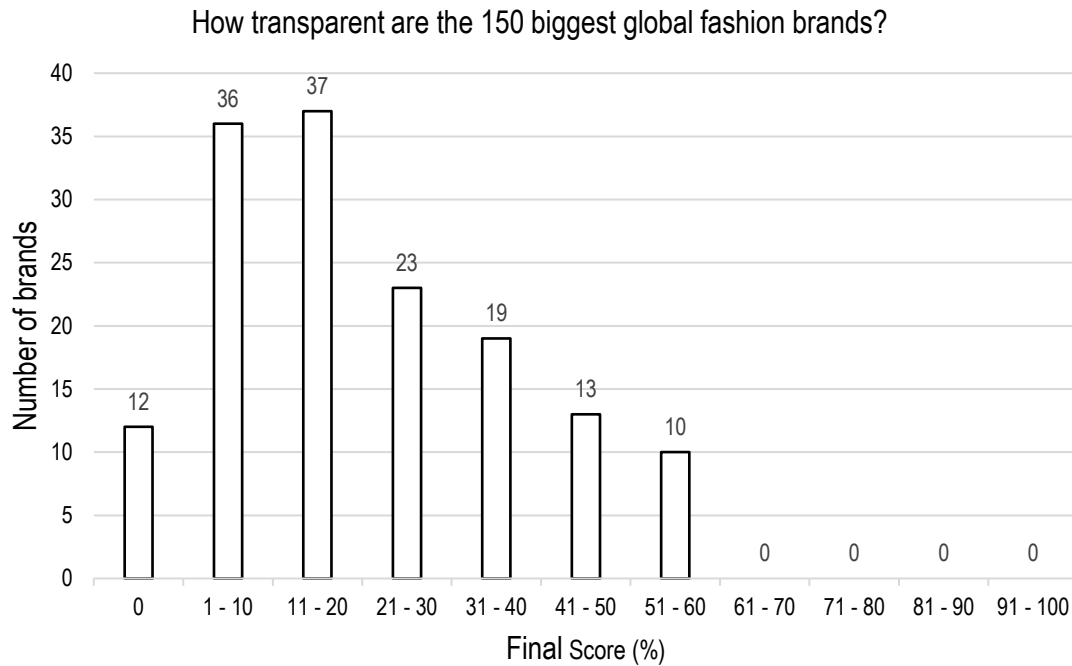
Transparency can either be *financial transparency*, or *governance transparency*. Financial transparency is the disclose of financial information (e.g. earnings, profits, budgets, reports etc.) and governance transparency is the exposure of the rules and behaviour behind the business processes, that show how the company is run. In this thesis, merely the governance transparency is considered. (Holtz, Havens & Johnson 2008. 13-14.)

One symbol of ethical behaviour in a company is having their corporate social responsibility processes as a core value. Being open and honest about following the processes shows transparency and cherishes trust from the customers. If the values are not yet updated in the company, it is advisable to review and determine the corporate values, reinforce them and assess if they focus on the right things. (Holtz et al. 2008. 41-42.)

In addition to having ethics as the company's core value, it is important to go over the organisation's relationships and see if there are conflicts in the values of different entities. Recognising if there are any relationships that oppose the company values and altering those relationships can prevent future criticism or protest. According to Holtz et al. (2008), a company should address their relationships also in their marketing communication, in addition to the annual reports. (Holtz et al. 2008, 46.)

According to a study conducted in 2016, over half of the consumers thought that when they choose a brand, additional information provided by the brand is important, and 73% of them are ready to pay more for a product with complete transparency. Transparency creates customer loyalty, and to provide the customers with authentic relationship, the company must show transparency in e.g. how their products are produced and what their environmental impacts are. Transparency means that even bad issues of the company are shared, and not hidden under the carpet. (Harvey 2018, cited 18.10.2018).

The Fashion Revolution CIC (2018) described transparency in their Fashion Transparency Index in the following way: "...transparency means credible, comprehensive and comparable public disclosure of data and information about brands and retailers' supply chains, business practices and the impacts of these practices on workers, communities and the environment." According to The Fashion Revolution CIC's (2018) standards, transparency includes information of the company's practices like fair-trade, gender equality, well-being and living wages of the workers, sustainable livelihood, business accountability, good working conditions and environmental sustainability.



*FIGURE 3. How transparent are the 150 biggest global fashion brands? (Fashion Revolution CIC 2018, cited 11.9.2018.)*

Fashion Revolution CIC conducted a research in 2017 and 2018 to see how transparently fashion companies tell about their processes. According to their transparency index research for 2018, a huge number of retailers and brands were lacking on transparency. When looking at the graft in Figure 3, we can see that not even one brand scored over 60% in the transparency index, and only 10 brands were over 50%. Shockingly, 12 brands scored 0% in their transparency. (Fashion Revolution CIC 2018, cited 11.9.2018.)

The reason why transparency is so important simply lies on the safety of the people. If there is no information where the raw materials and products come from, it is simply impossible to make sure human rights, working conditions, and the safety of the environment are taken good care of. After the company has all the required information about their practices, all the way to the raw material level, it is crucial to publish it for everyone to see. When the consumers have access to this information about the factories and farms where the garments are made, they can encourage and drive the change towards better practices. Transparency fosters accountability of the companies for bad practices and pressures the company to modify their practices. (Fashion Revolution CIC 2018, cited 11.9.2018.)

The amount of information shared by major clothing brands is shamefully insignificant. According to the study by Fashion Revolution, a little over 1/3 of the brands have published a list of their suppliers. Less than 1/5 of the brands have published the facilities used in making the clothes, and only one single brand has made its suppliers of raw material available. (Fashion Revolution CIC 2018, cited 11.9.2018.)

To offer transparency, the Fashion Revolution CIC advises to take concrete measures by providing information to the customers about the garments and their lifecycle. Not only brands, but also the retailers are responsible to offer information about the products and they should require the brands to provide transparency and information through them. There are a few steps that brands and retailers can take to support transparency in their processes:

- Publishing a list of suppliers in a searchable format
- Releasing an easily understandable information package about the company's social and environmental performance, progress and impacts of the whole supply chain
- Enhancing sustainability / CSR communications – making relevant information effortlessly accessible and easy to understand
- Making direct contact information for the sustainability / CSR departments available on company website
- Responding to the #whomademyclothes requests on social media with specific supplier information, not only with the company's policies. (Fashion Revolution CIC 2018, cited 11.9.2018.)

In 2019 April, a Finnish association called Pro Ethical Trade Finland (Eettisen kaupan puolesta ry) published a research on the sustainability of 23 Finnish clothing brands by using an international Rank a Brand -criteria, that consists of climate impact, environmental impact and labour conditions. Rank a Brand is an independent community that compares different brands on sustainability and social responsibility to inspire brands to be more transparent and responsible (Rank a Brand 2019, cited 20.4.2019). The brands are categorized in five different categories depending on their score. None of the brands reached the best category, and only one was categorized to being “on track towards sustainability”. The rest of the brands still had a lot of work to do in their transparency, and many of them lost points due to lack of detailed information provided, even when their practices seemed to be sustainable. (Suomen Tekstiili & Muoti 2019, cited 20.4.2019.)

Recommendations by Pro Ethical Trade Finland include tips on how companies, decision makers and consumers can improve their sustainability and transparency:

- Companies can make a difference by:
    - o Conducting a human rights impact assessment in accordance with the UN guiding principles of business and human rights. Reporting on the risks and taking actions to minimize them.
    - o Cooperating with non-governmental organizations and trade unions.
    - o Publicly committing to pay a fair wage, creating operational models to achieve it and reporting on the progress transparently.
    - o Setting goals to diminish the company's own climate and environmental impacts and report on the progress transparently.
  - Decision makers can promote:
    - o Human rights and corporate responsibility in Finland.
    - o Finland to improve corporate responsibility legislation in the EU and globally.
  - Consumers can help by:
    - o Asking companies to give detailed information about their production and responsibility of their clothing.
    - o Searching about companies' corporate responsibility before purchasing
    - o Supporting improvement in Finland's corporate responsibility legislations and questioning members of Parliament what they are doing to improve them.
- (Eettisen kaupan puolesta ry 2019, cited 20.4.2019)

### **3.4 Issues in the fashion industry**

According to Carrigan, McEachern and Szmigin (2009), consumers are essentially concerned about human rights when it comes to ethical fashion. In the fashion industry, there are many practices that might be considered unethical, such as child labour, sweatshops and fur farms. Ethics are "The discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation (Merriam-Webster 2016)." In business, ethics is a set of codes that say what is morally right or wrong, and it should be embedded in the corporation's culture with full commitment (Henninger, Alevizou, Goworek & Ryding 2017. 13). There are several other issues as well, including animal welfare, fair wages, environmental and health concerns. The most common issues in the fashion industry are discussed in this chapter. (Carrigan et al. 2009, cited 26.7.2018.)

Year by year fast fashion has found its way to be a globally known trend acquired by many high-street fashion brands. Fast fashion involves production of clothes and fashion products quickly from the catwalk to the consumer. Instead of having seasonal collections, fast fashion companies receive new changing inventories of clothes throughout the year. (Cline 2012, chapter 4, Fast Fashion.)

The popularity of fast fashion rises from the ability to respond to consumers' quickly changing wants and needs by producing low priced goods in mass production. The quickly changing trends attract people to purchase more clothes with cheaper prices and lower quality. This results in more clothes ending up to the landfills since the lifespan of the clothes are shortened. Consuming an overwhelming amount of clothes like this causes many problems, such as excess use of natural resources, child labour, dangerous working conditions and environmental impacts. (Jung & Jin 2016, 410-412).

Instead of having four different seasons – spring, summer, autumn and winter – fast fashion shops can have as many as 52 “micro-seasons” in one year. The production is similarly made fast by tracking sales electronically and by using just-in-time manufacturing, that can produce a product in less than two weeks from a sketch into the final product. Purchasing new clothes each season has become commonly accepted leading to normalization of over-consumption (Gibson & Stanes 2011, 172; Fletcher 2007, cited 17.5.2018)

Consumers are pursued to buy more and more, and always new trendy items, which leads to overconsumption of clothes and resources. Fast fashion is the second most polluting industry after oil industry being the worst one. Tremendous amount of harmful chemicals is used in the production of clothes resulting in environmental and health problems. Toxic chemicals are known to be connected to tumours and brain defects in people, even children. The greediness for making a lot of money by producing fashion in a fast phase neglects the other aspects of the production – labour, capital and natural resources. The cheap prices are achieved by abusing and taken advantages of the labour and natural resources. (Azevedo 2018, cited 17.5.2018; Fletcher 2007, cited 17.5.2018)

Modern day slavery is one problem that also affects the fashion industry. It is forced labour, where people do not have freedom to leave their job due to a threat. Usually this involves human trafficking, and even child labour (Common objective 2018e, cited 16.10.2018). Child labour is the

labour under the minimum legal age of employment, and labour which causes harm on their health, education or wellbeing. A lot of children work in agriculture, including cotton plantations. Children are exposed to dangerous chemicals, machinery and cotton dust, and are forced to carry heavy loads (Common objective 2018a, cited 16.10.2018). There are many health and safety threats throughout the whole supply chain of a garment. These may include:

- Inhaling dust or fibre when handling textile
- Exposing to harmful chemicals
- High level of heat and noise in the factories/workplaces
- No protection equipment or clothing
- No clear way to fire doors/emergency exists
- Insufficient lighting and ventilation
- Overworking/not getting enough rest. (Common objective 2018c, cited 16.10.2018.)

Defending workers' rights can be done by making sure that suppliers fulfil the laws and regulations in national employment. Some ways of ensuring ethical operation throughout the supply chain is to set a minimum age of employment and make employment freely chosen. In the fashion industry, it is not uncommon for workers to be paid under the minimum wage, leading to poverty. In many countries the minimum wage is not even enough for basic standard of living, and yet still workers are paid less than the minimum level. It has been argued that the final retail price would not even be affected much if wages were risen to an acceptable level. The workers should have a right to a collective labour agreement and the terms of employment should include pay rates, working hours, as well as health and safety measures, and inhumane and discrimination should be forbidden. (Barbara I Gongini 2017, cited 25.7.2018; Common objective 2018d, cited 16.10.2018.)

In addition to unethical practices towards workers, the fashion industry also neglects animal rights. Fur is seen as a luxury item that became popular in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and as it became more popular, fur farming grew, and inhumane practices became more common. Animals are kept in small cages, they live in constant distress and pain, are physically disabled and carry diseases. Many European countries have banned fur farming, but it is still a huge problem for example in China. (Guides 2019, cited 21.10.2018.)

Fur also has environmental impacts. To prevent the animal skin from rotting, it needs to be treated with toxic chemicals that harm the waterways and workers. There is a lot of debate on which one is worse for the environment – faux fur or real fur. Some researches argue that faux fur is worse

for the environment, since it is usually made out of polyester, yet according to a research, mink fur has 20% more environmental impact than other textiles. On the other hand, not all fur is raised on a fur farm, but is from for example a roadkill. Fur also decomposes eventually, but faux fur made of acrylic or polyester hardly does. Since there is no clear answer on which one is more environmentally friendly, both of them might encourage the use of fur in fashion, and therefore are not used by many. (Wicker 2018 cited 21.10.2018.)

The fashion industry impacts the environment by polluting the ecosystem with chemicals and pesticides in the cotton plantations. These chemicals are dangerous for the environment and people. Not only does the process of creating a garment pollute the planet, but so does the disposal of them by filling the landfills. In opposition to this, sustainable and ethical retailers use organic cotton and recycled textiles to reduce the damaging impact on the environment. (Henninger, Alevizou, Goworek & Ryding 2017. 14.)

According to the calculations by the Water Footprint Network, production of one cotton shirt uses approximately 2500 litres of water. Production of 1 kilogram of cotton uses 10 000–30 000 litres of water, and in addition to that, a lot of water is used in dyeing and washing the garments. Textile dyeing and treatments cause about 20% of water pollution, and approximately 8 000 synthetic chemicals are used in the production of textile. Clothing production produces about 4.8% of the world's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and half of that comes from using the cloth – washing, drying and ironing it. (Common objective 2018b. cited 16.10.2018.)

### **3.5 Recognizing ethical clothing**

Any company can say they are selling eco-friendly clothes, but the consumer usually has to dig deeper to find the truth. Creating ethical clothes starts from designing resources efficiently and in an environmentally friendly way, taking care of workers' rights, safety and fair wages, and finally by ensuring the afterlife of the garment does not cause harm and that it can be recycled accordingly (Barbara I Gongini 2017, cited 25.7.2018). Some tips for checking the eco-friendliness of the garment is to first see if it is made from synthetic or natural fibres. Some clothing might have green certifications that tell for example that there are no harmful materials used. (Webster 2017, cited 1.11.2018.)



To recognise ethical and sustainable clothing, there are standards and certifications given to a garment that allows the consumers to know it is made according to specific standards. The purpose of the certification is to secure that specific conditions have been met in the process of producing the garment. A list of some key certificates in the textile industry are introduced below. (Future Learn 2018, cited 22.9.2018.)

### **List of some key certificates used in clothing:**

#### **Bluesign®**



The bluesign® standard removes harmful materials in the beginning of the manufacturing process before production of the product begins. It also makes sure that environmental standards are met in the whole textile manufacturing chain. (Ecolabel Index 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

#### **CMiA**



The CMiA certification ensures sustainable cotton farming and improved living conditions of the farmers. Their goal is to produce ecologically and socially sustainable raw material. (Ecolabel Index 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

#### **EU Ecolabel**



The EU Ecolabel rewards environmentally friendly products and services. The goal is to encourage producers to decrease the impact of their products on the environment. (EEB 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

#### **Fairtrade Certified**



Products carrying the Fairtrade Certification have met the social, environmental and economic criteria of ethical trade. It supports sustainable development of producers and farmers in poor countries. (Ecolabel Index 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

#### **Global Recycle Standard**



The Global Recycle Standard is for textile companies that have used recycled material in the products they are making or selling. (Ecolabel Index 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

### GOTS certified



GOTS certified is a unity of various eco textile standards. Their requirements include organic raw material harvesting, as well as environmental and social responsibility in manufacturing. (Ecolabel Index 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

### Nordic Ecolabel, "Swan"

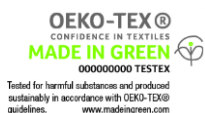


The Nordic Ecolabel is used in the northern countries to determine environmentally friendly products by testing and control visits. (Ecolabel Index 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

### Oeko-Tex Standard 100



Oeko-Tex Standard 100 is a global certification that tests textile throughout the production from raw material to a finished product. They test for forbidden substances and harmful chemicals that are not forbidden but are not good for health.



Oeko-Tex Standard has also complimentary certifications for environmentally-friendly, human-ecological and socially responsible products. (Ecolabel Index 2018, cited 15.12.2018.)

## 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Depending on the main method for gathering data, a research is typically divided into quantitative and qualitative research (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 131). The choice of the research method must be justified and fit for the research problem and chosen based on the purpose of the study. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and data analysis are widely used in business researches. The differentiation between these two methods is to see whether the data is numeric or non-numeric. Quantitative methods are defining and used in data collecting and analysis that generate numerical data, such as questionnaires, graphs and statistics. Qualitative methods for data collecting and analysis generate non-numerical data, that explain a phenomenon founded on meanings expressed in words. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007. 145, 472)

In this research a quantitative method is used by undertaking a survey for the customers of the case company. This method is used to gather standardised material, which implies you ask the exact same question from each respondent of the sample (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007. 354-355). A questionnaire is a central method in a survey research and will be used as the main data collecting method in the research at hand. A questionnaire enables the researcher to gather a lot of data in a short time, since it is possible to ask several questions in one survey from multiple customers. It is a time efficient way to gather data, but it also has its disadvantages, which will be discussed in chapter 4.1. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 191-193, 195.)

Prior to conducting the survey, the process of this research begins with explanation of the topics important for the research and gathering theoretical background in order to find the right questions for the survey. The data collected for the theoretical part is referred to as secondary data, that was collected by someone prior to this research for another purpose (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007. 611). The theoretical framework helps to understand the important aspects that affect the customer's behaviour and decision-making process, so that the correct questions can be asked from the customers in order to gather useful data concerning the topic. The research method was chosen to gather insight from the customers themselves. With a survey it is possible to gather primary data directly from the customers in an efficient way and to understand their point of view on the topic.

## **4.1 Reliability and validity**

Reliability is referring to the degree to which the collection and analysis of the data produce consistent results (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 149.) This means that if the research is conducted again by another researcher, the results should match. The more reviewers come to the same conclusion, the more reliable the findings should be. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 231.)

Validity refers to the ability of the research method to measure the correct phenomenon you mean to measure. For example, in a questionnaire the respondents might give you an answer, but if the question was misinterpreted by the respondent, the validity suffers when the researcher understands the answer incorrectly and makes false conclusions. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 231-232)

A questionnaire also has its disadvantages that might affect the reliability of the research results. Some of the survey respondents might not take the questionnaire seriously enough or there could be a possibility for misunderstanding the questions. The questions should be thought out in a way that cannot be misinterpreted easily, and the answer options broad enough for the customer to answer correctly and truthfully. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 195.)

The questionnaire's design affects the reliability of the collected data. There are a few ways to maximise the validity, reliability and response rate. These include designing each question carefully, making the questionnaire form's layout clear, pilot testing the questions and carefully planning and executing the administration. (Saunders et. al 2007, 356).

Questions with clear meaning give the most reliable results, and words that can be interpreted in many ways should be avoided. In order to get reliable results, according to Hirsjärvi et al. (202-203) it is advised to ask specific questions instead of open questions and keep the questions short for better understanding – the question should only cover one issue at a time. Multiple-choice questions tend to give more accurate results than agree/disagree questions, which according to research, people tend to answer by choosing the more socially acceptable option. This type of questions might have a big negative impact on the validity of this research and should be taken into account in the questionnaire. According to Saunders et. al (2007, 149), the same phenomenon happens when interviewing employees – they tend to answer what they think their boss wants to

hear. One way to reduce the effect of this participant bias is to make the questionnaire anonymous, says Saunders et. al (2007, 149). (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 195.)

## **4.2 Data collection**

The collecting of data starts off by planning the questionnaire form and testing it. The planning of a questionnaire requires the researcher to have an aim for the research and the research questions made. After setting the goal of the research, the important demographic variables are considered – such as age, gender, education or income of the respondents. In this research the age, gender and income of the respondents were chosen to be included in the survey to see if they have impact on the consumer's thought on ethical clothing. (Vilkka 2015, 105.)

There are different types of questions that can be used in a survey depending on the wanted data. The questionnaire at hand is self-administrated, which means that the respondents complete the questionnaire by themselves on the internet or in the store. In this type of questionnaire, closed-ended questions have the most straightforward data input. Therefore, most questions in the survey were chosen to be closed-ended. (Saunders et. al 2007, 356, 369).

Closed-ended questions are used together with open-ended questions, so that more in-depth answers can be generated from the respondents. Open-ended questions give more detailed answers, since the respondents can freely express their thoughts, and a more spontaneous response is obtained from the respondent (Vilkka 2015, 105.)

Multiple choice questions are structured and closed. This type of questions produce comparable data, but compromise the accuracy, since the respondent only has limited options to choose from. When all possible response options are not known, an open answer option can be added to the question for the response to be more accurate. This method was used in question 5 for a more accurate answer (see appendix 1). (Vilkka 2015, 105.)

An electric survey form was chosen by using an internet application, Webropol (appendix 1). The application gives an easy platform for creating a survey, as well as collecting and reporting the data. An electric survey is a fast and efficient way to collect data and is suitable when time is limited, and the data needs to be collected efficiently and reported fast. Problems with this type of survey

could also occur. For example, it is impossible to rule out who answers the questionnaire. Therefore, it is not inclusively for the customers of Kure, but also for potential new customers. (Moilanen, Ojasalo & Ritalahti 2014. 128-129.)

The timing of the survey matched with the international Fashion Revolution campaign week, therefore being a very topical issue at the time. The survey was shared with the customers of Kure by providing a link on their Facebook page (appendix 3). Also, a short link was created to be shared in the store, so customers visiting the store could also participate in the survey (appendix 4). In addition, paper forms were provided in the store in case a customer does not have a possibility to respond online. The questionnaire was tested by a few individuals before conducting the survey.

### **4.3 Results**

The survey was opened 456 times by respondents, 278 started responding and finally 271 responds were submitted through a public weblink during a one-week period. The goal was to get over 100 responses, which was achieved on the first day of conducting the survey. The survey questions and answers can be found in appendix 1 and 2.

Out of the 271 respondents 268 were female and 3 were male. There were no apparent differences in the answers of female and male respondents, and since there were only 3 males, comparing their answers might not give valid information. Almost half (48%) of the respondents were between the ages 20-29, being the largest age group. One third (34%) were between ages 30-39. 13% of the respondents were 40-49 years old, and 5% over 49 years old. Only one respondent was under 20 years old. The respondents' income was also asked to learn if it affects their purchase behaviour. As is seen in appendix 2, respondents divided quite evenly into different income rates.

In question 4 the customers were asked whether they search for information about the cloth's ethicality before making a purchase decision. A little over two third (68%) answered yes, and one third (32%) said no. In question 5 over half of the respondents (55%) think that Kure has enough information about the ethics of the clothing brands. Only 24 individuals (9%) said they thought Kure does not provide enough information, and 36% did not know. Out of those 68% (184 individuals) who search for information about the ethical factors, only 10% (19 individuals) think that Kure does not provide enough information, but 30% say they do not know. This could imply that the information

has not been provided easily enough, and the customers have felt too burdened to look for the information.

When asked what information the customers would like to get about the origin of brands and clothing, over 80% were interested in getting information about the country of origin and location of the factories (83%), environmental friendliness of the material (80%) and working conditions, human rights and fair wage (87%). This same information was in the top three for the biggest age group of 20-29 years old, which seems to be the primary customer base. It is good to take this fact into consideration and emphasize the most wanted information when communicating about the ethics to customers.

Over half (52%) of the respondents also wanted to know what the company's environmental impacts are. 41% wanted to know about the recycling of clothing and textiles, and 38% were interested in the production process. In addition, there was interest in knowing how supervision is monitored, what are the origins of the materials used in the product, as well as chemicals used in the production of the clothing, transportation distance, how many intermediaries there are in the distribution, and is the product produced locally. (Figure 4)

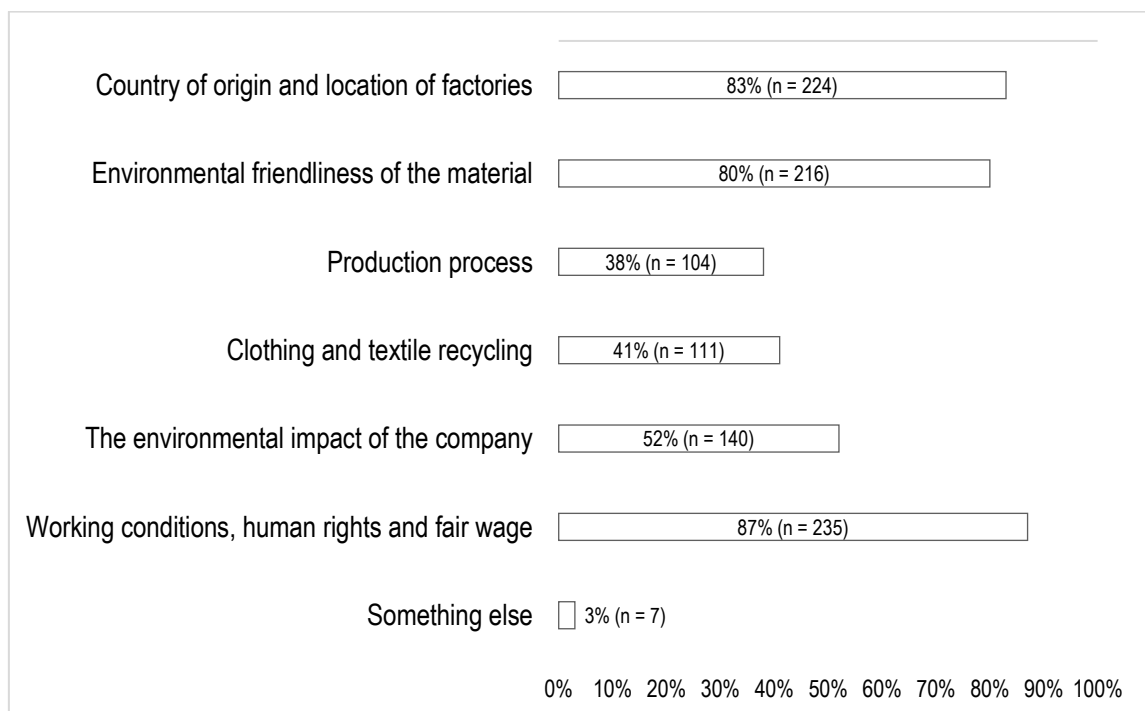


FIGURE 4. What information would you like to get about clothing brands and the origin of clothes?

When customers were asked how they would like to gain information about the ethics of clothing and brands, the most popular answer was “on product labels”. According to the answers, customers think that the information in product labels would help them to evaluate the purchase decision while shopping. The information should be easily available as the customer is shopping and looking for the information separately would not be required. The most important product information would be found on the product label, for example country of production and eco-friendliness and origin of materials used, as well as any certifications given to the garment were requested in the survey.

The respondents also wished to see the ethics of the brands in the store – for example a fact sheet or a poster of each brand or simple leaflets that would provide some key information and bring awareness of the importance of ethics at the same time. Information from the salespersons is also wanted, as well as guidance on how to find more information, for example by directing the customer to Kure’s website. Some customers wish to receive information about the ethics and production of the clothing after purchasing a garment through email or in a leaflet when they receive the product.

The answers suggest that more detailed information packages about the brands could be found on Kure’s website - information such as facts about production chain, ethics and sustainability of the brand, carbon footprint and overall eco-friendliness could be found in an easy-to-read table. Customers also wished to be informed through Kure’s website when shopping online by having the key information available in the product description, as well as through newsletters and blog posts.

Marketing was also mentioned in the answers, and the customers wished to see ethics in social media platforms, for instance Kure’s Instagram and Facebook. Illustrations of for example the product’s life cycle was requested, and stories behind the brands and people working in the production. Moreover, some customers said they have trusted that Kure has only picked ethical brands to their collection, and they do not have to do any research on the brands themselves.

Question number 8 was a ranking question, where respondents were asked to put the following things in order of importance when making a purchase decision on a garment:

- Cheap price
- The appearance of the garment
- Material quality
- Ethics
- Environmental friendliness



- Country of production
- Longevity of the garment

In figure 5 the preference of each option was given a weighted score in order to compare the answers (see more information in appendix 2.) The appearance of the clothing was the most important aspect when purchasing clothing, which supports the theory that consumers go for the more fashionable choice to express their self-identity (Berberyan et al. 2018, chapter 2.4).

The second most important aspect in purchasing clothing was material quality, following with longevity of the garment. These factors affect the actual use of the clothing, so it is not surprising that they are the most important aspects that consumers consider. Ethics was the fourth most important aspect, therefore being more important to most people than having a cheap price, which was the second last important, implying that most of the respondents do care about ethics when purchasing clothing, and cheap fast fashion items do not get as much support. Although, theory behind ethical buying implies that even though researches show the readiness to consume ethically, in the actual evaluation situation the consumer often decides to purchase the cheaper item (Berberyan et al. 2018, chapter 2.4).

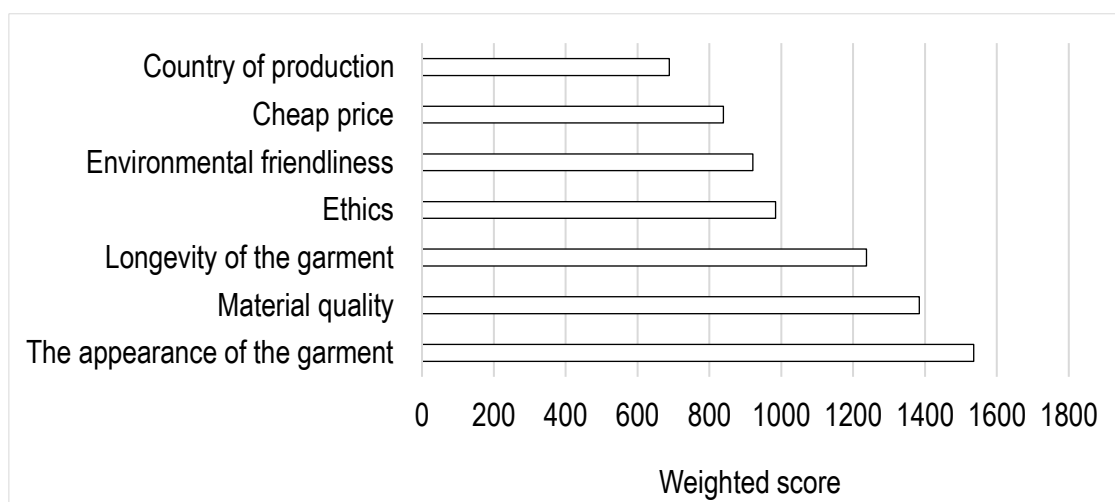


FIGURE 5. Importance of different aspects of clothing when making a purchase decision.

When the respondents were asked to choose which statement best describes their buying behaviour, 74% said that they are aiming to purchase more ethical clothing and are reducing the purchase of cheaply produced clothing, 19% sometimes bought ethical clothing but consumed cheaply produced garments more frequently. This shows that most of the respondents are

consuming more ethically but have not completely stopped consuming cheap fashion. Moving completely to consumption of ethical clothing is still very low, since only 5% stated they only buy ethical clothing. For 2% of the respondents the ethical factors did not matter when making a purchase decision. (Appendix 2)

A lot of the respondents expressed their concerns and wish that more people would be more ethical in their purchasing. Some problems that the respondents had were the selection of clothing and high prices. The need for more variety in ethical clothing was expressed in the survey, for example undergarments, jeans, children's clothing and sportswear were mentioned, as well as basic "classical" apparel. The prices of domestic and ethical clothing are relatively high compared to fast fashion retailers, and some respondents found this a problem in their clothing purchasing. This can also be seen in figure 6, where respondents with lower income seem to buy cheap clothing more than those of higher income. A cheaper alternative is buying clothing second-hand, which a lot of the respondents preferred, but it can also be difficult to find a specific garment when the need is urgent.

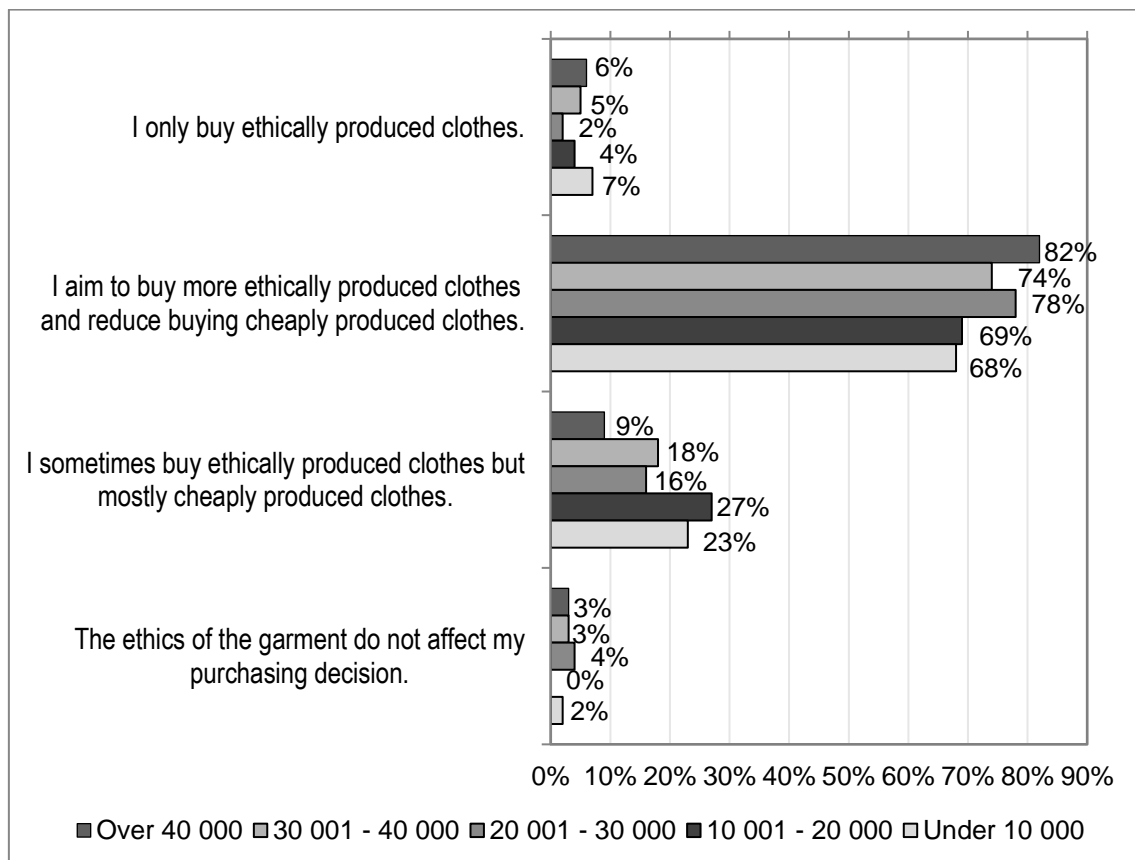


FIGURE 6. Purchase behaviour of ethical clothing according to income.

According to the survey, customers want more transparent communication from brands – information about their environmental impacts, where the materials for the garments come from, are the factories and working conditions safe, how the price of an item is formed and what chemicals are used in dyeing the clothing. The respondents said they want honesty from brands instead of “greenwashing”. In addition to transparency of brands, easy accessibility of information is something to improve, since many respondents thought that information is hard to find and takes too much effort in their decision-making process.

The survey showed that after purchasing, the customers also want to know how to take good care of the garments with proper washing and maintenance, how to repair broken clothing and recycle different materials and garments. These factors help the garment to have a longer life, therefore diminishing the need to consumer new items to replace old ones.

## 5 CONCLUSION

A research on consumer's buying behaviour concerning ethical clothing was conducted in order to find solutions and develop the following research questions:

- What affects the buyer's purchase decision when buying ethical clothing?
- How can the case company help the customer to gain information about the ethicality of the clothing?

Together with the theoretical framework, the research data gives valuable information for the case company Kure to improve their communication of brands' ethics and help customers to make more ethical choices in their fashion purchases.

The research showed that 68% of the respondents search for information about clothing's ethicality before making a purchase decision, which indicates that there is a need to provide this type of information to customers. Most of the respondents stated that they are consuming more ethical than cheaply produced clothing but have not completely stopped consuming cheap fashion. Reasons for this were for example the lack of variety, such as children's clothes, undergarments, jeans and sportswear, as well as high prices and availability.

When purchasing clothing, the respondents thought that the appearance of the garment, material quality and longevity of the garment were the three most important aspects when purchasing clothing. Previous studies support the finding that the appearance of a clothing outweighs the ethicality of the clothing, since clothing often communicates the person's self-identity and social status, and people want to look fashionable and be accepted by their peers. Therefore, it is important that there are fashionable options in ethical clothing, and the quality is not compromised.

Material quality also affects the longevity of the garment, as does timeless design and proper washing and maintenance instructions given by the salesperson and wash care label. On average, ethicality and eco-friendliness of clothing were more important than cheap price and country of production, the survey suggests. Although, some of the respondents stated that ethical clothing is too expensive, and they would rather go for the cheap option. Ethicality, high quality material and longevity of the garment are good attributes to emphasize when the customer is evaluating the purchase, and these factors can be used as arguments to higher price - as long as they are true.

Easy accessibility of information on a cloth's or brand's ethics was another major concern. The outcomes of the research are supportive of the arguments of previous studies claiming that convenience and perceived authenticity are hindrances in buying ethical clothing. For example, some consumers are sceptical of the authenticity of eco-friendliness, since claims like this are often used only as a marketing trick, and proper information is not provided due to lack of transparency. In order to gain trust from the consumers, the company must be transparent and authentic about their practices.

Often information is hard, or even impossible to find. Consequently, consumers are too burdened to find out about the ethics of a brand and go for the easiest option available. In order to be able to purchase clothing ethically, information from the brands and retailers must be available, concluding that transparency is directly connected to ethical buying. The respondents' interest in different aspects of ethical clothing were measured, as well as how they would like to obtain the information. The information gained from the survey is organized in table 2 in a way that is easy to follow and integrate to Kure's current communication.

*Table 2. What information to offer to customers and how.*

<b>Where</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>What</b>
The store	Product labels	Key information about the product e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Country of production</li> <li>- Eco-friendliness (certifications, carbon footprint)</li> <li>- Origin of materials used</li> </ul>
	Fact sheets / posters of brands. Leaflets	Key information about the brand, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facts about the brand and how they consider ethicality in their company</li> <li>- QR-codes guiding the customer to additional information (for example Kure's website).</li> </ul>
	Salespersons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing additional information about the clothes and brands</li> <li>- Guiding the customer to more information (for example Kure's website)</li> </ul>

Kure's online store / website	Information packages about brands	<p>More detailed information about clothes and brands, e.g. in an easy-to-read table.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Story of the brand</li> <li>- Production chain / process</li> <li>- Working conditions, human rights and fair wage</li> <li>- Eco-friendliness, environmental impacts and carbon footprint</li> <li>- Country of origin and location of factories</li> <li>- Recycling</li> <li>- Monitoring supervision</li> <li>- Chemicals used in the production</li> <li>- Transportation and intermediaries</li> </ul>
	Product descriptions	<p>Key information about the product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Country of production</li> <li>- Eco-friendliness</li> <li>- Origin of materials used</li> <li>- Certifications</li> </ul>
	Blog posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stories behind brands and people working in the production</li> <li>- Stories about ethical issues</li> <li>- Illustrations of e.g. product life cycle</li> </ul>
Marketing	E-mails / newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information about brands</li> <li>- Links to stories in blog posts</li> </ul>
	Social media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Instagram story and feed</li> <li>- Facebook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stories about brands</li> <li>- Illustrations of e.g. product life cycle</li> <li>- Links to blog posts</li> <li>- Communication of ethical values</li> </ul>

To encapsulate, brands should be encouraged to be transparent and required to provide information about their practices, and this information should be easily available to customers. Key information about the garment should be in the product label, and more information about the brand available in the store in info tables, leaflets or posters. Guidance to more information should come from salespersons and e.g. QR-codes directing to more detailed information packages on the internet about each brands' practices. Information on the website would also help the salesperson to check additional information efficiently for a customer, so not all the information has to be visible in the store. Information about different materials and how to recycle old clothing and textiles would also help customers to consume clothing more ethically. Consumers could also be educated on the matter through blog posts, marketing and social media.

In order to make a big difference in the fashion industry, ethical practices have to be implemented to more brands. Requirements from consumers are pushing more of them to start improving their practices and transparency, and more importantly, fast fashion brands should be motivated to make radical changes. Since in Finland the most popular clothing retailers are Prisma and K-Citymarket, a further study could explore the possibilities of bringing more sustainable options to these big retailers and push them to contribute to the change in clothing consumption.

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**QUESTIONNAIRE FORM**

Kysely: Vaatteiden eettisyys ja kuluttajakäyttäytyminen

Olen liiketalouden opiskelija Oulun ammattikorkeakoulussa ja kirjoitan opinnäytetyötä vaatteiden eettisyydestä, sekä sen vaikutuksesta ostopäätökseen.

Kyselyyn vastaamalla autat minua tutkimuksessani kuluttajien suhtautumisesta vaatteiden eettisyyteen. Vastaaminen tapahtuu anonymisti, ja lopuksi voit myös osallistua lahjakortin arvontaan.

**1. Sukupuoli \***

- ☐ Nainen
- ☐ Mies
- ☐ Muu

**2. Ikä \***

- ☐ Alle 20
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ Yli 49

**3. Vuositulot (brutto) \***

- ☐ 0-10 000
- ☐ 10 001 – 20 000
- ☐ 20 001 – 30 000
- ☐ 30 001 – 40 000
- ☐ Yli 40 000

4. Otatko selvää vaateen eettisyydestä ennen ostopäätöksen tekoa? \*

- ☐ Kyllä
- ☐ En

5. Mitä tietoa haluaisit saada brändeistä ja vaatteiden alkuperästä? \*

- ☐ Alkuperämaa ja tehtaiden sijainti
- ☐ Materiaalin ekologisuus
- ☐ Tuotantoprosessi
- ☐ Vaatteiden ja tekstiilin kierrätys
- ☐ Yrityksen ympäristövaikutukset
- ☐ Työolosuhteet, ihmisoikeudet ja oikeudenmukainen palkkaus
- ☐ Jokin muu, mikä?

6. Onko Kurella mielestäsi saatavilla tarpeeksi tietoa vaatebrändien eettisyydestä? (esimerkiksi vaatteiden alkuperä, ympäristöystävällisyys, tuotantoprosessi jne.) \*

- ☐ Kyllä
- ☐ Ei
- ☐ En tiedä

7. Kuinka haluaisit saada tietoa vaatteiden ja brändien eettisyydestä? (esim. tuotelaput, Kuren nettisivut, myymälä jne.) \*



8. Laita seuraavat asiat tärkeysjärjestykseen tehdessäsi ostopäätöstä vaatteesta. (1 = tärkein, 7 = vähiten tärkein.) \*

- Halpa hinta
- Vaatteen ulkonäkö
- Materiaalin laatu
- Eettisyys
- Ympäristöystävällisyys
- Tuotantomaa
- Vaatteen pitkäikäisyys

9. Mikä seuraavista kuvaa ostokäyttäytymistäsi parhaiten? \*

- ☐ Ostan vain eettisesti valmistettuja vaatteita.
- ☐ Pyrin ostamaan enemmän eettisesti valmistettuja vaatteita, ja vähentämään halpatuotettujen vaatteiden ostamista.
- ☐ Ostan joskus eettisesti tuotettuja vaatteita, mutta enemmän halpatuotettuja vaatteita.
- ☐ Vaatteen eettisyys ei vaikuta ostopäätökseeni.

10. Onko sinulla muita ajatuksia tai toiveita vaatteiden eettisyyteen liittyen?

Questionnaire: Ethics and consumer behaviour of clothing

I am an international business student in Oulu University of Applied Sciences, and I am writing thesis about ethical clothing and its impact on consumer's purchase decision.

By answering the survey, you are helping me in my research on consumer attitudes towards ethical clothing. The answer is anonymous, and in the end you can also take part in the gift card draw.

1. Gender \*

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other

2. Age \*

- ☐ Under 20
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ Over 49

3. Annual income (gross) \*

- ☐ 0-10 000
- ☐ 10 001 – 20 000
- ☐ 20 001 – 30 000
- ☐ 30 001 – 40 000
- ☐ Over 40 000

4. Do you search about the ethicality of a garment before making a purchase decision? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. What information would you like to get about clothing brands and the origin of clothes? \*

☐ Country of origin and location of factories

☐ Environmental friendliness of the material

☐ Production process

☐ Clothing and textile recycling

☐ The environmental impact of the company

☐ Working conditions, human rights and fair wage

☐ Something else, explain:

6. Do you think that Kure has enough information about the ethics of clothing brands? (e.g. origin, environmental friendliness, production process, etc.) \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I don't know

7. How would you like to gain information about the ethics of clothing and brands? (e.g., on product labels, company's website, in the store, etc.)\*



8. Put the following things in order of importance when making a purchase decision on a garment.

(1 = most important, 7 = least important.) \*

- Cheap price
- The appearance of the garment
- Material quality
- Ethics
- Environmental friendliness
- Country of production
- Longevity of the garment

9. Which of the following best describes your buying behaviour? \*

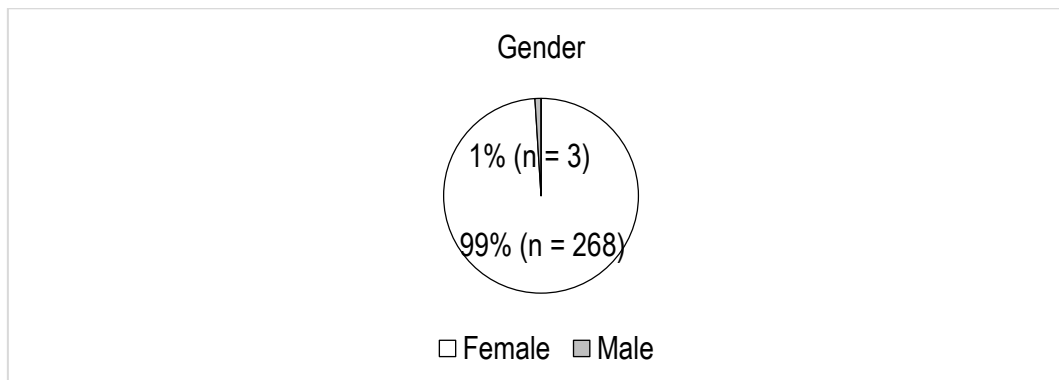
- ☐ I only buy ethically produced clothes.
- ☐ I aim to buy more ethically produced clothes and reduce buying cheaply produced clothes.
- ☐ I sometimes buy ethically produced clothes but mostly cheaply produced clothes.
- ☐ The ethics of the garment do not affect my purchasing decision.

10. Do you have any other thoughts or wishes regarding the ethics of clothing?

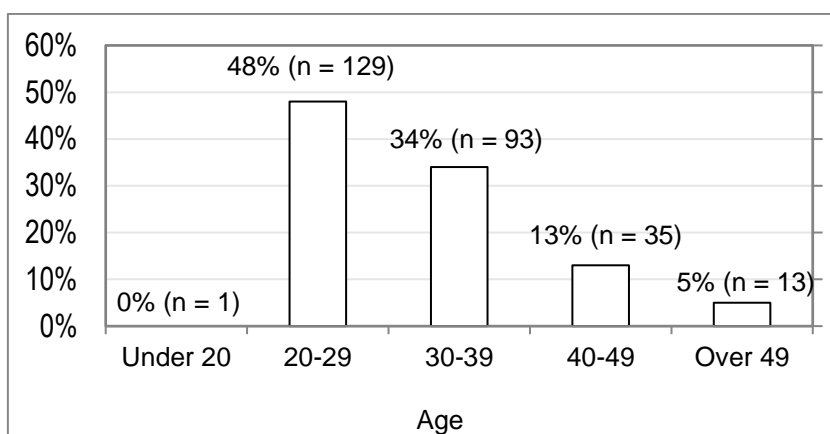
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## QUESTIONNAIRE ANSWERS IN DIAGRAMS

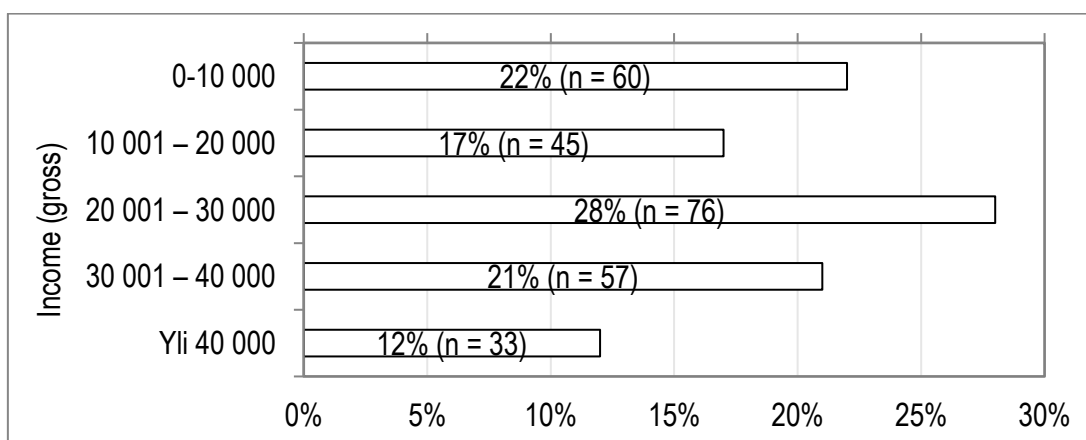
## 1. Gender \*



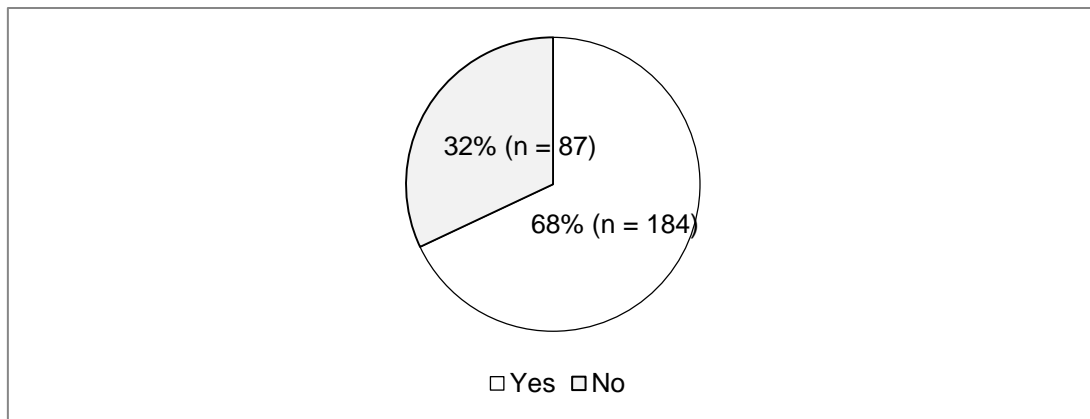
## 2. Age \*



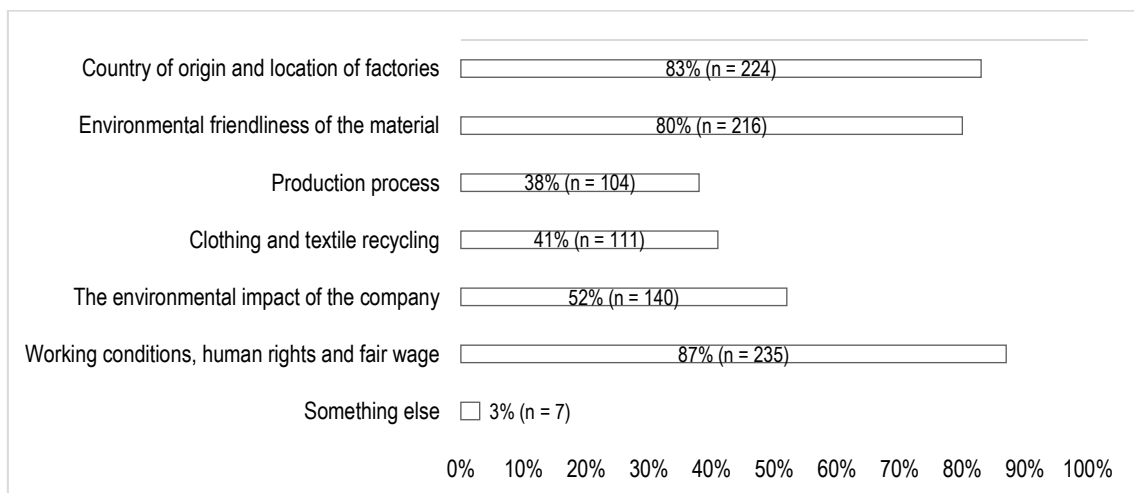
## 3. Annual income (gross) \*



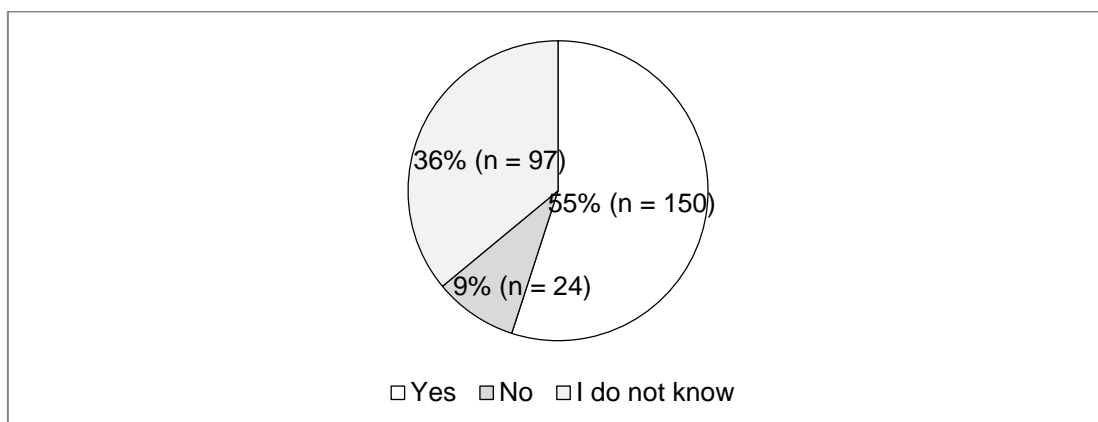
4. Do you search about the ethicality of a garment before making a purchase decision? \*



5. What information would you like to get about clothing brands and the origin of clothes? \*



6. Do you think that Kure has enough information about the ethics of clothing brands? (e.g. origin, environmental friendliness, production process, etc.) \*



8. Put the following things in order of importance when making a purchase decision on a garment.

(1 = most important, 7 = least important.) \*

	Cheap price	The appearance of the garment	Material quality	Ethics	Environmental friendliness	Country of production	Longevity of the garment
1	18	147	40	8	10	14	34
	6.64%	54.24%	14.76%	2.95%	3.69%	5.17%	12.55%
2	25	33	107	22	19	13	52
	9.22%	12.18%	39.48%	8.12%	7.01%	4.80%	19.19%
3	28	33	55	41	27	13	74
	10.33%	12.18%	20.29%	15.13%	9.96%	4.80%	27.31%
4	42	15	25	64	58	30	37
	15.50%	5.53%	9.23%	23.62%	21.40%	11.07%	13.65%
5	29	17	11	77	76	29	32
	10.70%	6.27%	4.06%	28.41%	28.05%	10.70%	11.81%
6	39	6	21	45	61	68	31
	14.39%	2.21%	7.75%	16.61%	22.51%	25.09%	11.44%
7	90	20	12	14	20	104	11
	33.21%	7.38%	4.43%	5.16%	7.38%	38.38%	4.06%

TOTAL	839	1535	1384	984	921	688	1237
Rank	6	1	2	4	5	7	3

In order to compare the answers in a ranking question, where respondents have put things in order of preference, the average ranking is calculated for each answer. This enables a quick evaluation of most chosen answer. The highest average ranking refers to being the most popular answer. The answers are weighted in reverse: the answer ranked as most preferred (respondent ranked as #1) gets the highest weight, and the answer ranked as least preferred (respondent ranked as #7) gets the lowest weight. (Survey Monkey 2019, cited 1.5.2019.)

Here the weights are given as follows:

The 1st choice has a weight of 7

The 2nd choice has a weight of 6

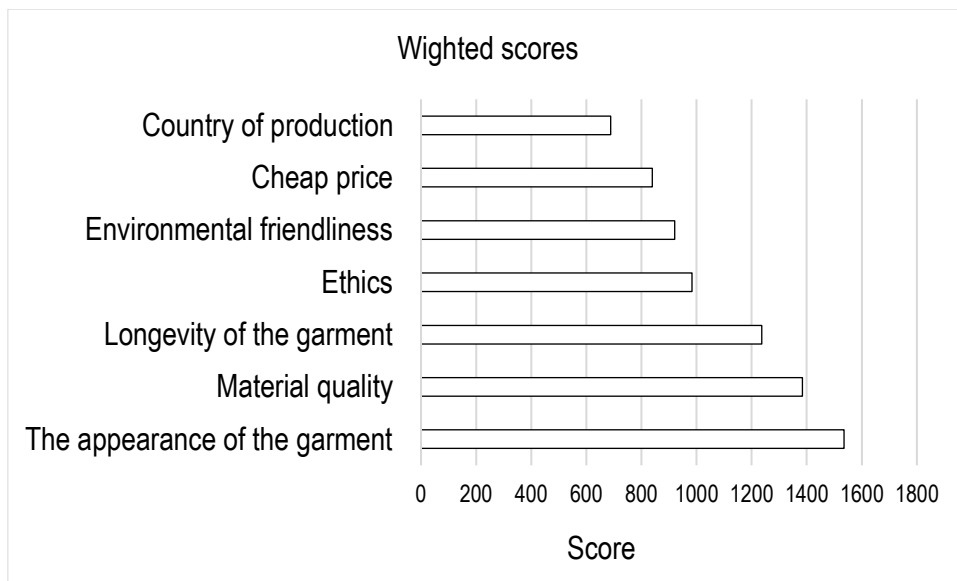
The 3rd choice has a weight of 5

The 4th choice has a weight of 4

The 5th choice has a weight of 3

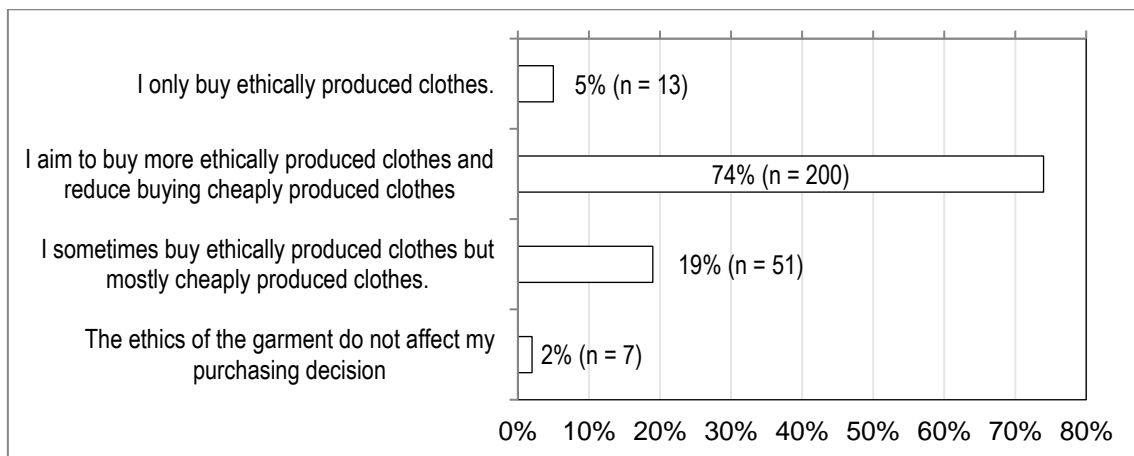
The 6th choice has a weight of 2

The 7th choice has a weight of 1



Survey Monkey 2019, Cited 1.5.2019,

9. Which of the following best describes your buying behaviour? \*





## FACEBOOK POST OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE



QUESTIONNAIRE SIGN IN THE STORE

