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**Does culture have a significant role in consumers
perception of the sustainability of the Textile and
Clothing industry?**

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ABSTRACT:

Climate change and globalization have become two of the most significant trends in the latest years, with Textile and Clothing industry at the fore front of the publics focus on sustainability issues. Consumers are becoming more aware of sustainability issues in relation to their consumption, opening up a door for companies to differentiate and gain competitive advantage. Along with globalization, and recent resurgence of populism and nationalism internationally, culture has become more significant. As culture is known to significantly influence consumers' behavior, values and attitudes, it can be considered vital for companies to know whether it has an effect on their industries sustainability. This thesis connects these themes by researching the effects of culture on consumers attitudes and perceptions in the context of Textile and Clothing industry's sustainability. The research is approached through the following hypotheses: 1. If a consumer identifies strongly with their culture (nationality), then culture influences their perceptions of sustainability within the Textile and Clothing industry, and 2. Knowledge of sustainability influences consumers perceptions of sustainability within the Textile and Clothing industry negatively. The main themes, sustainability, consumer perception and culture are analyzed through various theories and models, including Social Identity theory, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the GLOBE and the Triple Bottom Line. Utilizing the theoretical framework and by adopting a quantitative and deductive approach through the use of an online survey, the hypotheses are answered. Through performing multiple regression, merely knowledge of sustainability was found to have a significant influence on attitudes towards sustainability, On the other hand, neither cultural drivers or demographic aspects were found to be significant predictors of consumers' attitudes towards sustainability. While consumers' strong identity with their culture has a strong influence, according to the findings, focus should be put on consumers knowledge, rather than cultural factors. While the sample turned out to be too small, the results of this thesis can be seen as significant from both managerial standpoint and for the companies in Textile and Clothing industry. The findings of this thesis can be utilized e.g. in adapting companies' marketing strategies to better recognize the influence of culture and knowledge on consumers' perceptions regarding sustainability, as well as utilized in future research on the subject.

KEYWORDS: Sustainability science, Culture, Perceptions, attitudes, Textile and Clothing industry

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TIIVISTELMÄ:

Ilmastonmuutos ja globalisaatio ovat muodostuneet viime vuosien merkittävimiksi trendeiksi ja samalla tekstiili- ja vaateteollisuus alan kestävyteen liittyvät ongelmat ovat siirtyneet ihmisten huomion keskipisteeseen. Kuluttajat ovat entistä tietoisempia vastuullisuudesta omaan kulluttamiseensa liittyen, antaen yrityksille mahdollisuuden erottautua ja saavuttaa kilpailuedun. Globalisaation lisäksi myös nationalismi ja populismi ovat kasvattaneet kannatustaan ympäri maailmaa viime aikoina, tehden kulttuurista aikaisempaa merkittävämmän. Yritysten kannalta voidaan nähdä tärkeäksi tietää vaikuttaako kulttuuri kuluttajien havaintoihin, ja miten, sillä kulttuurin tiedetään olevan merkittävä vaikutustekijä kuluttajien käyttäytymisen, arvojen ja näkemyksien kannalta. Tämä tutkielma yhdistää nämä teemat tutkimalla kulttuurin vaikutusta kuluttajien näkemyksiin ja havaintoihin tekstiili- ja vaateteollisuuden vastuullisuudesta. Tutkimus lähestyy aihetta seuraavien hypoteesien kautta: 1. Jos kuluttaja identifioituu vahvasti kulttuuriinsa (kansallisuuteensa), silloin kulttuuri vaikuttaa hänen havaintoihinsa tekstiili- ja vaateteollisuuden kestävydestä, ja 2. tietämys kestävydestä vaikuttaa kuluttajien havaintoihin tekstiili- ja vaateteollisuuden kestävydestä negatiivisesti. Keskeisiä teemoja, kestävyys, kuluttajien havainnot ja kulttuuri, käsitellään erilaisten teorioiden ja mallien, kuten sosiaalinen identiteetti teorian, Hofsteden kulttuuri- ulottuvuuksien, GLOBE:n ja TBL:n, kautta. Teoreettista pohjaa, sekä kvantitatiivista ja deduktiivista lähestymistapaa käyttämällä verkkopohjaisen kyselyn muodossa, tutkimus pyrkii vastaamaan hypoteeseihin. Monimuuttuja regressioanalyysin kautta voidaan todeta, että vain tietämys kestävydestä vaikuttaa merkittävästi kuluttajien näkemyksiin kestävydestä. Toisaalta sekä kulttuuritekijät että väestötieteelliset tekijät todetaan epämerkittäviksi tekijöiksi kuluttajien näkemyksien vaikuttajina. Vaikka kuluttajien vahvalla kulttuurillisella identiteetillä on vahva vaikutus, tutkielman tulokset korostavat kuluttajien tietämyksen merkitystä kulttuurin yli. Vaikka tutkimuksen otannan voidaan katsoa olevan liian pieni, tutkielman tuloksien voidaan katsoa olevan merkittävät sekä johtamisen näkökulmasta että tekstiili- ja vaateteollisuuden yritysten kannalta. Tämän tutkielman tuloksia voidaan hyödyntää yritysten mm. markkinointistrategioiden mukauttamisessa huomioimaan kulttuurin ja tietämyksen vaikutuksen kuluttajien havaintoihin kestävyteen liittyen. Lisäksi tulevat tutkimukset voivat hyödyntää ja replikoida sen tuloksia.

AVAINSANAT: Sustainability science, Culture, Perceptions, attitudes, Textile and Clothing industry

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Abbreviations

TBL	Triple Bottom Line
SIT	Social Identity Theory
CVSCALE	Cultural Values Scale
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ESG	Environmental Social Governance
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

During the last decades, globalization has rapidly increased (Steenkamp, 2019, p. 1). Along with it, changes related to increased mobility, internet, social media, and use of English language on a global scale have ultimately diversified and fragmented people's belonging, leading to confusion when it comes to culture and identity (Kramsch & Zhu, 2020, pp. 1-5). While some scholars have suggested that globalization leads to cultural homogenization, borders and nationality can be seen to have in fact increased their significance through recent resurgence of populism and nationalism internationally (Steenkamp, 2019, p. 1; Kramsch & Zhu, 2020, p. 2). Along with these changes, culture has once again been on the table in terms of diversity, language and identity (Kramsch & Zhu, 2020, p. 2), although local culture has long been argued to be the most significant factor influencing identity and consumer behavior (Inglehart & Baker, 2000).

One of the industries experiencing growth is the Textile and Clothing industry, as for example in European Union growth in exports and trade in general have surged, with women's clothing leading the trend (Euratex, 2022). Simultaneously, consumers are becoming more aware of sustainability issues in relation to their consumption and implementing that knowledge in practice (Gershof & Frels, 2015; Grazzini et al., 2021). There is a growing market for sustainability in the Clothing industry; 80% of Europeans expressed a desire when it comes to acquiring clothing with longer lifespan (Eurobarometer, 2020). Furthermore, according to a European survey from 2020, 14% of people have strived to purchase secondhand clothing instead of new pieces (Fashion Revolution, 2020).

The rise of ethical consumerism has led to pressure on brands to appear ethically committed and integrate ethical values into their brand identities (Iglesias et al., 2019). Moreover, responding to stakeholders' concerns is essential from a strategic point of

view considering the competitive position of the company (Zhu et al., 2016). Indeed, in order to build a successful business in today's world, an organization needs to pay attention to social and environmental issues on top of the economic issues (Abbate et al., 2024, p. 2854). Companies are expected to increase their CSR initiatives while simultaneously reducing their environmental impact (Zhu et al., 2016), requiring changes in for example operations. An essential tool that has emerged for organizations wanting to demonstrate responsible behavior is Sustainability reporting (SR) (Mori & Best, 2017), and the use of Sustainability reporting has been increasing significantly around the world in recent years.

Appearing ethical in consumers eyes has been associated with several benefits, like increased customer loyalty (Iglesias et al., 2019). However, this can be challenging as consumers often have difficulties in distinguishing responsible firms amongst the ever-increasing number of eco-labels (Gosselt et al., 2019). Culture can be considered to be in a key position here, as Kotler et al. (2016) state, culture influences consumers' behavior, values and attitudes. Globalization has opened up a door for companies to differentiate on local consumer culture (Schuiling & Kapferer, 2004). Indeed, once a company's position aligns with consumers' cultural meanings and attitudes, consumers' cultural associations are expected to positively influence company's brand equity (Cayla & Arnould 2008; Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013).

1.2 Research gap

This thesis will attempt to shed more light onto an area of research that has not been researched enough. The focus is on whether consumers' culture affects their perceptions when it comes to the level of sustainability of the Textile and Clothing industry. While each aspect of my thesis has been extensively studied, to the author's best knowledge this specific perspective of combining these main themes has not been taken. The industry is especially fitting to the subject of this thesis, as the Textile and Clothing industry has been in the global eye regarding its sustainability during the latest years.

Furthermore, companies within the industry often have fragmented and complex supply chains, which are known to have especially socially and environmentally negative impacts (Strozzilaan, 2022), giving the study a relevant perspective.

Abbate et al. (2024, p. 2852) stated in their review of studies in the field of sustainability in Textile and Clothing industry, that this research in this area is growing popularity within scientific publications. Majority of studies, such as Dhir et al. (2021), Hwang et al. (2020), Kang et al. (2013), Karaosman et al. (2015), Nguyen et al. (2019), Sobuj et al. (2021) and Zhao et al. (2019) for instance, have focused on sustainable clothing purchase intention and factors influencing it. Furthermore, for instance consumer behaviors in sustainable disposal, consumption, usage and purchase has also been studied (Wagner & Heinzl, 2020). On the other hand, Islam et al. (2020) researched what the main practices related to environmentally friendliness were utilized within the industry. Others, like Koszewska (2018) has studied the subject from the point of view of challenges in the industry.

When discussing consumer behavior and sustainable fashion, Busalim et al. (2022, p. 1) state that, for instance, cross-cultural perspective is not represented as much as other aspects. Maignan (2001) researched cross-cultural differences between consumer's perceptions of corporate social responsibilities. In a large-scale review of studies on consumer behavior and sustainability from the years 2009-2019, merely 8 had an international aspect (Busalim et al., 2022, pp. 1821-1822). Therefore, it is clear that this perspective should be studied more, especially in the 21 century. Busalim et al. (2022, pp. 1821-1822) call for more focus on demographic influences in studies focusing on the subject, as consumers of different cultures, for instance, can have differing behavioral responses, process of sustainable messages, and values. The relevance of cultures influence on consumers' perception of companies' sustainability can be seen to be considerable, as consumers create the demand for green business, and therefore their behavior is powerful when it comes to the failure or success of a company.

Climate is increasingly thought to be either a financial risk or an opportunity for companies (Fink, 2019). A positive image of the sustainability aspects of a company may lead to positive effects, like increased purchase likelihood (Kumar et al., 2021). On the other hand, when brands find themselves in bad lighting from the consumers point of view, the consequences may even include loss of green brand equity. Previous studies that have researched the sustainability of companies with a focus on consumers' perception have been, for instance, related to greenwashing. The possible negative impacts of an organization's activities regarding sustainability can be both reputational and operational, which can lead to financial effects (GRI Foundation, 2022, p.9).

Beyond the reputational effects related to consumers and their view of a company's sustainability, their perceptions can affect, for instance, their consumption and brand attitudes. However, a gap in consumer's attitude-behavior was identified in the context of sustainable consumption (Busalim et al., 2022, p. 1). In reference to that, Busalim et al. (2022, p.1822) suggest that studies implement social theories, taking a perspective of social influence. As suggested by Busalim et al. (2022), this thesis adopts both social influence and cultural influence as the research's main aspects in the context of sustainability, while additionally focusing on the cross-cultural factor suggested by Maignan (2001). Moreover, this thesis attempts to develop more information regarding this research gap from the point of view of cultural influence on consumers' perception.

1.3 Research questions

This paper aims to address the gap in research on whether culture has an effect on consumer perceptions towards companies' sustainability. Furthermore, the **main research question** of the paper is:

Main research question: **Does culture have a significant role in consumers' perception of the sustainability of Textile & Clothing industry?**

The **subquestions** are:

- What is the level of consumers' knowledge, and as a consequence, the level of their attitudes on the sustainability of the Textile and Clothing industry?
- Do consumers identify with their country's culture, and subsequently view themselves as being part of that in-group?
- What effects does the culture of a consumer have on their perceptions?

Below in Figure 1, the main themes, and their expected relationships, of the thesis are illustrated.

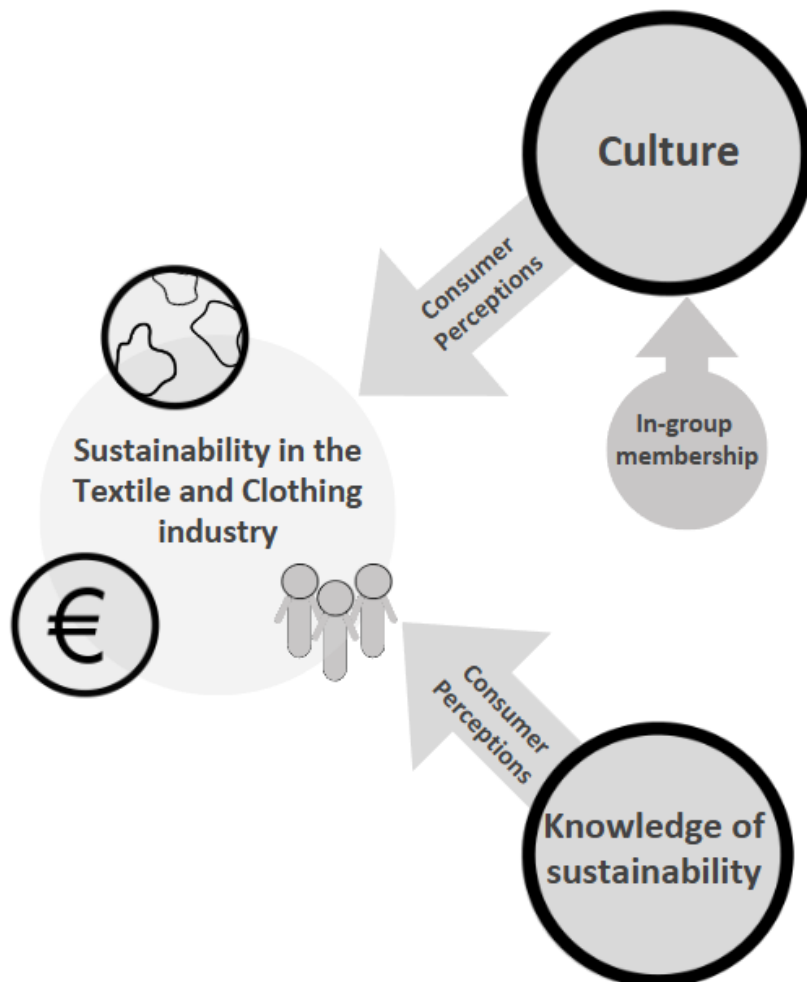


Figure 1 Relationships between main themes

1.4 Definitions of key concepts

Now the definitions of the main concepts are provided: sustainability, sustainability reporting, cultures across countries, and consumer perception:

- **Sustainability**

The concept of sustainability was first defined in 1987 in an UN report, as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (Brundtland, 1987). In order to achieve this, sustainability needs to be balanced between environmental, social and economic matters (White, 2015, p. 5)

- **Sustainability reporting**

Sustainability reporting can be described as the measurement, disclosure, and communication of information about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or Environmental Social Governance (ESG) aspects, activities, policies, and risks (Christensen et al., 2011, pp.1178-1179). Moreover, it can consider the information needs of both investors and stakeholders as a whole. Sustainability reporting can be seen as a vital way of achieving wider sustainability and climate goals.

- **Cultures across countries**

Culture is perceived as a blurry concept, which is relative in its meaning in different circumstances and has multiple significant layers (Gjerde, 2004; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2012). It can be defined as programming of minds on a collective level (Hofstede, 1991, p.5), with shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events (House & Javidan, 2004, p. 15). This can e.g., be the result of common experiences of members (House & Javidan, 2004, p. 15) and ultimately leads to recognition of members of a group from another (Hofstede, 1991, p.5).

- **Consumer perception**

Consumers' perceptions are related to their ability of reasoning reality based on external stimuli (Rosenzweg & Gilovich, 2012). Moreover, individuals' perceptions of physical reality is strongly influenced by social factors (Moscovici, 1976). Consumer perception theories focus on the influence of consumers' idea of goods, which affects their buying behaviors (Rosenzweg & Gilovich, 2012).

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The structure of this thesis consists of six main chapters, which are introduction, theoretical background, research methodology and data, results, analysis, and finally conclusions. The first chapter, introduction, aims to introduce the subject and scope of the study. Moreover, the research questions and key concepts of the thesis are introduced.

Introduction is followed by theoretical background. This theoretical chapter begins by analyzing consumer perception through Social Identity Theory. Moreover, Hofstede's dimensions are introduced as the basis of cultural theories and the GLOBE is introduced to elaborate on Hofstede's research on cultural grouping. Sustainability in general is analyzed through Triple Bottom Line, as well as opening up sustainability reporting and sustainability within the Textile and Clothing industry. Furthermore, the two hypotheses of the thesis are introduced in the theoretical chapter.

The third chapter, research methodology and material, introduces research approach and design, data collection and sample, as well as description of data. Moreover, results of the study are presented in chapter four, while the fifth chapter provides analysis. Finally, conclusions in chapter six addresses limitations, reliability and validity, as well as states both implications and suggestions for future research.

2 Theoretical background

In order to understand the role of Culture in consumer perception of international companies' sustainability, this thesis adopts four main theories: Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory and the GLOBE, Social identity theory, as well as Triple Bottom line model as the theoretical framework for this thesis.

2.1 Social identity theory

Consumer behavior can be an extremely influential asset or detriment to companies and their brands. Studies have shown time and again that, among others, a brand's reputation is vital and connected to brand equity (Mahmood & Bashir, 2020). Furthermore, by improving areas which consumers consider important, like ethical CSR practices, companies can expect direct benefits in the form of growth in brand equity. Increasingly one of the factors consumers care about is ethical and green practices by companies.

In this subchapter of the thesis, the main aspects of Social Identity Theory (SIT) will be reviewed and utilized in the process of understanding consumer perceptions in the context of cultural influence. Social identity theory can be seen applicable in this study, as it highlights the relationship between entities embodiment of cultural values and the subsequent in-group membership experienced by consumers (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986; Costarelli & Colis, 2016). The theory can be seen as relevant as it is, for instance, considered an umbrella term for other theories in the area of intergroup behavior (Harwood, 2020, p. 2), and has been universally used in marketing studies (Han et al., 2023).

Social identity theory was developed by John Turner and Henri Tajfel in the early 1970's while studying 'minimal group paradigm', which illustrated the fundamental need to differentiate based on group memberships (Tajfel et al., 1971). Within these studies, people were found to be willing to sacrifice high levels of benefits in order to retain relative superiority compared to other groups' members. Later in the 1970's, the studies led to the development of social identity theory (SIT), a model that places individual

motivations related to identity at the center (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Moreover, the theory focuses on social categories, the process of categorization, as well as behavior within intergroups (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 58). In fact, the key aspects of the theory; categorization processes, social comparison processes, self-enhancement motivation, beliefs about relations amongst groups, are integrated to analyze intergroup behavior as well as collective self- and social identity (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 57).

Categorization of social groups focuses on differentiation of others and ourselves into separate distinctive categories, utilizing stereotypes on attributes distinguishing the group in the process (Oakes, 1996; Oakes et al., 1994). Mental representations upholding social groups are defined by aspects such as hobbies, gender or nationality, which people identify with (Han et al., 2023). In a shared identity, in-group membership is built upon group shares values, norms and narratives (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Core attitudes within the group are less likely to be abandoned by group members (Cooper & Mackie, 1983). Furthermore, social groups are limited by physical and social boundaries (form), norms and roles (structure), as well as common history (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 462).

As mentioned earlier, identity is multiple, and people have both social identities as well as an individual identity. However, it needs to be clarified that all identities can be seen as social in terms of defining a person in social context (Turner, 1991). Social identity in itself is seen as an individual's understanding of self as a member of a specific social category, and how that differs compared to members of other categories (Tajfel, 1978). Ultimately, it connects the societal and individual together (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 194).

It is said that specifically the group's common history plays a key role in forming its identity, and subsequently the identities of its members (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 463). Moreover, ideological traditions, like religion or nationalities, have been found to be tied with social categories, and in history have had a significant influence on ingroup members (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 194). Moreover, social identity can be of more

importance than individual and survival and has aggravated even to kill or die for ideological reasons. Social identity theory defines individual members in ideological terms, which aids in understanding how collective action can be coherent ideologically. The theory does not, however, specify in detail how social identity and socio-ideological aspects influence crowd in micro-processes (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 194).

Psychological processes concerning social identity are seen at large social group levels, as one's sense of belonging and in-group membership is associated with both negative and positive feelings (Harwood, 2020, p. 2). Groups have a significant role in an individual's identity; Hogg & Abrams (1988, p.463) state "...just as the group is within the individual, the individual is within the group...". Social identity is perception of self through the stereotypical characteristics of the ingroup, which is highlighted in the differentiation of self as this includes depersonalization of self, meaning that the category becomes self-defining instead of self-inclusive (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 434). Moreover, in this process actions, thoughts and perceptions are molded to those of the groups prototype, ultimately producing collective self-conceptualization and group behavior (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, P. 74).

It is said that a key contribution of SIT to the field of group processes can be found specifically in the link of group membership and self-conception to social categorization (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p.61). Furthermore, Turner (1991) has found that the psychological foundation for group behavior can be identified in self-categorization, specifically in prototype-based depersonalization of self. This is seen as ingroup members determine the relevant action considering their category identity in different contexts. Therefore, members of a social category expect others within the same group to act accordingly and agree on subjects relevant to the shared social identity.

Prototype of a social group defines and evaluates aspects and characteristics within the specific group membership (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 61). Depersonalization of self, based on a social group's prototype, is at its core self-categorization identical to how one

would categorize others, thereby depersonalizing oneself (Turner et. al., 1987). Moreover, as one's concept of self is tied closely to the prototype, one adapts their behavior in terms of actions, feelings and attitudes, to match those of the relevant ingroup prototype (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 61). Thus, one becomes to evaluate and represent themselves in collective terms shared with others within the group.

The collective self of an individual, on the other hand, can be seen to be a layered collection of relatively distinctive social identities of the social groups the individual feels they belong to (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 61). Individual identity is presented as an ever-shifting point on a continuum that ranges from social identity on one end to personal identity on the other (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 463). Furthermore, the specific point on the continuum is affected by various variables, which determine also which group membership of the individual is the most significant when on the social identity side.

Social identity theory has had various explanations for the motivational basis of an individual ; Abrams & Hogg (1988) found that at the center of motivations was a desire for positive self-concept. Self-esteem has also been considered as a vital motivator, as well as an outcome of intergroup actions (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 444). Categorization to social groups is seen within the theory as an inevitable human instinct that is intended to simplify the surrounding environment (Harwood, 2020, p. 3). As we have categorized ourselves within a group, we start to look for ways to gain from the ingroup membership in the form of positive feelings (Harwood, 2020, p. 3).

Social identity processes have been found to have a variety of effects; group membership affects one's behaviors, attitudes and perceptions, for instance (Han et al., 2023). Identity-related processes can predict collective and individual responses to group statuses at societal-level, for instance, in the form of discrimination among groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In-group bias illustrates how one tends to discriminate against out-groups and be partial to their in-group (Han et al., 2023). Beyond ingroup membership, self-identifying

with a group creates a strong ingroup attachment, (Costarelli & Colis, 2016), which has found to be at a key position in portraying dimensions and aspects of ones ingroup in a better light compared to outgroups (Han & Guo, 2018).

Discrimination and prejudice between groups can ultimately be explained through this search for positive differentiation of own ingroup (Harwood, 2020, p. 3). Moreover, intergroup differentiation and categorization can also be utilized to reduce uncertainty (Hogg, 2000), minimize threats to self-esteem (Hogg & Abrams, 1990), as well as to obtain a positive social identity (Tajfel, 1978). According to Tajfel et al. (1971), the fundamental need to differentiate based on group memberships is inherently so strong that people are willing to sacrifice high levels of benefits in order to retain relative superiority compared to other groups' members. Moreover, the participants would, for instance, welcome lower cash payments, as long as the payments for an outgroup were lower. As mentioned before, this was found to be the case in 'minimal group paradigm' studies in the 1970's, which lead to the further development of social identity theory.

Group identification has been shown to lead to polarization, as the prototype assimilated by the ingroup accentuates intergroup differences (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 20). Moreover, polarized attitudes appear when in contact with a salient outgroup, especially when differentiating subjects between the groups are present, and can lead to an increase of said attitudes. On the other hand, ingroup members develop an attraction towards groups prototype in the form of group members embodying it (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 20). Furthermore, through the group prototype and shared cognition, reciprocal patterns of mutual regard are transformed into consensual regard for more prototypical group members (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 21).

While SIT and social categorization have been found to have extensive effects on individuals behavior, social perception and self-conception, producing so-called 'groupy' consequences (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 61), the effects can vary depending on context. For instance, consumers' buying behavior can be explained through cultural influence,

as purchasing national brands can be viewed as an act of self-stereotyping and identifying with the ingroup (Van Veelen et al., 2015). Moreover, act of purchase in this context not only embraces their ingroup membership, it strengthens their ingroup identity in both their and the outgroups eyes. Ingroup membership influences consumers evaluations of brands extensively, as they associate cultural identity with the brands (Swoboda et al., 2012).

Effects of ingroup membership can be seen to have differing effects depending on the individuals themselves, the goods, or a brand's qualities. For instance, the individuals own level of ingroup attachment has an effect, as people with lower levels are less motivated to stereotype themselves with the ingroup (Han & Guo, 2018). Moreover, they may view their ambitions to be contradictory with the ingroups and are therefore less likely to self-stereotype with the ingroup. On the other hand, individuals identifying strongly with their ingroup act and engage in endorsement behaviors on the group's behalf (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Van Veelen et al., 2015). A strong sense of self-identifying within the ingroup can also lead to engagement behaviors, like self-stereotyping and self-anchoring (Tajfel & Turner, 1979 ; Van Veelen et al., 2015). Contradictory from self-stereotyping, self-anchoring portrays how an ingroup member projects their attributes onto the rest of the ingroup.

On the other hand, attributes significant in the function of ingroup mindset can also be related to the brands perceived localness. It has been argued that when consumer perceives a local brand, the localness signals an alignment of local culture and values (Han et al., 2023). Moreover, the embodiment of local values has been shown to be able to create a powerful sense of ingroup membership, identity and attachment (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986; et al., 2006; Costarelli & Colis, 2016). However, individuals with high cosmopolitanism can be expected to be less affected by perceived brand localness, PBL (Han et al., 2023).

When the good does not significantly affect consumers lifestyle or identity, they tend to have low involvement with goods (Quester & Lim, 2003). Low involvement can also be generally seen with frequently purchased goods. As consumers have low involvement with goods, they tend to spend less time researching the good, compared to high involvement goods. On the other hand, with relevant goods consumer has high involvement, and actively researches information on the good (Berens et al., 2005 ; Schiffman et al., 2011). It has been shown that consumers are more confident with intrinsic cues when they are informative and understandable, as well as when they are related to high-involvement goods (Schiffman et al., 2011). Moreover, if intrinsic cues can't be evaluated correctly, consumer relays on extrinsic cues, so-called 'cognitive shortcuts' (Wilson & Brekke, 1994).

All in all, ingroup membership is given a significant meaning in social identity theory, and members identifying strongly with their group act on its behalf (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This can include self-stereotyping and self-anchoring (Van veelen et al., 2015). Indeed, group is said to be the key of understanding behavior (Abrahams & Hogg, 2001, p. 1-2).

This leads to the following **Hypothesis**:

Hypothesis 1 (H1) *If a consumer identifies strongly with their culture (nationality), then culture influences their perceptions of sustainability within the Textile and Clothing industry.*

2.2 Hofstede's cultural dimensions and the GLOBE

In this chapter the concept of culture is, first of all, analyzed more profoundly. Culture is often perceived as a blurry concept, which is relative in its meaning in different circumstances and has multiple significant layers (Gjerde, 2004; Spencer-Oatey, & Franklin, 2012). For example, culture can be seen as highly collectivistic, due to the social meanings and behaviors it involves (Kitayama & Uskul, 2011). On the other hand, it can be

seen as individualistic, since society constantly molds and is molded by individuals (Markus & Kitayama, 2010). Therefore, there have always been different views on how to define the concept of culture. Since the concept can be considered extremely hard to grasp due to its unambiguity, some illustrative findings of existing literature are included in order to better illuminate culture from a practical standpoint.

Hofstede (1991, p.5) described culture as programming of minds on a collective level, leading to recognition of members of a group from another. On the other hand, according to a cultural model GLOBE, culture is defined as “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations” (House & Javidan, 2004, p. 15). Moreover, cultural processes partly mold with the time in line with the integration and differentiation of cultures (Raeff, 2011), which can in part be explained by the ever-changing environment influencing people, as well as their behavior and values (Gentile et al., 2014). Especially traditions can attain strong cultural importance, as they for instance span communication (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

This chapter will first discuss culture from the point of view of Geert Hofstede, whose theories have been widely used as a basis for cultural research, and especially cultural values, such as long-term orientation and collectivism, are considered vital constructs in marketing (Klimas, 2019, p. 117-127). By researching dozens of countries and their values it was discovered that they all had similar issues, but different solutions to them (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 36-37). These issues can be outlined by four themes; 1. Social inequality, including relationship to authority, 2. Relationship between individual and group, 3. Conception of masculinity and femininity, including social and emotional consequences of being either gender, 4. Way of handling uncertainty and ambiguity, which can be connected to ways of handling both aggression and how feelings are expressed.

These issues can be transformed into various cultural dimensions (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 37). The first dimension is called power distance, which can be measured from high to low. Moreover, it can be defined as the extension in which the less influential members of organizations and institutions in a country expect and accept an uneven distribution of power (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 59). Some typical features of countries with low power distance include that subordinates are less dependent on their superiors and prefer consultation in decision-making. There is also a relatively low emotional distance between superiors and subordinates. On the other hand, in countries with high power distance, subordinates are highly dependent on their superiors, either preferring the dependence or rejecting it. Additionally, the emotional distance between the subordinates and superiors is large. In eastern societies the greater asymmetry of power can be seen in sellers having more power than buyers within marketing principles (Frazier et al., 1989). Furthermore, in western societies this has not been the case.

The second dimension is called collectivism versus individualism (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 37). This dimension consists of dividing countries into either collectivistic or individualistic countries (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 88). Collectivistic societies put groups interests above individuals, and there is a given, mutual relationship of dependency between an individual and the group. Moreover, individuals see themselves as a part of the group. On the other hand, in individualistic countries people view themselves as “me” and as individuals who are judged based on their own attributes, not by being members of a group. Furthermore, within an individualistic society individuals are put before the group and encouraged to be independent.

The third dimension is called femininity versus masculinity (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 37). The terms feminine and masculine refer to relative social, emotional, and cultural roles, which can be shown both by men and women (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, pp. 130-133). Masculine societies are connected with clearly separate gender roles. Men are expected to be tough and focused on materialistic goals, women are expected to be more shy, gentle and care about the quality of life. On the other hand, in feminine

societies gender roles are more overlapped. This means that both men and women are expected to be shy, gentle and care about the quality of life. On the other hand, in masculine societies individuals tend to more often be judgmental, assertive and care less about others feelings (Hofstede, 1991).

The fourth dimension is called uncertainty avoidance index, and it can be measured from weak to strong (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 37). It is based on the idea that people from each nation have to face the fact that the future is uncertain and hard to predict, which can cause anxiousness in some individuals and groups alike (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, pp.180-181). The feelings we have when it comes to this uncertainty, and how we deal with it, is part of our cultural heritage.

The fifth dimension is called short-term versus long-term orientation (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p.226). It is divided into long-term and short-term orientations, of which short-term orientation aims to facilitate virtue that is connected to the present moment. This is the case especially when it comes to traditions, fulfilling social obligations and “saving face”. Moreover, there is a social pressure to spend money rather than save (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 228). On the other hand, the long-term orientation aims to facilitate virtue that is directed at future rewards. ‘Economical’ and ‘persistent’ could be said to be the attributes that picture this orientation best (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 226). Moreover, respect for circumstances is thought highly of and it is important that one can feel shame (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 228).

The power of culture and its dimensions in practice can be showcased, for example, by a study that focused on identifying effects caused by cultural dimensions, more specifically collectivism and long-term orientation, to Polish and Vietnamese consumers (Doanh et al., 2021). Furthermore, the study aimed to identify perceived green and environmental purchase willingness when it comes to the intention to purchase environmentally friendly goods, and both long-term orientation and collectivism were found to predict consumer purchase intentions. Moreover, perceived environmental knowledge was

connected to green purchase intention (Amoako & Dzogbenuku, 2020, pp. 1609-1626; Cheung & To, 2019, pp. 145-153). When comparing Poland and Vietnam as countries, one could see that on top of the differences in culture and the level of development in the two countries, the awareness of sustainable consumption was also significantly higher in Poland (Doanh et al., 2021).

Doanh et al. (2021) generated the data by first conducting customer surveys in both Poland (301 consumers), and Vietnam (611 consumers), and secondly by analyzing the gathered data by utilizing a structural equation modelling (Doanh et al., 2021). The results of the study showed that the cultures of both Poland and Vietnam had in common the predicting effect of green purchase willingness on green purchase intention. Moreover, both had perceived environmental knowledge as a significant factor participating on the willingness and intention of purchasing sustainable products, although, this was found to be much higher in Poland. Finally, especially showcasing the influence of culture in practice, the cultural dimensions of collectivism and long-term orientation were found to greatly influence green consumption in the collectivist Vietnam culture specifically, which was not the case with Poland.

Although research has recognized attributes and differences in cultural values among different countries, a study incorporating Hofstede's cultural dimensions showed that they affect behavior to a lesser extent (Sobol et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the cultural dimensions had an impact on consumer behavior, for example, when it comes to product categories. Moreover, individualism was shown to impact consumption negatively when it came to local and global foods, and positively with electronics. Power distance was shown to be positively related to household appliances and luxury goods, and on the other hand, feminine cultural values were shown to positively affect the consumption of personal-care products. Finally, short-term orientation was found to be positively connected with the adaptation of global fashion.

Many studies have extended Hofstede's research and utilized the model of cultural dimensions in later studies. One of the most prominent of those theories can be seen to be GLOBE. The GLOBE was originally developed in 1991, and eventually funded in 1993 (Chhokar et al., 2013, p. 6). Furthermore, it studies the interrelationships of national culture, organizational practices and leadership with the help of 175 scholars, management researchers and social scientists from 61 countries. One of its accomplishments has been a study including multiple phases, methods and countries, in order to determine the cultural influences on organizational processes and leadership (Chhokar et al., 2013, p. 12).

The GLOBE and its key dimensions were developed upon existing literature, such as Hofstede (2001) and Hofstede & Bond (1988) (Chhokar et al., 2013, p. 3). Moreover, the quantitative dimensions it includes are Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism, Humane Orientation, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Performance Orientation, Power Distance, and Uncertainty Avoidance. Out of these dimensions, six were developed on the basis of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, Uncertainty Avoidance and Power Distance even having the same form (Chhokar et al., 2013, p. 4). Furthermore, two of Hofstede's dimensions were divided into four dimensions in GLOBE; Collectivism became the Institutional Collectivism and the In-Group Collectivism. On the other hand, Masculinity was developed into Gender Egalitarianism and Assertiveness.

GLOBE has developed cultural study further by grouping societal cultures through both physical climate and regional clusters (House, 2004, p. 178). Each cluster has a profile defining it through the nine GLOBE's cultural dimensions introduced in the last paragraph, focusing equally on cultural values and practices. Moreover, the clusters were developed to easily perceive intercultural differences and similarities. Geography has widely been recognized in cultural studies as a significant influence on culture (House, 2004, p. 179), Hofstede (2001) stated that it is in fact the largest factor behind intersocietal variation in cultural dimensions. Beyond geography, GLOBE's regional clusters were crafted keeping in mind the economic, linguistic, religious and historical similarities between societies, as well as various previous research on the subject (House, 2004, p. 183).

GLOBE identified 10 regional clusters, which are comprised of 61 countries that participated in the study (House, 2004, p. 183). Furthermore, the clusters are limited by larger regions, the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa. European societies are divided into Anglo, Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, Germanic Europe, as well as Eastern Europe (House, 2004, p.183). Figure 2 below, is modelled after a figure in GLOBE, depicting the ten regional clusters and 61 countries participating within the study (House, 2004, p. 190).

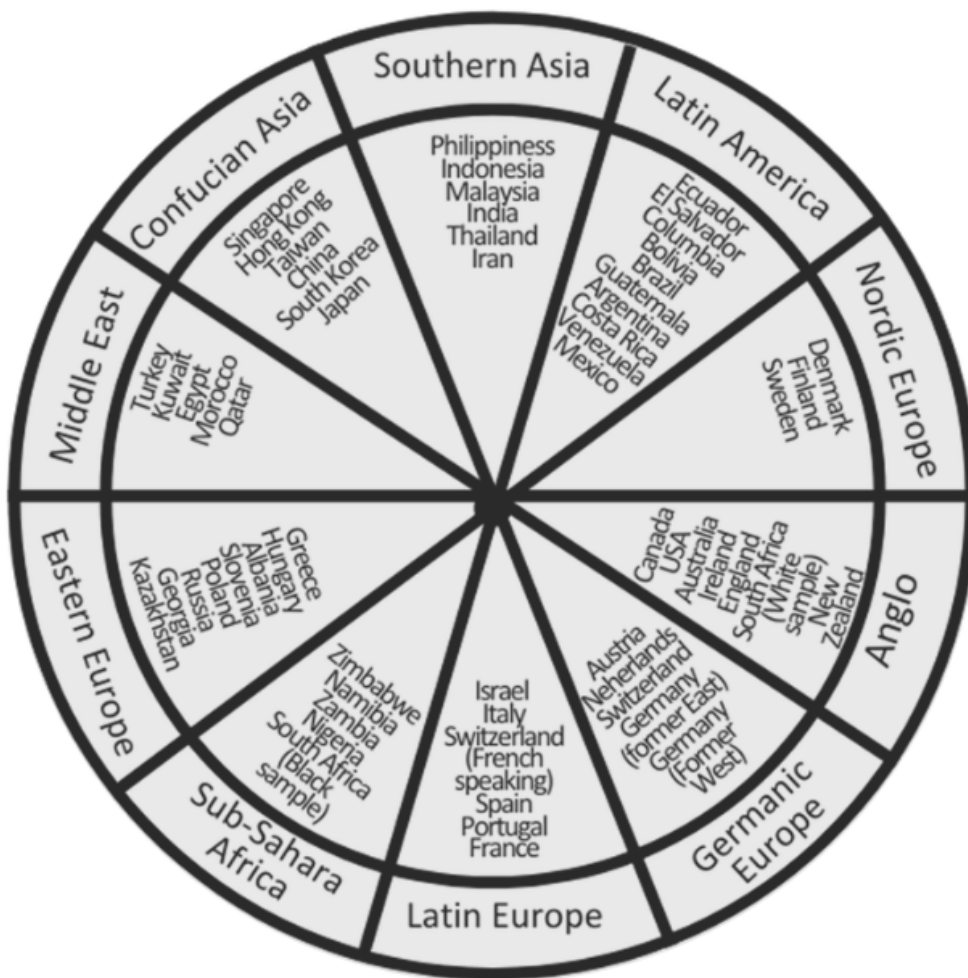


Figure 2 Country Clusters, modelled after GLOBE (House, 2004, p. 190)

It is concluded that neither Hofstede's cultural dimensions, or the GLOBE, could be adopted in this thesis without the other. Through extensive empirical research, this

thesis determines that no grouping method in Hofstede's cultural dimensions that is applicable in this context on a practical level was found. On the other hand, the GLOBE's cultural clusters were developed first and foremost in order to determine the cultural influences on organizational processes and leadership (Chhokar et al., 2013, p. 12), requiring the support of a model that researches culture from a more overall perspective. Thus, the combination of both theories was chosen in this thesis.

2.3 Triple bottom line

In this chapter the concept of sustainability is first briefly defined in order to build a basis on the following theme Triple Bottom Line theory.

Originally ethical aspects were brought into the context of business in 1980's by Edward Freeman (1984), and the subject has since been an increasingly popular subject in studies. The concept of sustainability, however, was first introduced in 1987 in an UN report, defining it as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland, 1987). Now a days the definition of the concept can be said to be ambiguous, varying depending on situations and stakeholders (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the key emphasis can often still be identified as longevity of earth and its resources in regard to future life (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 49).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be seen as a stage on the way to sustainability (Wilson, 2015, p. 443). Moreover, CSR is widely recognized in business context and in many ways overlaps with sustainability, although the concept of sustainability itself is nevertheless more comprehensible. The most relevant and substantial interpretation of sustainable development, however, can be seen as the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) (Elkington, 1998, pp. 37-51). Norman et al. (2004, p.247) state that many have referred to Triple Bottom Line, while in fact discussing concepts like CSR. Moreover, the connection

between the two can be seen as substantial, as both discuss the vitality of considering environmental, social and financial in business operations.

Contrary to popular belief, the term Triple Bottom Line was first introduced in mid-1990's by a management think tank, and later developed further in 1997 paper called 'Cannibals with Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business' by John Elkington (Norman et al., 2004, p. 244). Simply put, Triple bottom line outlines sustainability as the social bottom line, economic bottom line and the environmental bottom line (Elkington, 1998). Moreover, Triple Bottom Line depicts people, profit, and planet as mutually reinforcing pillars essential in balancing social, environmental and economic results. Elkington (1998) emphasized that an organizations' performance as a whole should be perceived from the standpoint of their efforts towards environmental, social, and economical sustainability.

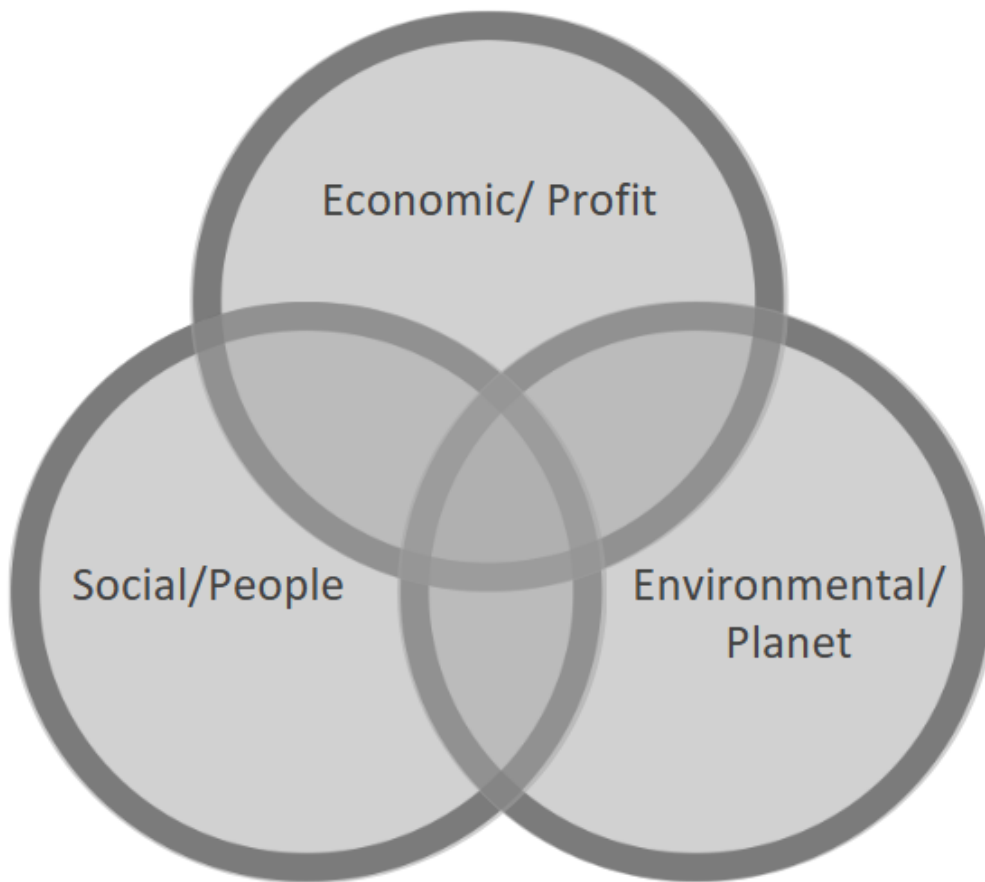


Figure 3 TBL provides economic, social and environmental sustainability. Modelled after Wilson (2015, p. 3).

Figure 3 above, modeled based on the Venn diagrams (1980) depicts the overlap between Triple Bottom Lines dimensions, demonstrating the interconnectedness between social, environmental and economic aspects within the model. This Venn diagram of sustainability can be said to provide a strong and relevant empirical frame of reference (Jones et al., 2011, p.258), while simultaneously it is recognized that the diagram merely depicts a snapshot of performance (Wilson, 2015, p. 443).

A key contribution of TBL was to introduce analyzing organizations' performance from a social and environmental aspect, beyond the traditional economical aspect (Norman & Mac Donald, 2004, p. 243). Another central contribution of Triple Bottom Line can be

found in the notion that an organization should measure, audit and report its fulfillment of these sustainability metrics to its stakeholders (Norman et al., 2004, p. 243). Moreover, these stakeholders can include suppliers, employees, communities and customers, for instance.

Similarly to the concept of sustainability itself, the objective of TBL was stated to entail meeting current and future generations' needs in terms of resources, without harming the environment (Elkington, 1998). Some of the objectives of TBL on an organizational level can be identified as ensuring profit and securing liquidity (economic pillar) (Schulz & Flanigan, 2016, pp. 449-458), contributing to the development of societal and human capital (social pillar), as well as consuming resources that can be reproduced (environmental pillar) (Hubbard, 2009; Norman et al., 2004, pp. 243-262).

Since the introduction of Triple Bottom Line by Elkington at the end of 1990's, the concept has become popular and has become widely recognized (Norman et al., 2004, p. 244). Many organizations have since adopted TBL, including 2005 World Assembly (United Nations, 2005). Furthermore, NGO's, political parties and governments have been widely seen to accept and support its principles (Norman et al., 2004, p. 244).

Triple Bottom Line was welcomed especially by the scientific community, with many making strong statements regarding its potential and applicability in the future (Norman et al., 2004, p. 245). Jorgensen (2000) stated that Triple Bottom Line "defines a company's ultimate worth in financial, social, and environmental terms." Further depicting it as a significant tool in management, allowing companies to react to changes in stakeholders' behavior faster and adjust their strategy accordingly, before reaching the so-called bottom line. Reporting according to TBL is evaluated to eventually substantiate organizations membership within society, through fulfilling each relevant stakeholders' demands (Jorgensen, 2000).

Norman et al. (2004, p. 246) reviewed Triple Bottom line a few years after its publishing, especially focusing on the social pillar, although emphasizing that a majority of the issues raised apply to the environmental pillar as well. As Norman et al. (2004, p. 246) put it, TBL accepts several 'claims' regarding responsibility, first being the measurement claim. According to Norman et al. (2004, p.246), TBL assumes that social performance and impact can be measured, audited and reported in fairly objective measures while using standard indicators as a basis. Moreover, within the aggregation claim, it is assumed that there exists an uncontroversial and universal bottom line that can be used to calculate i.e. social 'profit/loss'. This part of the TBL has received some backlash, as it can be deemed difficult to formulate a sound methodology to calculate such a bottom line (Norman et al., 2004, p. 249).

Norman et al. (2004, p. 246) brought up also the so-called 'convergence claim' within TBL at the time, stating that supporters of the theory believe that measuring social performance aids in improving it, as well as in the long-run profitability of such organizations performing well in that context. Furthermore, according to a strong social-obligation claim, companies would have an obligation to maximize their net positive social impact, the social bottom line. Moreover, accurate measurement is considered a part of this, as it indicates fulfillment of the obligation. Finally, a transparency claim was identified by Norman et al. (2004, p. 246), highlighting an obligation a company has towards its stakeholders to disclose information of the level of its performance with respect to each stakeholder.

It is argued that Triple Bottom Line has brought a new perspective into the subject in regard reporting and measurement (Norman et al., 2004, p. 247). While especially larger organizations have gathered data on some sustainability aspects before TBL, the significance of the model can be identified in the increasing transparency and reliability through external reporting and verification (Norman et al., 2004, p. 248). Moreover, gathering this data in one report is also considered a vital improvement. Years after

Norman et al. (2004) reviewed Triple Bottom line theory, many of the issues they raised can be seen to be answered to by the further development of sustainability reporting.

2.4 Sustainable reporting and the Textile and Clothing industry

In this chapter, the concept of sustainable reporting and one of its most prominent frameworks, the Global Reporting Initiative, are defined. Moreover, an overlook of sustainability in the context of Textile and Clothing industry is presented.

Sustainability reporting can be described as the measurement, disclosure, and communication of information about CSR or ESG aspects, activities, policies, and risks (Christensen et al., 2011, pp.1178-1179). Moreover, it considers the information needs of both investors and stakeholders as a whole. Sustainability reporting can be seen as a vital way of achieving wider sustainability and climate goals. Milne & Gray (2013) argue that sustainability of a company has become synonymous with incorporating economic, environmental, and social performance indicators into reporting and management processes.

The raise of sustainability issues themselves led to the development of sustainable reporting; a report by World Commission on Environment and Development published in 1987 recognized sustainable development as a concept, laid foundation for theoretical framework on the subject, as well as emphasized the need for sustainable reporting (Gokten et al., 2020). Sustainability reporting has later taken more leaps forward, as the European Union, for example, has drafted extensive directives regulating sustainability reporting and sustainable development goals. Moreover, towards the end of 1990's Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability reporting standards were developed (Gokten et al., 2020) with the help of UN Environment Programme, by Tellus institute and Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (Wilson, 2015, p. 3).

Now a days, Global Reporting Initiative can be said to be one of the most prominent frameworks for sustainable reporting, and it is part of a significant movement of social

and ethical accounting (Norman et al., 2004, p. 247). GRI is a non-governmental, independent organization that aims to promote and develop a consistent framework for non-financial reporting (Dingwerth & Eichinger, 2010). GRI's categories include environmental, economic and social, which are further divided into specific subcategories for reporting reasons (Wilson, 2015, p. 3). Moreover, the main concepts of the standard are impact, material topics, due diligence, and stakeholder (GRI foundation, 2022, p. 4).

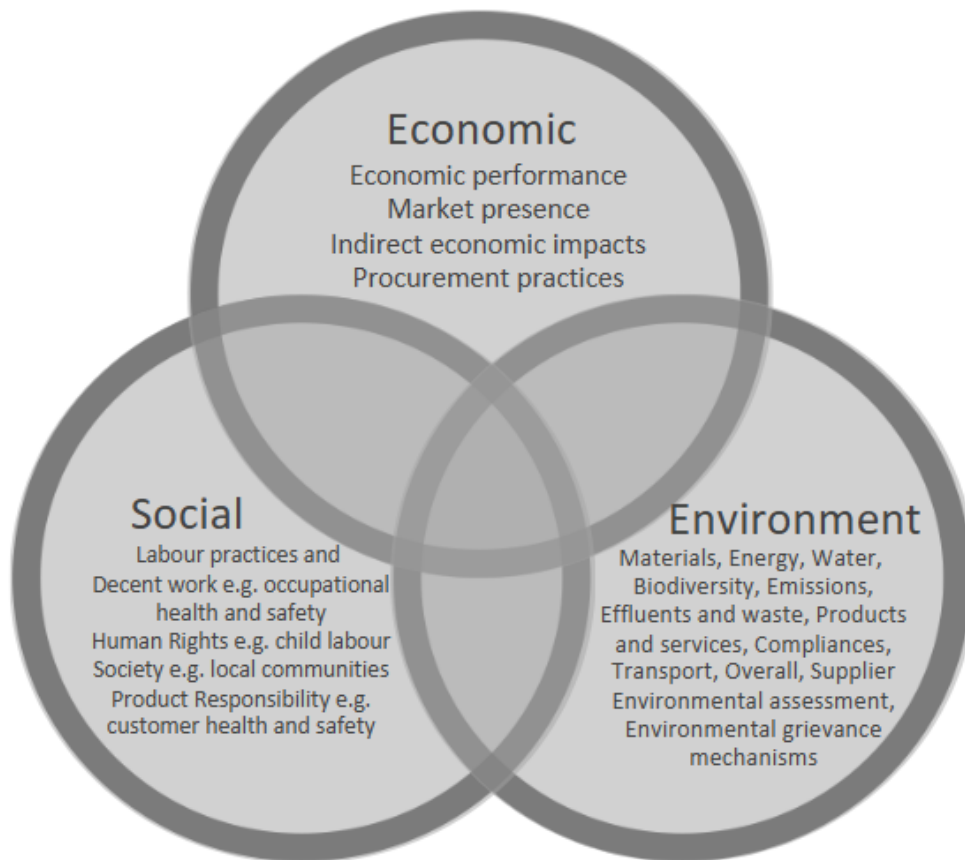


Figure 4 GRI and TBL, modelled after Wilson (2015, p. 3).

Above we see Figure 4, modeled based on the Venn diagrams (1980), depicting GRI's categories and subcategories. The figure illustrates Triple Bottom Line in the context of specific and relevant measures within The Global Reporting Index, GRI (Wilson, 2015, p. 3). Moreover, some argue that GRI takes a comprehensive focus on the social and

ecological aspects, while only including a few economic metrics. By doing this it can be said to leave the responsibility of the economic side on other relevant organizations, like IFRS.

GRI aims to offer organizations a voluntary reporting framework that is known for its rigor, verifiability, comparability, and general acceptance (Willis, 2003). It was established to combat inconsistencies in reporting and has been progressively further developed since its creation (Wilson, 2015, p. 3). It enhances global comparability and quality of reported information on the economic, environmental, and social impacts of an organization (GRI foundation, 2022, p. 4). This is achieved through the quality and consistency of the standards.

For companies taking pride in being responsible, Triple Bottom Line and sustainable reporting has been an opportunity to showcase their sustainability in the public eye (Norman et al., 2004, p. 255). Moreover, having already improved their performance in these aspects, and often tied sustainability with their image, they are confident to publish their reports. In these situations, Triple Bottom Line can complement their existing strategies well and is expected to lead to positive effects in the eyes of consumers and investors. On the other hand, as Triple Bottom Line was introduced, companies that had previously not paid attention to CSR began to adopt the new rhetoric, many in an attempt to clear their reputation after a scandal (Norman et al., 2004, p. 255).

Textile and Clothing industry in particular, can be said to be challenging from a sustainability perspective, as issues can be recognized on each Triple Bottom Line dimension. Although, the Elkington (1998) emphasizes that all three dimensions in the Triple Bottom Line model should be balanced in company's sustainability performance (Weisenfeld & Hauerwaas, 2018), this turns out to be fairly difficult in Textile and Clothing industry. The industry is known for its fragmented and lengthy supply chains, requiring challenging cooperation and commitment between all parties along the way in order to reach sustainability (Bubicz et al., 2021; Huq et al., 2016). In addition to challenges in

communication between different stakeholders within a complex and long supply chain, monitoring of obedience with ethic codes is demanding as well (Bubicz et al., 2021; Sardar et al., 2016; Wilhelm et al., 2016). A comprehensive review of studies on sustainability in the context of Textile and Clothing industry found two central issues within the industry's sustainability above others; complex supply chains and fast fashion (Abbate et al., 2024, pp. 2847-2848).

Fast fashion is a business model characterized by its disposable nature, low prices and continual changes (Joy et al., 2012). Along this, the design and manufacturing within the industry has also changed to follow rapidly alternating trends (Kozlowski et al., 2018). While this creates fast income, it also creates an enormous volume of textile waste (Chan et al., 2020), as 75 % of this waste is discarded in landfills globally (Ellen Mac Arthur Foundation, 2017). Moreover, merely 25% of this textile waste is recycled or reused, and less than a percentage of all textiles is recycled into clothes. Furthermore, such companies often replicate existing brands' work and trends. Especially the disposable nature of fast fashion has been broadly found to be a significant factor in causing economic, social, health and environmental problems (dz et al., 2020).

The environmental effects of the Textile and Clothing industry are huge; it is one of the most polluting industries (Grazzini et al., 2021) and it is the second most water consuming industry globally (Paździor et al., 2017). Textile and Clothing industry is responsible for 8 % of global greenhouse emissions (Shrivastava et al., 2021). It is seen as a leading driver for global warming, causing an increase of various effects like sea level rise and hurricanes (Mishra et al., 2021). The industry affects nature negatively in other ways as well; for instance, the microplastics and colored waste water it dumps harms ecosystems significantly (Liu et al., 2021; Sadeghi-Kiakhani et al., 2021).

Various challenges can also be identified on the social side of Textile and Clothing industry. Centering a major portion of the transformation process of raw material to clothing in developing countries has an effect on the sustainability of the industry as a whole

(Chan et al., 2020). While companies achieve lower labor expenses, this leads to significant issues such as unsafe environments for employees (Shrivastava et al., 2021). Moreover, many processes at the end-of-life textiles still need to be completed by hand (Centobelli et al., 2022), as parts like zips and buttons in textiles are challenging to remove (Marques et al., 2020).

The current situation and the unsustainable nature of the Textile and Clothing industry depicted above leads to the following **Hypothesis**:

Hypothesis 2 (H2) Knowledge of sustainability influences consumers perceptions of sustainability within the Textile and Clothing industry negatively.

Pressured by increasing governmental regulation related to socio-cultural levels, economic, organizational, material and technological factors (Kivimaa et al., 2019), Textile and Clothing companies tend to note sustainability issues more (Islam et al., 2020; Kabir et al., 2019). Other drivers for change include competition, market promotion, reputation, as well as social factors such as internal culture and superiors' knowledge on the matter (Guedes et al., 2017; Van & Nguyen, 2019). Sustainability related changes have been found to often lead to cost savings (Lucato et al., 2017), as well as, for instance, efficiency improvements for companies that have implemented environmental management systems ISO 14001 (Ali et al., 2020).

Various new initiatives related to sustainability have been founded within the Textile and Clothing industry, especially focusing on implementation of environmental practices and eco-efficiency (Muñoz-Torres et al., 2021). Minimizing waste and carbon emissions are sought to be done through innovative methods (Kozłowski et al., 2018), such as recycling raw materials and utilizing biodegradable materials (Wang et al., 2019). On the other hand, many issues related to the industry's supply chain have been attempted to be managed through procurement of intermediaries, which can strengthen transparency and coordination (Koeksal et al., 2018).

Kumar et al. (2020) and Ashby (2018) emphasize that in the context of the Textile and Clothing industry's supply chain, strategic resources, as well as shared culture and vision among the suppliers and the company are key in order to reach improvements. A sustainable supply chain can be reached, if a company commits to fixing social conditions, lengthening life cycle of goods, minimizing production waste and pollution (Abbate et al., 2024, p. 2851). All in all, extensive changes in materials, operation and production need to be made.

Regarding sustainability of materials, various types of repurposing can be utilized when it comes to textile waste. Using waste as a source in order to produce thermal energy (Nunes et al., 2018) is one option. On the other hand, instead of the traditional incineration of textile waste, companies can utilize pyrolysis instead (Yousef et al., 2019). Anaerobic digestion, composting, fermentation, as well as fiber regeneration can alternatively be used in order to manage textile waste (Juanga-Labayen et al., 2022). On the other hand, cotton waste, for instance, is suitable for removing pollutants from the environment and for developing high-performance catalysts (Shirvanimoghaddam et al., 2019).

Abbate et al. (2024, pp. 2854-2855) emphasize that in studies of sustainability within Textile and Clothing industry, digital technologies have a potential to improve sustainability performance. For instance, blockchain improves performance by optimizing supply chain (Centobelli et al., 2021). This is achieved through technology that ensures increased transparency and traceability of goods. Technologies like blockchain can be utilized as strategic tools in order to protect environment, facilitate implementation of sustainable practices and to overall ensure sustainable development (Abbate et al., 2024, p. 2855)

While opportunities related to Textile and Clothing industry's sustainability are increasing, various fundamental barriers for implementing corporate sustainability responsibilities can be found. Companies do not have enough training, information or resources,

and the initial cost of sustainable improvements can be too great (Guedes et al., 2017; Van & Nguyen, 2019). Furthermore, issues in external and internal communication, lack of regulatory base, as well as complicated green design in processes and systems (Majumdar & Sinha, 2018).

3 Research methodology and data

Within this chapter, the choice of research approach and design are first introduced. Next, the measures utilized in data collection of the sample are introduced and justified. Finally, reliability of the data collection, as well as correlation of main constructs are calculated and presented.

3.1 Research approach

Successful scientific research requires collection of good data, as well as a research method that utilizes the data well (Hakala, 2018). Moreover, the researched subject is at the center of the choice in research method, and it is recommended that the first choice should be between qualitative or quantitative methods. To investigate the impact of culture on consumer perceptions of the Textile and Clothing industry's sustainability, this thesis adopted a quantitative and deductive approach through the use of an online survey. Deductive approach is utilized, as it can explain causal relationship between various variables (Saunders et al., 2009). The quantitative method is used to describe the issue through numbers, and the research questions are often easily defined before executing research, while in qualitative research is more descriptive and the research objective can shift throughout the research (Hakala, 2018).

The data is analyzed through statistical analysis methods in order to test hypotheses and answer the research questions in the study. Regression was chosen as a suitable model, as it is used to determine the strength of cause-and-effect relationship between variables, as well as to predict values of dependent variables on the basis of an independent variable or variables (Saunders et al., 2007, pp. 451, 453). The dependent variable in this study is consumers' perception of sustainability, and independent variables are the knowledge of sustainability issues and the cultural drivers. Moreover, respondents in the regression were limited to the ones strongly identifying with their nationality (Question 4). Multiple regression specifically is deemed suitable as there are more than one independent variables (Richardson, 2015, p. 67). Moreover, dependent variable's value is

influenced by other variables in the study, while independent variable is not influenced by other variables.

3.2 Research design

A research questionnaire can be executed through for instance mail, phone interviews of internet-based surveys (Holmes et al., 2017, pp. 141-143). Holmes et al. (2017) state that the advantage of Internet-based surveys is that they offer more opportunities to personalize the questionnaire. Moreover, they can prevent respondents from returning to previous questions, which is important in evaluating each section individually. The survey contained 29 items, 28 of which were fixed choice questions, in order to establish the most valid opinions regarding the topics related to the research questions. This research utilized the Likert scale, which measures how much respondents agree with statements (Ekinici, 2015). A five-point Likert-type scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” was chosen, and a total of 20 questions were in this form. 6 questions were in the form of multiple-choice questions. When utilizing rating questions such as the Likert scale, the final score of concepts measured by the questions can be calculated through combining the scores of the rating questions (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 374).

The survey begins with section 1, including 5 demographic questions, and 1 question related to whether respondents strongly identify with their nationality. The second section includes 12 questions for national culture drivers, which has a key role in answering research questions and testing both hypotheses. Section 3 of the survey includes 4 questions related to consumers’ attitudes towards sustainability of the industry. It is vital to collect data related to respondents’ attitudes and background, as they can be utilized in analyzing their heterogenic preferences (Lancasar et al., 2017). Moreover, respondents’ level of identifying with their nationality reflects their level of in-group membership, which is a significant factor influencing consumer perceptions and behavior (further discussed in Chapter 2.1). Section 3 additionally includes 5 questions related to the consumers’ knowledge of the sustainability of the industry, intended to aid in testing

hypothesis H2. Finally, 2 questions related to feedback of the survey were included. Detailed description of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

Bourke et al. (2010, pp. 42-43) stated that in questionnaires executed without an interviewer, it is especially important to pay attention to the phrasing of questions. In order to ensure validity in this aspect, the majority of the questions were adopted directly from previous research. Beyond ensuring the validity of questions through relying on existing research, the questions were meticulously chosen in order to best represent the main themes and aid in answering research questions and hypotheses of the thesis. Questions related to sustainability were chosen to evenly represent each dimension of Triple Bottom Line in order to comprehensively measure consumers' attitudes and knowledge on the matter. The questions regarding this section were based on Byrd & Su (2021, p. 344), and their measurement of Clothing sustainability knowledge and Attitudes towards Clothing production. Questions 21, 22 and 25 were modified from economic aspects of sustainability in Fast Fashion (Nogueira et al., 2023, pp. 3-4), following similar form as crafted by Byrd & Su (2021, p.344) to portray economic dimension.

Questions regarding the cultural section were adopted from Yoo et al. (2011, p. 18) Individual Cultural Values Scale (CVSCALE), enabling analysis of 5 of Hofstede's cultural dimensions on an individual level. Yoo et al. (2011, p. 3) state that CVSCALE is especially suitable to researchers dealing with individual consumers of different cultures, linking individual-level cultural orientations to individual attitudes and behaviors. In total 12 questions were chosen from 4 Hofstede's cultural dimensions, with 3 questions from each dimension. The chosen dimensions were Collectivism, Power Distance, Masculinity and Uncertainty Avoidance. Long-Term Orientation dimension was excluded from the questionnaire, as the author deemed that the four other dimensions sufficiently captured 4 main themes behind Hofstede's dimensions (see more in chapter 2.2, p. 19). Moreover, as Schumann et al. (2010, p. 65) states, these four dimensions have been used in similar cross-cultural studies. Furthermore, limiting the analysis to these dimensions enabled a more manageable length of the questionnaire, while still having a sufficient

number of questions from each dimension and ensuring valid responses. A full review of the questions and sources are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Review of items in survey

Survey section	Item section	The item number	Source of items
Cultural drivers	Collectivism	7,8,9	CVSCALE, Yoo et al. (2011, p.18)
	Power distance	10,11,12	CVSCALE, Yoo et al. (2011, p.18)
	Masculinity	13,14,15	CVSCALE, Yoo et al. (2011, p.18)
	Uncertainty Avoidance	16,17,18	CVSCALE, Yoo et al. (2011, p.18)
Attitudes towards sustainability	Environmental	20	Byrd & Su (2021, p. 344)
	Social	19	Byrd & Su (2021, p. 344)
	Economic	21, 22	(Nogueira et al., 2023, pp. 3-4)
Knowledge of sustainability	Environmental	24, 26	Byrd & Su (2021, p. 344)
	Social	23, 27	Byrd & Su (2021, p. 344)
	Economic	25	(Nogueira et al., 2023, pp. 3-4)

The chosen Hofstede's dimensions utilized in the survey are comparable to the cultural model used in clustering the data. 6 of GLOBE's cultural dimensions, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group collectivism, Power Distance, Gender Egalitarianism and Assertiveness,

as well as Uncertainty Avoidance were developed on the basis of 4 Hofstede's dimensions; Individualism, Power Distance, Masculinity and Uncertainty Avoidance (Chhokar et al., 2013, p. 4). As the national cultural drivers of respondents were measured with questions developed on the basis of those 4 Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the comparability of data is ensured although two separate models were utilized. In order to further ensure comparability and efficient analysis of data, respondents were grouped based on their nationalities according to GLOBE's 10 regional clusters (see chapter 2.2). As the majority of the respondents were expected to come from Europe, the respondents were divided through clusters within the European societies. These were Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, Germanic Europe, as well as Eastern Europe (House, 2004, p.183).

3.3 Data collection and sample

While conducting research it is important to pay attention to who the research aims to reach as respondents (Bateman et al., 2002, pp. 80-81). Moreover, the targeted group consists of individuals affected by benefits or costs, and the sample should represent this target group. This thesis strived to gather a diverse sample of consumers from different demographic groups within cultural groups, for instance, through having equal number of men and women, and different age groups. The sample was hoped to reach a minimum of 100 respondents from at least 20 different countries.

The data was collected using an online survey through Microsoft Office Forms, intended to be as accessible and easily approachable to consumers as possible. The survey was shared and distributed through personal and professional networks, multiple social media channels, as well as flyers mainly attached to schools' announcement boards and announcement boards near international students' living facilities. As the author's personal network mainly consists of Finns, the data collection was targeted especially towards non-Finns. To achieve this, the language used when distributing the survey was targeted towards international crowds and always in English. Moreover, flyers were left

by the international department of schools and international channels in social media were utilized.

3.4 Reliability and correlation

In order to assess the reliability and internal consistency of the scale and items within the survey, Cronbach's alpha was performed. The equation for Cronbach's alpha is stated below:

Equation 1 Cronbach's alpha

$$\alpha = \frac{N\bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1)\bar{c}}$$

In the equation 1. \bar{v} is the equals of average variance, \bar{c} is the average inter-item covariance among the items and N is the number of items. Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.52, which is often deemed to showing poor reliability as it is less than 0.6 (George & Mallery, 2003). While the poor score of Cronbach's alpha can be seen to lower the validity and reliability of the survey scale, some argue that there is no specific universally accepted way of measuring the adequacy of α . Moreover, having too high a score can even be thought to be an indication of a repetitive scale. Therefore, the questionnaire is deemed adequate for the purpose of this thesis.

As Richardson (2015, p. 46) states, normally correlation of a data set must be tested before performing regression. Through correlation, significant correlation coefficient (linear relationship) can be found and later quantified through regression. Although, this can be thought to be unnecessary in this thesis, as the sample size is abnormally small. Furthermore, Richardson (2015, p. 55) notes that while simple regressions significance can be predicted through the significance of the correlation, this is not the case in multiple regression. However, in order to increase validity, the testing of correlation was nevertheless included in the thesis, this is depicted in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Correlation of main constructs

	Cultural drivers	Attitudes towards sustainability	Knowledge of sustainability
Cultural drivers	1		
Attitudes towards sustainability	-0,15111779	1	
Knowledge of sustainability	-0,126826404	0,265123168	1

The correlation between the variables is presented above in Table 2. Correlation can be between -1 and +1, each maximum value representing either perfect positive correlation or negative correlation, with 0 indicating that variables are entirely independent (Saunders, 2007, p. 451). Correlation between main constructs was found to be overall negative and weak, especially between cultural drivers and other variables. On the other hand, knowledge of sustainability and attitudes towards sustainability were found have stronger positive correlation of 0,26. While this is still considered weak, it is closest to low positive correlation, which is often seen to be >0,3.

4 Results

In this chapter the numerical description of the data in the sample is provided. Moreover, the sample of the questionnaire is further looked at and analyzed in terms of respondents' attitudes and perceptions. In order to test the hypotheses of the thesis, statistical analysis of quantitative data, in the form of an online survey, is utilized. The data is analyzed through a multiple regression model. Finally, the results of the research are further inspected and the feedback for the survey is evaluated.

4.1 Description of the data

The description of data will be presented in this subchapter. First of all, the nationalities of the respondents are presented, and the respondents are grouped to GLOBE'S regional clusters for further analysis on the degree of representation of cultural dimensions within the study's sample. Furthermore, the socio-demographics of the sample are reviewed, in order to determine whether the survey reached a diverse sample. A total of 105 people, from 23 different countries, responded to the online questionnaire during the 15 days it was open. The sample included respondents from various nationalities, as can be seen in Table 3 below. However, unsurprisingly the sample had an overrepresentation of Finnish respondents.

Table 3 Nationalities of the respondents

Nationality	Total number of respondents
Czech Republic	3
Denmark	1
Estonia	1
Finland	60
France	2
Germany	9

Greece	2
Hungary	3
Italy	1
Lithuania	1
Luxembourg	1
Netherlands	2
Poland	6
Romania	1
Spain	3
Sweden	2
Ukraine	1
India	1
United States	1
Canada	1
Argentina	1
Chile	1
China	1

However, some respondents were from countries that are not included in GLOBEs study's sample, and were sorted in clusters according to GLOBEs criteria, including the most vital criteria geography and linguistics (House, 2004, p.179) (see Subchapter 2.2 p. 22). Following this criteria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania, and Ukraine were sorted into Eastern European cluster, and Estonia into Nordic European cluster. On the other hand, Luxembourg was found to suit both Germanic and Latin Europe clusters and in result the respondent with that nationality was disregarded. Moreover, 6 respondents (from India, United States, Canada, Argentina, Chile and China) outside these clusters were disregarded, as the cluster size was deemed to be too small.

Finally, this study groups France, Italy and Spain in **Latin Europe** cluster, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Estonia in **Nordic Europe cluster**, Germany and Netherlands in

Germanic Europe, as well as Greece, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Ukraine in **Eastern Europe** cluster. The majority of respondents were female regardless of the cluster, and the survey had better reached younger generations, with age groups 21-30 and 31-40 comprising the majority. In terms of education, respondents were divided; 2 % had middle school or lower education, 17 % had high school education, 37 % had bachelor's degree, 43 % had a master's degree. The sample was quite equally distributed when it comes to the household's net monthly income in euros. Detailed description on the socio-demographics of the sample divided by clusters can be found below in Table 4.

Table 4 Socio-demographics of the sample divided by regional clusters

Sample	Regional Clusters					Total (N)	
	Latin Europe	Eu-	Nordic Europe	Eu-	Germanic Europe		Eastern Europe
Valid respondent (N)	6		64		11	16	97
Gender (%)							
Female	66,67%		59,38%		54,55%	75%	60
Male	33,33%		39,06%		45,45%	25%	36
Other	0%		1,56%		0%	0%	1
Age range, in years (%)							
11-20	0%		3,13%		0%	0%	2
21-30	66,67%		71,88%		90,91%	68,75%	71
31-40	0%		12,50%		9,09%	25%	13
41-50	33,33%		3,13%		0%	6,25%	5
51-60	0%		7,81%		0%	0%	5
60+	0%		1,56%		0%	0%	1

Level of formal education.	0%	3,13%	0%	0%	2
Middle school/lower					
High school	16,67%	21,88%	0%	12,50%	17
Bachelor's degree	16.67%	40,63%	27,27%	37,50%	36
Master's degree	66.67%	34,38%	63,64%	50%	41
Postgraduate course/ PhD	0%	0%	9,09%	0%	1
Households net monthly income (€)	16.67%	14,06%	18,18%	25%	16
<1500					
1500-3000	33,33%	25%	27,27%	37,50%	27
3001-4000	16,67%	10,94%	18,18%	6,25%	11
4001-6000	0%	31,25%	36,36%	18,75%	27
6001-8000	33,33%	12,50%	0%	6,25%	11
>8000	0%	6,25%	0%	6,25%	5

Compared to the data published in Eurostat, there are several demographics that are underrepresented in this sample. In regard to age, the sample is across all clusters too young compared to the whole population. According to Eurostat (2024) the population is ageing, with the median age being 44,5 years old in EU overall, and 48,4 in Italy and 46,5 in Greece, for instance. On the other hand, the overrepresentation of women in the sample is not considered as significant, as according to Eurostat's publication (2024) the female population in Europe is overall increasing. According to Eurostat, for example, in 2024 France, Italy and Spain there are 104-106,5 women per 100 men. Education and income within different clusters of the sample were found to be more evenly dispersed and representative of the populations.

4.2 Multiple regression model

Next the data was closely analyzed through a multiple regression model. The multiple regression was conducted in Excel, a general-purpose tool that can e.g. be utilized to successfully simplify calculation of regression (Richardson, 2015, p. 53). There are certain assumptions for this model; assumption of normality (the dependent variable is normally distributed regardless of independent variables values), equal variance assumption (variance for normal distribution of possible values for dependent variable is the same for every value of every independent variable), the linearity assumption (there is a linear relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable), nonmulticollinearity assumption (none of the independent variables are correlated with each other), as well as the independency assumption (observations of dependent variable are independent of each other) (Richardson, 2015, pp. 72-73). The equation for Sample Regression (Richardson, 2015, pp. 41-42) is stated below:

Equation 2 Sample Regression model

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k + \varepsilon$$

In Equation 2, β_i is the slope of variable's coefficient from $i=1$ to k , and β_0 is the Y-intercept. The multiple regression was conducted in order to test the relationship between dependent variable attitudes towards sustainability and independent variables knowledge of sustainability and cultural drivers. Additionally, the survey's sections on the respondents' socioeconomical background, such as gender and age, were included as control variables. As Saunders et al. (2007, p. 374) suggest, the respondents scores for each variable were calculated by summing up scores on the rating scale of each variable's questions. Therefore, for the attitudes towards sustainability, each respondent had a value between X and Y as a sum of their replies for questions 19-22. The same was done for each cultural driver, which was supported by the fact that both in Hofstede's cultural dimensions and the GLOBE, the scores of cultural dimensions can be measured from high to low (see Subchapter 2.2). Furthermore, the same was done for each item

in knowledge of sustainability. The results of the multiple regression can be seen in Tables 5, 6 and 7.

First of all, the regression statistics will be looked at through examining Table 5 below. Out of a range of -1 to 1, Multiple R is found to be 0,4, indicating a strong linear relationship between observed and predicted values of Attitudes towards sustainability. Moreover, R Square measures the degree independent variables predict variance in dependent variable. Adjusted R Square, on the other hand, shows a more reliable score in the context of the model and shows that variables explain approximately **8%** of the variance in attitudes towards sustainability. While this is not often considered 'significant', it shows that especially knowledge of sustainability affects the dependent variable to some extent. However, it is noteworthy that the Standard Error of the model is quite high, with a score of 2,4. Standard Error is utilized in order to measure the accuracy of prediction. The minimum value of Standard Error is 0, and the smaller the value is the more accurate the prediction is.

Table 5 Regression statistics

Regression statistics	Value
Multiple R	0,405064905
R Square	0,164077577
Adjusted R Square	0,08166269
Standard Error	2,437727574
Observations	79

Next, the results are examined further through Coefficient tables. Coefficient of determination is utilized to measure how well the equation acts as a predictor (Saunders, 2007, p. 454) of the total variance of the dependent variable. Furthermore, values in coefficient can range from 0 to 1, 0 indicating that the equation predicts 0% of the dependent variables' variation, and similarly 1 indicating a 100% prediction of variation. A positive

value translates to a positive relationship between independent and dependent variable. As seen in Table 7, the control variables (gender, age, education and income) predict in total quite a large portion of the dependent variables' variation, with gender and age being the strongest predictors. On the other hand, as seen in Table 6, one of the independent variables, knowledge of sustainability, predicted 22,8% of the variation. However, the other independent variable, cultural drivers, was found to predict -8% of the variation.

Standard Error is found to be relatively small for both independent variables, as Cultural Drivers score is 0,06 and Knowledge of Sustainability is 0,10. On the other hand, Standard Error was high for each control variable, ranging from 0,21 to 0,65. T-Stat illustrates whether the coefficient is significantly different compared to 0, with higher values indicating stronger relationship. The T-Stat scores for Cultural Drivers was very low with -1,3, and quite high for Knowledge of sustainability with 2,3. Finally, the confidence intervals can be seen to support the reliability predictions, as out of the two independent variables, Knowledge of sustainability takes more significant values 95% of the time, as can be seen in Table 6. However, the impact of the coefficient relationship depicted in previous paragraphs is only significant when P-value is lower than 0,05, as the confidence level of the regression is 95%. Therefore, merely knowledge of sustainability was found to be a significant variable, with prediction of 22,8% of the overall 8 % variation of the dependent variable, Attitudes towards sustainability. Moreover, neither cultural drivers or the control variables were found to be significant predictors of consumers' attitudes in this thesis, as their P-value exceeds 0,05.

Table 6 Coefficient of determination, independent variables (N=79)

	Independent variables	
	Cultural Drivers	Knowledge of sustainability
Coefficients	-0,082678241	0,228738559
Standard Error	0,059858226	0,096424504

T Stat	-1,381234408	2,372203635
P-value	0,171538654	0,020395659
Lower 95 %	-0,202032153	0,036473559
Upper 95 %	0,036676	0,421004

Table 7 Coefficient of determination, control variables (N=79)

	Control variables				
	Gender	Age	Education	Income	Intercept
Coefficients	-0,278166024	0,349398153	0,034604611	0,177744316	14,42863859
Standard Error	0,655987598	0,325985085	0,38367129	0,2126495	3,161202563
T Stat	-0,42404159	1,071822514	0,090193381	0,83585579	4,564287895
P-value	0,67281751	0,28742956	0,928387504	0,406040214	2,05021E-05
Lower 95 %	-1,586168146	-0,300597645	-0,730414213	-0,246266745	8,125379708
Upper 95 %	1,029836	0,999394	0,799623	0,601755	20,7319

4.3 Feedback on survey

Finally, the feedback from respondents of the survey are briefly analyzed. This can be considered a vital part of questionnaires and the results, as it has been found to be connected to respondents' answers and the credibility of the study. An aspect strengthening the credibility of the study can be found in the fact that 34,3 % of the respondents answered, 'strongly agree' and 55,2 % 'agree' in regard to their confidence in their responses. Merely 9.5 % Selected neutral, and 1 % disagree. Furthermore, out of the 19 respondents who gave additional feedback on the survey, it was deemed positive. On the other hand, respondents gave suggestions for additional questions, or alternative

ways of phrasing. A reoccurring pattern in responses was the survey being considered “interesting”, and a few respondents stated that they learned more about the subject and reflected on their attitudes and behavior as a result. Another reoccurring subject was the importance and current subject of the research itself, and respondents often stated their support for the research. Based on the feedback, it can be concluded that consumers want to learn more about the subject and deem it important.

5 Analysis

In this chapter the empirical analysis will be carried out. Hypotheses are tested utilizing the data and empirical testing presented in the previous chapter. The focus will be on the influence of demographic factors on consumer perception. Moreover, the sample is analyzed more profoundly through mirroring the chosen regional clusters against GLOBE and Hofstede's cultural dimension scores. Finally, it is determined which hypotheses the empirical test supported or rejected, and thus the research questions are answered.

As Saunders (2007, p. 423) states, "for values where there are likely to be a large number of categories (or values for quantifiable data), you will need to group the data into categories that reflect your research question(s) and objectives". The sample is analyzed more profoundly through regional clusters and the degree the clusters, Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, Germanic Europe and Eastern Europe, represent the cultural dimensions used within the study. This is done through mirroring the chosen regional clusters against GLOBE and Hofstede's cultural dimension scores. calculating the means of each clusters' scores in cultural dimensions as well as each clusters mean score in attitudes towards sustainability and knowledge of sustainability issues. These will be mirrored against GLOBE's and Hofstede's research on cultural dimensions to see to which extent the sample and clusters represented their dimensions.

5.1 Cultural drivers

Specific focus is put on the samples scores regarding cultural dimension Collectivism, as it is closely connected to GLOBE's collectivistic dimension In-Group Collectivism. In GLOBE's research, collectivism is divided into Institutional and in-group collectivism (House, 2004). Moreover, House et al. (2004, p. 454) state that cultures scoring high on Collectivism make more distinctions between out-groups and in-groups. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2.1, as individuals view themselves as part of an in-group, this group membership becomes a significant influence on them. In this process individuals' actions,

thoughts and perceptions are molded to those of the groups prototype, ultimately producing collective self-conceptualization and group behavior (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, P. 74). Social identity processes have been found to have a variety of effects; group membership affects one's behaviors, attitudes and perceptions, for instance (Han et al., 2023). Below in Figure 5, a bar chart depicts the Cultural Cluster scores of the respondents in the sample strongly identifying with their nationality (N=79).

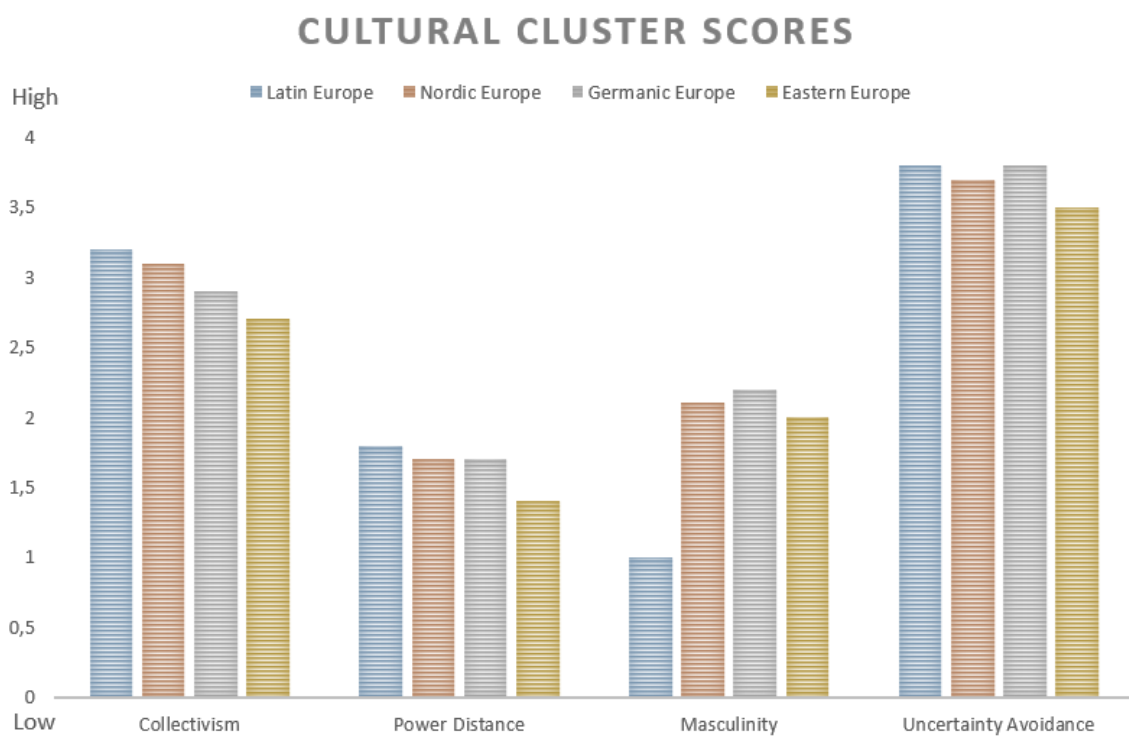


Figure 5 Cultural Cluster Scores of the sample (N=79)

The scores are measured by the average score per dimension within each cultural group, as the data would have been difficult to present otherwise as an overview. The four cultural groups represented their clusters quite well in Collectivism, as seen in Figure 5, as they have quite homogeneous mid-level scores. Latin Europe cluster has the highest, with 3.2 as the mean of the cluster and Eastern Europe the lowest with 2.7. Moreover, the Nordic Europe cluster scores 3.1. and Germanic Europe 2.9. Below in Figure 6, a bar chart depicts the “should be” scores of cultural clusters in terms of cultural dimensions.

The Nordic European cluster of this sample should have lower score considering the “should be” score in institutional Collectivism. Similarly, Germanic Europe cluster should have lower scores considering the “should be” values with In-Group collectivism. However, a staggering portion of German respondents (N=5) for instance responded ‘No’ or ‘Not sure’ to item 4, “Do you strongly identify with that nationality?“, supporting GLOBE’s “should be” scores on the lower level of in-group membership within Germanic Europe cluster.

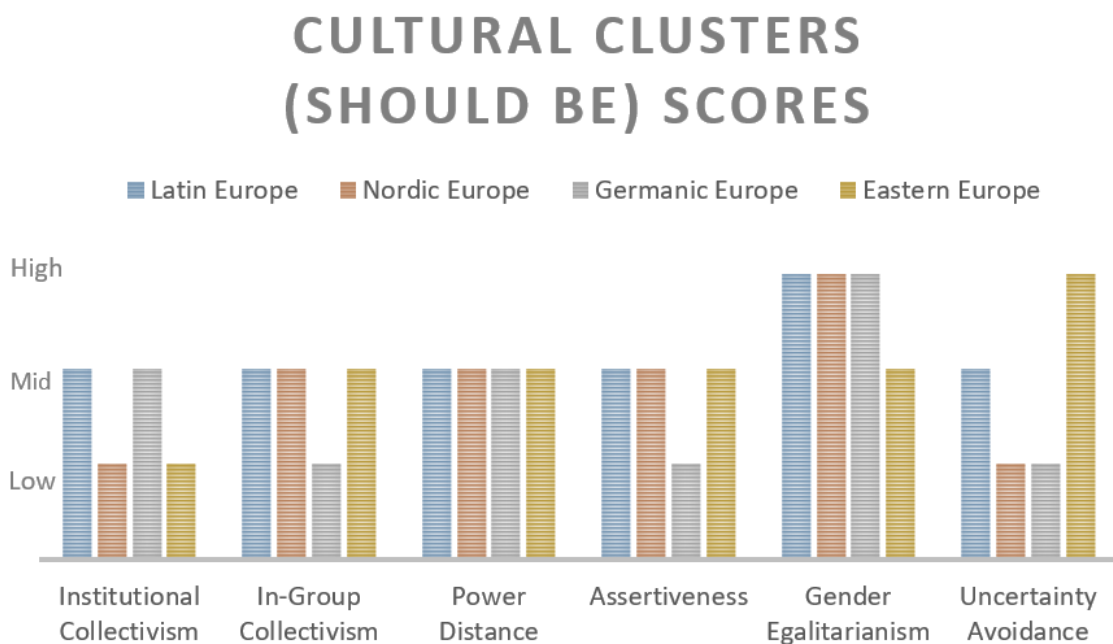


Figure 6 Cultural Clusters (should be) Scores. (House, 2004, p. 194)

Now, the results of the multiple regression stated in Chapter 4 are analyzed further. By utilizing only the respondents who answered that they identified strongly with their nationality in the multiple regression model, the in-group membership towards the culture of the respondents was ensured. However, as stated in Subchapter 4.2, cultural drivers are not found to be a “significant predictor” of consumers attitudes in this thesis. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, and Hypothesis 1 rejected.

H1. If a consumer identifies strongly with their culture (nationality), then culture influences their perceptions of sustainability within the Textile and Clothing industry.

The results of this thesis can be thought to be significantly influenced by the small sample size and overrepresentation of Finnish respondents. Moreover, the demographic factors were also unequally distributed. On this basis, and based on previous research, different results regarding the influence of culture and in-groupness can be expected to be measured with a larger and more heterogeneous sample. On the other hand, previous papers with larger samples have also found insignificant results when it comes to cultures effect on perception toward sustainable products. For instance, a study comparing cultural values of Finland and Pakistan identified that vertical collectivism and horizontal individualism were both found to have an insignificant influence on consumers' attitudes toward green products (Liobikienė & Juknys, 2016). Moreover, although research has recognized differences in cultural values among different countries, a study incorporating Hofstede's cultural dimensions show that they affect behavior in a lesser extent (Sobol et al., 2018).

The inconsistencies in results can partly be explained by the Social Identity theory. According to the Social Identity theory, while groups have been found to have extensive effects on individuals' perception and self-conception, producing so-called 'groupy' consequences (Abrams & Hogg, 2001, p. 61), the effects vary depending on context. For instance, consumers' buying behavior can be explained through cultural influence, as purchasing national brands can be viewed as an act of self-stereotyping and identifying with the ingroup (Van Veelen et al., 2015). Moreover, act of purchase in this context not only embraces their ingroup membership, it strengthens their ingroup identity in both their and the outgroups eyes. Ingroup membership influences consumers evaluations of brands extensively, as they associate cultural identity with the brands (Swoboda et al., 2012).

Effects of ingroup membership can be seen to have differing effects depending on the individuals themselves, the goods, or a brand's qualities (see Chapter 2.1). As stated earlier, the study ensured the in-group membership towards the culture of the respondents through including only respondents strongly identifying with their nationality in the multiple regression model. However, in order to further test the significance of respondent's strong identification, another regression was performed. This regression was otherwise identical, except it also included the respondents who answered 'no' and 'unsure' to whether they identify with their nationality. Moreover, even though the regression included 20 more observations, the Adjusted R Square, for instance, was more significant in the original regression. This can be seen as a factor supporting Hypothesis 1.

The difference between the results of the two multiple regressions performed can be seen to support the findings of the theoretical background. As discussed in chapter 2.1, individuals level of ingroup attachment is significant, as people with lower levels are less motivated to stereotype themselves with the ingroup (Han & Guo, 2018). Moreover, they may view their ambitions to be contradictory with the ingroups and are therefore less likely to self-stereotype with the ingroup. On the other hand, individuals identifying strongly with their ingroup act and engage in endorsement behaviors on the group's behalf (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Van Veelen et al., 2015). Individuals with lower levels of identifying with their culture, are less motivated to stereotype themselves with the ingroup (Han & Guo, 2018), and the group-membership does not have similar influence on them.

Especially high cosmopolitanism has been found to have such effects, as such individuals are expected to be less affected by perceived brand localness and cultural factors (Han et al., 2023). Some believe that many are assimilating into Global Consumer Culture (GCC) and thus shifting away from traditional local culture (Holton, 2000; Pieterse, 2004). GCC is said to grow through globalization and increased interconnectedness of different cultures, as well as development of new cultures (Hannerz, 1990, p. 237). Especially technology and the branding and marketing activities of multinational corporations are seen to lead to consumers assimilation of Global Consumer Culture (Holton, 2000, p. 142).

However, individuals with high cosmopolitanism can be expected to be less affected by perceived brand localness, PBL (Han et al., 2023). On the other hand, short-term orientation in cultures has been found to be positively connected with adaptation of global fashion (Sobol et al., 2018).

Furthermore, as the goods, or a brand's qualities have also been found to affect the influence of group on an individual, it is vital to also analyze the role of Textile and Clothing industry in the results of this study. Textile and Clothing industry can be deemed a high-involvement industry, as it is often significantly connected to consumers lifestyle and identity. As stated in chapter 2.1, with relevant goods consumer has high involvement, and actively researches information on the good (Berens et al., 2005 ; Schiffman et al., 2011). It has been shown that consumers are more confident with intrinsic cues when they are related to high-involvement goods (Schiffman et al., 2011). Therefore, in a high involvement industry, such as Textile and Clothing, consumers connect the goods with their identity, are strongly influenced by intrinsic cues, and actively research information on the goods. This once again highlights that the results of this thesis can be seen to differ from existing theoretical research, as the aspect of high-involvement Textile and Clothing industry did not seem to increase the influence of the group (culture) in consumers perceptions. Moreover, this further supports rejecting Hypothesis 1.

On the basis of the results, the preceding analysis and answers to the hypothesis 1, the relevant research questions were answered. While hypothesis 1 was rejected, a majority of respondents nevertheless strongly identified with their nationality and culture, which is why the answer to the subquestion *"Do consumers identify with their country's culture, and subsequently view themselves as being part of that in-group?"* is yes. However, as culture was not found to have any significant effects or influence on consumers perceptions and attitudes in this thesis, the answer to subquestion *"What effects does the culture of a consumer have on their perceptions?"* is no significant effects were found. Finally, the answer to the main research question *"Does culture have a significant role in*

consumers' perception of the sustainability of Textile & Clothing industry?" is deemed to be no, as the Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

5.2 Knowledge of sustainability

Now the results of the multiple regression stated in chapter 4 are analyzed from the point of view of **Hypothesis 2**. In subchapter 4.2, it was found that merely knowledge of sustainability was found to be a "significant variable", with prediction of 22,8% of the prediction the model overall has on Attitudes towards sustainability. Moreover, it was found that the relationship between knowledge of sustainability and attitudes towards sustainability was positive. This could literally be interpreted to mean that an increase in sustainable knowledge is associated with a more favorable attitude towards sustainability. However, as the items in the survey were phrased in the form of 'issues', consumers' high knowledge of sustainability can be interpreted to mean they have high awareness of the challenges within the Textile and Clothing industry's sustainability. Therefore, this thesis concludes that the more consumers are aware of the sustainability challenges within the Textile and Clothing industry, the more important they view the sustainability issues within the industry.

Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) *Knowledge of sustainability influences consumers perceptions of sustainability within the Textile and Clothing industry negatively.*

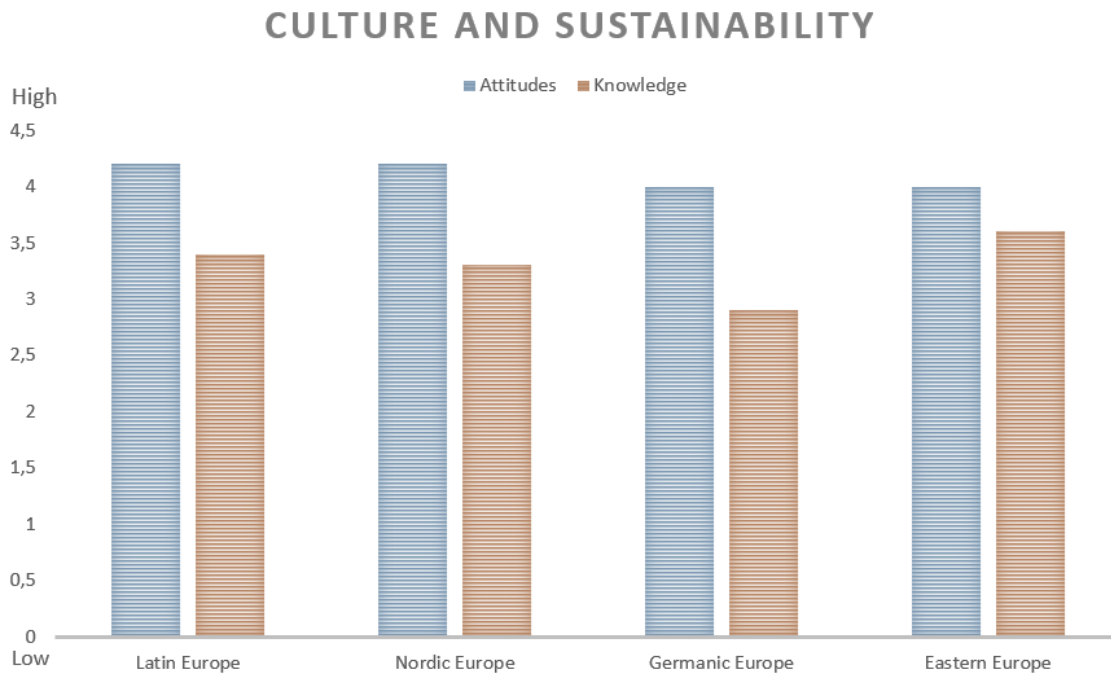


Figure 7 Knowledge and attitudes of sustainability within clusters

The influence of knowledge on attitudes is further analyzed in terms of cultural clusters. The relationship between the variables is highlighted in the form of a bar chart in Figure 7 above. The relationship between the variables found in the multiple regression is mainly supported by the cultural clusters, as the level of knowledge and the level of attitudes are fairly consistent and high. However, certain exceptions were identified, as the Eastern Europe clusters level of attitudes was not significantly greater than the level of their knowledge of sustainability. Nevertheless, the abnormal relationship between the two variables within this cluster can be expected to be affected by the small sample size once again.

Finally, the subquestion related to Hypothesis 2 is answered. “What is the level of consumers’ knowledge, and as a consequence, the level of their attitudes on the sustainability of the Textile and Clothing industry?” Consumers’ knowledge of the state of sustainability in the Textile and Clothing industry within the sample is deemed overall quite high, as the mean ranges between 3 and 4 across the clusters. This could be expected to be influenced by demographic aspects, such as the formal education of the respondents

seen in Table 4, as the majority of respondents have completed either bachelor's or master's degrees. On the other hand, while out of the four cultural clusters, Germanic Europe has the highest education levels, their knowledge of sustainability levels seen in Figure 7 are the lowest.

Besides the influence of demographic factors, an explanation could be found from cultural influence. Across all cultural clusters the scores in Uncertainty Avoidance dimension were strongest (see Figure 5), and the dimension can be seen to have the highest influence on respondents. As stated in Chapter 2.2, the future is uncertain and hard to predict, which can cause anxiousness in individuals and groups alike (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, pp.180-181). Moreover, the feelings one has when it comes to this uncertainty, and how one deals with it, is influenced by culture. The high level of knowledge of Textile and Clothing industry's sustainability could, therefore, be a product of abnormally strong scores (compared to the "should-be" scores in Figure 6) in consumers Uncertainty Avoidance across the cultural clusters. In other words, so-called Climate Anxiety that has emerged during the latest years could be a factor in consumers high levels of knowledge of the sustainability in Textile and Clothing industry.

All in all, while the results of the multiple regression were found to support only the influence of knowledge of the sustainability in Textile and Clothing industry on consumers' perceptions of the industry's sustainability, it is clear that the subject is multidimensional, and connections can be also found beyond the relationships of these variables. While through statistical measures cultural drivers were found not to be significant in this thesis, culture may still overall influence consumers perceptions on the matter. As analyzed in the previous paragraph, it may indirectly affect consumers level of knowledge. Moreover, cultural group membership may influence consumers especially in the context of the Textile and Clothing industry, as it the industry's goods are considered high involvement.

Nevertheless, based on the results and findings, the updated relationships between the main themes are illustrated in Figure 8 below.

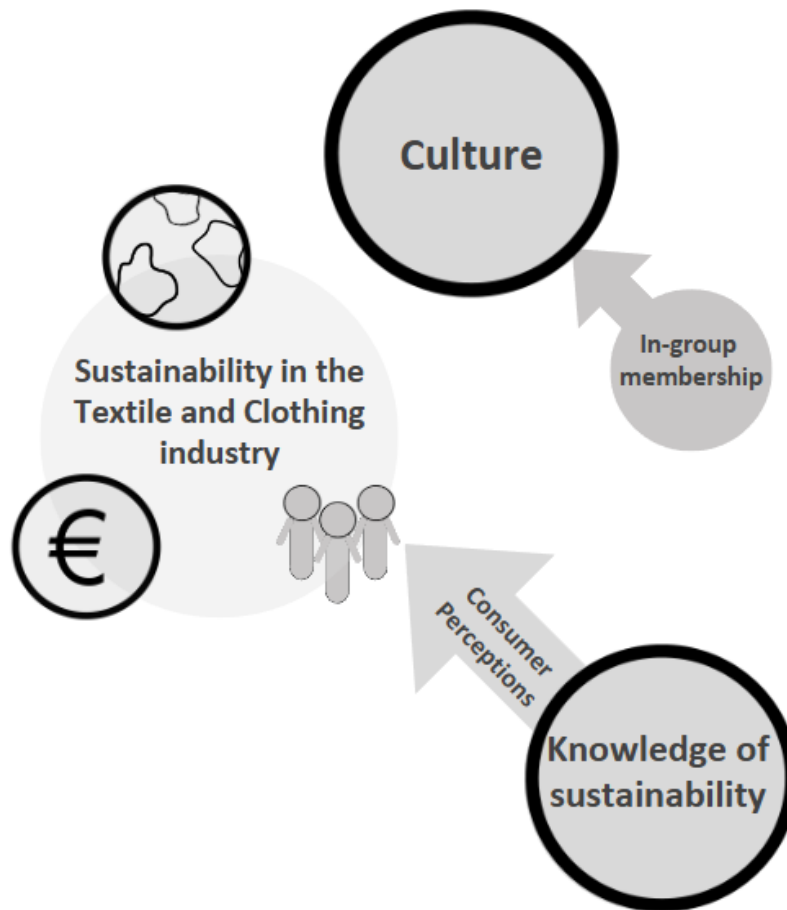


Figure 8 Updated relationships between main themes

6 Conclusions

In this final chapter, the conclusions are presented. First of all, the summary of the study's results are presented in the context of the overall research design. Furthermore, after this both theoretical and managerial implications are stated in the light of the results and analysis of the thesis. Next, suggestions for future research are provided both on the basis of insights from this thesis, as well as from existing literature. Finally, the limitations of this thesis are stated.

6.1 Summary of results

This thesis's main objective was to research whether culture had any significant role in consumers' perceptions of the sustainability of Textile and Clothing industry. Furthermore, the role of consumers knowledge of the sustainability of Textile and Clothing industry on consumers perceptions of the sustainability of Textile and Clothing industry is additionally researched. Moreover, this knowledge is analyzed to see whether specific forms of effects caused by the influence on perceptions could be identified. The cultural influence on perceptions was analyzed through respondents' nationality, level of identification related to the latter. In order to answer the research questions and hypotheses focused on these main themes, the thesis adopted a quantitative and deductive approach through the use of an online survey. A significant factor influencing each part of this thesis is the small and homogeneous sample gathered through the survey. This is thought to strongly affect the results of the thesis.

Through statistical measures, it was found that the initial hypotheses and research design had room for improvement, and the subject still requires more research. Results of multiple regression (see chapter 4.2 and Tables 5, 6, 7 and 8) that merely knowledge of sustainability was found to have a significant influence on attitudes towards sustainability. On the other hand, neither cultural drivers or demographic aspects were found to be significant predictors of consumers' attitudes towards sustainability. While consumers' strong identity with their culture has a strong influence, according to the findings, focus

should be put on consumers knowledge, rather than cultural factors. While the sample can be seen to be too small, the results of this thesis can be seen as significant from both a managerial standpoint and for the companies in the Textile and Clothing industry. The findings of this thesis can be utilized e.g. in adapting companies' marketing strategies to better recognize the influence of culture and knowledge on consumers' perceptions regarding sustainability, as well as utilized in future research on the subject.

6.2 Implications

As stated above, the most significant findings in the research of this study are related to the influence knowledge of the sustainability of Textile and Clothing industry has on consumers perceptions and attitudes on the sustainability of the Textile and Clothing industry. Therefore, the implications are mostly focused on the influence of knowledge, while only shortly focusing on the possible influence of cultural drivers.

First of all, theoretical contributions are stated. The thesis contributes especially to the fields of consumer research and cultural research by taking too little researched, but current, perspective of cross-cultural consumer perceptions. The application of cultural dimensions along with Social Identity theory is, according to the authors knowledge, a new combination in the field, therefore, opening up opportunities in future research of the subject. From a broad perspective, the findings suggest that the role of knowledge in consumer perceptions is significant, thus supporting the findings of existing literature on the subject (see Chapter 1.2). As concluded in chapter 5.2, the more consumers are aware of the sustainability challenges within the Textile and Clothing industry, the more important they view the sustainability issues within the industry. This main finding of the thesis additionally contributes to the research of sustainability.

From a managerial perspective, being aware of consumers knowledge of the sustainability within Textile and Clothing industry can be seen to be vital. This is also supported by existing research, as for instance, perceived environmental knowledge has been

found to be connected to green purchase intention (Amoako & Dzugbenuku, 2020, pp. 1609-1626; Cheung & To, 2019, pp. 145-153). Therefore, this thesis suggests that companies within the industry should be a part of educating consumers about these benefits in order to conjure favorable perception and reactions from consumers towards their goods. Successful green branding, when it comes to generated consumer perceptions and behavior, can benefit various parties significantly. Especially companies and brands gain in the form of being able to positively differentiate within the very competitive marketplace, while simultaneously enhancing their brand equity and experiencing growth in sales.

Additionally, the contributions of the analysis regarding cultural drivers in this thesis can be thought to support the findings of existing literature. From a managerial perspective, being aware of both consumers and employees' cultural influence can be seen to be vital. For instance, when targeting consumers with high cosmopolitanism, individuals are expected to be less affected by cultural factors (Han et al., 2023), reducing the level and influence of in-group membership. Therefore, in such situations marketing strategies beyond brand localness are recommended. On the other hand, it can be considered important for managers within the Textile and Clothing industry to further utilize the possibilities high involvement goods come with. From this point of view, emphasizing marketing and communication strategies with consumers in-group membership in the center could be a profitable avenue.

On the other hand, as this thesis puts a specific focus on the cultural in-group membership, the organizational implications drafted by GLOBE in relation to in-group collectivism can be seen to illustrate managerial implications well. As employees have a strong inter-related relationship with organizations, the organization is expected to become a part of their self-identity (House, 2004, pp. 446-447). In such situations, managers are expected to exceptionally support their employees through hard times, and similarly, employees can be asked to sacrifice their personal wishes when they contradict obligations of the organization. Moreover, as companies are able to build such in-group relationships

between the organization and an employee, employees are more committed to the common long-term goals of the organization, instead of prioritizing their personal career paths, for instance. If reached, this can be thought to be a significant implication for managers, as employees' increased commitment can be expected to decrease, for example, employee turnover costs and the number of incentives needed.

However, the applicability of these insights from the point of view of theoretical and managerial contributions has to be evaluated through the data and sample. While data was able to be gathered from multiple countries and therefore in some degree represented multicultural perspective, nevertheless, the sample turned out to be more homogeneous than hoped, leading to less reliable and applicable results. The results were significantly influenced by the limited resources of the study, and it can be stated that further research is needed in order to improve and confirmed.

6.3 Future research

There are various possibilities for future research in this area. First of all, the thesis addresses a research gap of current subjects that are only becoming more and more important. Moreover, although the fields of research on sustainability, Textile and Clothing industry, and culture have growing interest, there is a need for new perspectives. Finally, the thesis highlights existing research gaps, offering guidance on potential paths for future research. Future research regarding the subject is needed. In this subchapter, various interesting topics of future research, realized both in this thesis, and in previous research are identified.

First of all, the author recommends future research to replicate and further develop this study, especially through gathering a larger and more heterogeneous sample. Furthermore, a specific emphasis should be put on collecting diverse sample in terms of national cultures. Moreover, research should build on the subject by further analyzing consumer perception and behavior in the context of culture and sustainability. Furthermore, there

is still much to research when it comes to the specific contents of sustainability, consumer perceptions and their relationship to culture. One concrete avenue of research can be found in a need for holistic understanding of sustainability issues in the Textile and Clothing industry, especially from various stakeholders benefit aspect (Abbate et al., 2024, pp. 2839, 2840).

Future research on the subject is encouraged, as the companies are nevertheless pressured to alter strategies along with the changing environmental and economic environment (Wilson, 2015, p. 436). It is argued that sustainability can offer firms a competitive advantage (Porter & Van der Linde, 1995) and firms need to deviate from the mindset that sustainability is not profitable. In order for an organization to create long-term growth, Porter (1985) states that companies have to be very sensitive and responsive towards market forces, as they need to be able to differentiate or follow others in their strategies. Indeed, "For an organization to survive its rate of learning must be equal to, or greater than, the rate of change in its external environment" (Garratt, 1987, p. 54).

6.4 Limitations

Various challenges have been associated with conducting quantitative research, such as access of data, time, money and availability (Saunders et al., 2009). Furthermore, granting equal opportunities to each respondent and representing the whole population of a country is often difficult. Moreover, Holmes et al. (2017, pp. 141-143) state that internet-based surveys can face challenges like not reaching a broad or heterogeneous sample. A significant limitation in this thesis can be identified specifically in the sample and gathered data, as majority of the respondents are Finns, female and 21-30 years old.

The thesis also has several limitations with reference to the theories it uses. Utilizing two separate models in the cultural section of research can be considered a limitation, as although certain GLOBE's cultural dimensions and Hofstede's cultural dimensions are strongly connected, some differences between the two can nevertheless be identified.

Due to lack of existing literature on utilizing the two models together in research, the analysis of data may be affected by minor incomparability issues.

As one compares the differences and similarities of different cultures, there is the possibility of repeating already made mistakes in previous research, like assumptions of larger differences on poor grounds (Gjerde, 2004). Another limitation of this research is basing the cultural differences strongly on national cultures, although this is not a full representation of culture as a whole. Moreover, culture goes beyond the national levels of individual countries, since there can be found differences on a regional, gender, generation, society class and workplace levels as well (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, pp. 24, 32). Moreover, as Hofstede & Hofstede (2005) advise, when analyzing cultural differences, one should be careful with the use of national differences. Therefore, this thesis can be thought to somewhat lack in those aspects as well.

Triple bottom line has also faced some criticism; Norman et al. (2004, p. 246) question some aspects of Triple bottom line, highlighting for instance the limit to stakeholders right to companies' information, highlighting this especially from competitions point of view. A seemingly first article to take a critical look into Triple Bottom Line, Norman et al. (2004) have raised some questions about its validity, stating that it promises more than it can deliver. Furthermore, they note that the model does not seem to have clear methodology or definition as a concept when it comes to each three bottom lines (Norman et al., 2004, p. 245). While this is a valid notion, the research around the model can be seen to have evolved further in the last 20 years.

Possible limitations can also be found in the research methodology; deductive approach, for instance, has been criticized to possibly leading to explanatory results (Miller, 1983; Sekaran, 1992). Finally, it is never completely certain whether the respondent carried out the research truthfully, despite all efforts of the researcher. In order to reduce possibility of respondents, for instance, reporting false information and opinions, Saunders

et al. (2009) emphasize the importance of researchers paying attention to reliability and validity in research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

A survey on consumers' views of the sustainability of Textile and Apparel industry

Thank you for helping us get a better understanding of consumers' perceptions of sustainability of the Textile and Apparel industry! Please only fill the survey once.

In section 1, you will be asked questions related to your background. After this, questions on your views related to culture (section 2), and to Sustainability in the Textile and Apparel industry (section 3) will be presented. Next, in section 4 you will be asked questions related to your knowledge of the sustainability of Textile and Apparel industry. Finally, in section 5 you can provide feedback on the survey.

1. Your gender

Male []

Female []

Other []

2. Your age range

11-20 []

21-30 []

31-40 []

41-50 []

51-60 []

60+ []

3. Your citizenship

Choose your answer

(Every European country and other as options)

4. Do you strongly identify with that nationality?

Yes []

No []

Not sure []

5. Your highest level of education

Middle school or lower []

High school []

Bachelor's degree []

Master's degree []

Postgraduate course / PhD []

6. Your households net monthly income (euros)

<1500 []

1500-3000 []

3001-4000 []

4001-6000 []

6001-8000 []

>8000 []

National cultural drivers

Please choose the alternative that best describe to what extend you agree with the following statements (Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5)

7. Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties.

8. Group Welfare is more important than individual rewards.

9. Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group.

10. People in higher positions should not ask the opinions of people in lower positions too frequently.
11. People in higher positions should not delegate important tasks to people in lower positions.
12. People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions by people in higher positions.
13. Solving difficult problems usually requires an active, forcible approach, which is typical of men.
14. Men usually solve problems with logical analysis; women usually solve problems with intuition.
15. There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman.
16. Rules and regulations are important because they inform me of what is expected of me.
17. It is important to closely follow instructions and procedures.
18. Standardized work procedures are helpful.

Attitudes towards sustainability of the Textile and Apparel industry

Please choose the alternative that best describe to what extend you agree with the following statements (Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5)

19. I am concerned about issues affecting workers in clothing and textile manufacturing business.
20. I believe there is a lot that individual textile and apparel consumers can do to improve the environment.
21. I am concerned about durability and fit in clothing and textile products.
22. I believe good workmanship and materials are important.

Knowledge of sustainability in the Textile and Apparel industry

Please choose the alternative that best describe to what extend you agree with the following statements (Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5)

23. I am knowledgeable about social equity issues (e.g. working conditions of factory workers, fair wage for factory workers) in the fashion apparel business.

24. I am informed about environmental issues (e.g. eco-fashion, environmental impact of clothing manufacturing) in the fashion apparel manufacturing business.

25. I am knowledgeable about economic consumption factors (e.g. durability, renting) in the fashion apparel business.

26. I am knowledgeable about apparel brands that sell environmentally friendly products.

27. I know more about socially responsible apparel business than the average person.

Feedback on the survey

Please choose the alternative that best describe to what extend you agree with the following statements (Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5)

26. I am confident with my responses.

27. If you would like to share some feedback on the survey, please leave a comment here (open-ended)

The responses have been sent, thank you for your participation!