QUÉREN CLEMENTE COLNAGO

THE ETHICAL CONCERNS OF THE FAST FASHION CONSUMER:
A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

SÃO PAULO
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THE ETHICAL CONCERNS OF THE FAST FASHION CONSUMER:
A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Thesis presented to Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo of Fundação Getulio Vargas, as a requirement to obtain the title of Master in International Management (MPGI).

Knowledge Field: Internacionalização de Empresas

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Firstly, I would like to thank God for allowing me to dream and to give me the conditions to fulfill these dreams in the best way possible.

To my parents, Sulamita and Marco that have been there for me in every step of the way and that taught me to always do my best and to be worthy.

To my Supervisor, Mário, for his attention and dedication throughout these intense months.
ABSTRACT

Consumer behavior is been studied by academia since the late fifties. Despite the advances seen in the area, the topic still not fully explored due to the big range of variables that can influence consumers and their shopping practices.

The fast fashion model is the main disruption experienced by the fashion sector in the past decades. Despite being surrounded by social and environmental scandals, companies adopting this business model present a solid growth and profitability over the years allowing some of them to be classified as the biggest apparel companies in the world.

This paper aimed to explore the reasons why consumers keep buying from fast fashion companies even with these scandals being frequently reported by media. From the Literature Review, emerged the fact that there is no consensus amongst scholars if gender can influence the ethical concerns during the shopping experience. Therefore, the paper focused on exploring the ethical concerns and behaviors of fast fashion consumers under a gender perspective.

Females and males were compared in five topics, being (i) the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece, (ii) the self-proclaimed concern about social and environmental impacts generated by the fast fashion industry, (iii) prior consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to the social and environmental impacts produced by these companies, (iv) future consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to human rights violation and (v) beliefs about the impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries where the clothes are produced.

The results of the survey show no significant difference between the two groups, supporting past findings that also aimed to compare women and men in regards of their ethical concerns and shopping modes.

KEY WORDS: Consumer behavior; Gender; Ethical concerns; Fast fashion; Fashion industry.
RESUMO

O comportamento do consumidor vem sendo estudado por acadêmicos desde o final dos anos cinquenta. Apesar dos avanços encontrados na área, esse tópico não encontra-se totalmente explorado devido ao alto número de variáveis que podem influenciar o consumidor e seus hábitos de compra.

O modelo de fast fashion é a principal ruptura encontrada no mercado de moda nas últimas décadas. Apesar de ser rodeado por escândalos sociais e ambientais, empresas que adotam esse modelo de negócios apresentam sólidos crescimento e lucratividade ao longo dos anos, permitindo que algumas delas sejam classificadas como as maiores empresas de vestuário do mundo.

O presente estudo teve como propósito explorar as razões pelas quais consumidores continuam realizando compras em empresas de fast fashion apesar dos escândalos frequentemente reportados pela imprensa. A partir da Revisão da Literatura, emergiu o atual não consenso acadêmico sobre o fato de gênero influenciar as preocupações éticas durante o momento da compra. Desse modo, este trabalho teve como foco explorar as preocupações éticas e os comportamentos dos consumidores de fast fashion sob a perspectiva de gênero.

Mulheres e homens foram comparados em cinco tópicos: (i) o fator mais importante a ser considerado quando comprando um item de fast fashion; (ii) a auto-proclamada preocupação sobre os impactos sociais e ambientais gerados por essas empresas; (iii) prévia consideração a parar de comprar de empresas de fast fashion devido aos impactos sociais e ambientais gerados por essas empresas; (iv) futura consideração a parar de comprar de empresas de fast fashion devido à violação de direitos humanos; (v) convicções sobre os impactos gerados por empresas de fast fashion nos países onde as roupas são produzidas.

Os resultados da pesquisa mostram ausência de diferença significativa entre os dois grupos, corroborando conclusões passadas de estudos que também intencionaram comparar homens e mulheres em respeito às suas preocupações éticas e seus modos de compra.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Comportamento do consumidor; Gênero; Preocupações éticas; Fast fashion; Indústria do fast fashion.
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1 INTRODUCTION

Fast fashion is the main disruptor experienced by the fashion industry in the last decades (HYUNSOOK; HO; NAMHEE, 2013). The new approach was responsible for bringing important innovations to the field, with a focus on reduced production and distribution times (BRUCE; DALY, 2006; CACHON; SWINNEY, 2011; CARO; MARTINEZ DE ALBENIZ, 2014; CHRISTOPHER; LOWSON; PECK, 2004; SARICAM; ERDUMLU, 2016) and making fashionable clothes available to the mass (CARO; MARTYNEZ DE ALBENIZ, 2014; JOY et al., 2012).

The success of fast fashion is undeniable. Indeed, it is considered the most recognized business model within the fashion sector (SARICAM; ERDUMLU, 2016) and three out of the eight largest apparel retailers in the world are fast fashion companies, with a combined market value of USD 171.9 billion (MARR, 2018).

However, the innovations offered by fast fashion’s supply chains and designers do not come with a low price to the environment and to the society. In order to meet the growing demand for clothes and to make products available in stores in the minimum time, fast fashion companies rely on third parties to produce their garments in countries, mainly Asian, with weak environmental and labor laws (CHAVERO, 2017).

Scandals involving the main global fast fashion companies regarding violation of work rights, unsafe working conditions, environmental pollution are common and do not go unnoticed by the international media. The most emblematic episode, the Rana Plaza collapse was disclosed all around the world.

Regardless of the public embarrassments, fast fashion companies seem to have a shield protecting their business. Even with all media and information available on Internet, these companies do not face the rejection of the majority of the consumers, with profits increasing year after year even after major scandals (SIEGLE, 2014).
2 OBJECTIVE OF THE PAPER

This paper has as main objective the construction of a deeper academic understanding regarding the behavior of the young (20 years old to 35 years old) consumer that buys from fast fashion companies that are often connected to scandals in the environmental and societal spheres. The focus is on young people with a background in Business education.

In order to achieve this objective, the study concentrates on answering the following research question: Why do consumers keep buying products from fast fashion companies even with these companies being constantly involved in environmental and societal scandals?

It is important to highlight that the research question, as well as the whole development of the paper, is built on the already proved academic assumption that consumers have an intrinsic willingness to buy in a more ethical way than his/her actual purchasing habits (ZANE; IRWIN; RECZEK, 2016; CARRINGTON; NEVILLE; WHITWELL, 2014).

3 RELEVANCE OF THE PAPER

Despite being object of academic studies since the late fifties (FULLERTON, 2013), the consumer behavior still not fully understood by scholars. The reasons that drive consumers towards a non-ethical purchase are among the topics that demand further knowledge.

As stated by Vittel and Muncy (1992), there is a big range of factors that can shape the way consumers make ethical assessments. This study aims to explore how the gender factor influences the consumer.

By exploring how gender influences consumers of fast fashion companies, the study adds on the current academic debate. Furthermore, the paper provides insights and conclusions that can be further explored and tested by other researches.

Finally, the study provides a deep analysis on fast fashion consumer’s societal and environmental concerns, as well as their priorities when shopping, allowing companies to assess consumer’s opinion in delicate matters surrounding their businesses.
4 STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

The present paper contains five main sections, being: (i) Literature Review; (ii) The Fast Fashion Industry; (iii) Methodology; (iv) Survey Results and (v) Concluding Remarks.

The Literature Review aims to explore the current academic discussion on topics related to the proposed research question and its results are the basis to the construction of the questionnaire applied in this study.

The section “The Fast Fashion Industry” introduces the concept and business model of the traditional fast fashion companies as well as presents to the reader the societal and environmental impacts associated to this sector.

The Methodology explores and explains the quantitative approach used during the survey. Furthermore, the questionnaire is introduced and the distribution tools used to disseminate it are presented.

The Survey Results section identifies, explores and examines the outcomes generated by the participants of the survey and the Concluding Remarks section summarizes the paper, as well as states the limitations of the research and proposes future research options.

5 LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1 Expected outcomes from the Literature Review

Before mentioning the expected outcomes of the Literature Review, it is important to highlight that the Research Question proposed in this paper has a high degree of specificity, focusing solely on purchasing habits of consumers from fast fashion companies that are constantly associated to environmental and societal scandals. Therefore, the first round of Literature Review brought no significant results, being necessary to refocus the Literature Review on broader topics.
After this clarification, it is possible to mention that the Literature Review conducted for this paper considered two expected outcomes, with the second outcome being a direct result from the first.

Firstly, the Literature Review aimed to summarize what academics and scholars have been writing in the past years regarding the core elements presented in the Research Question – the relation between consumer and the product and the intention behavior gap. This way, two sub research questions were developed and used as basis for the Literature Review, being:

- How does the consumer and the products relate to each other?
- What are the reasons behind the existing gap between consumer’s intentions and actual behavior?

The academic literature related to these two sub research questions leaded to extra three new topics, being: external variables, mechanisms to reduce the gap and the definition/characteristics of the ethical consumer. These secondary topics had the following secondary research questions:

- Are there any external variables that can influence the consumer to buy in a more ethical or unethical way?
- Are there mechanisms to reduce the gap between consumer’s intentions and actual behavior?
- Who can be classified as a truly ethical consumer and what are his/her characteristics?

The second expected outcome of the Literature Review was to find already existing academic conclusions for the proposed Research Question and its sub and secondary questions in order to avoid the exploration of topics that already present a consensus amongst scholars.

5.2 Collection Procedure for the Literature Review

The collection procedure for the Literature Review of this study had three rounds. Each round had its own purpose and timeframe, as explained below.

The first round occurred from April to June 2018 and was focused on the following databases:
Polymer Contents (ScienceDirect), JSTOR Business I Archive Collection, JSTOR Business III Archive Collection, Annual Reviews, Emerald Insight, Springer, WileyBlackwell, SAGE Journals Online, Informs Pubs Online, Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences. Thirty-eight articles were analyzed in order to explore the academic discussions about the intention-behavior gap, the drivers for consumption, the ethical consumption and the consumer behavior.

The second round was a deployment from the first one and took place from July to September 2018 with the analysis of thirty-four articles that were mentioned in the articles from first round. This round had a higher focus on the ethical consumerism and the consumer’s choices when shopping. The following databases were used in this phase: Emerald Insight, Kluwer Academic Publishers, MDPI, WileyBlackwell, Google Scholar and RAND.

The final round was focused on the fast fashion industry and occurred in the month of October 2018. Twenty-two academic articles were evaluated and the Springer, Emerald Insight, Oxford Journals (Oxford University Press), MDPI and Informs Pubs Online, Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences databases were used in this phase.

5.3 Preliminary thoughts

Understanding consumer behavior is vital for companies to succeed in their business. In current days, consumers are constantly under an enormous amount of information and choices.

Marr (2018) states that currently, humankind produces 2.5 quintillion bytes of data every single day and the two-year period from 2016-2017 generated 90% of this content. Examples of the forces behind this unprecedented content generation are: almost 4 billion of people use Internet, Google research website computes more than 40,000 searches every second and almost 47 thousand pictures are posted on Instagram every minute.

Companies are aware of this new scenario and it is possible to recognize corporate actions towards a better knowledge of their consumer in this new era. Fast fashion companies, in particular, put the understanding of their consumers as a business model’s pillar.
H&M, the global fast fashion company, mentions in its 2017 annual report “As increased digitalization in society is creating new consumer behaviors, the H&M group is evolving at a faster pace in response to changes in customers’ expectations and shopping habits”. (H&M GROUP, 2017). Inditex, owner of global fashion chains such as Zara and Pull&Bear, states in its 2017 annual report: “The customer is at the centre of Inditex’s activity and, we have developed an integrated store and online platform in order to listen their feedback” (INDITEX, 2017).

However, a deeper knowledge about consumer behavior is not an exclusive aim of contemporary firms. In fact, Fullerton (2013) identified studies from the late fifties that had this objective. Furthermore, the author points that the official start of consumer behavior as a discipline occurred in 1961, with James Engels publishing “Motivation research – magic or menace”, in the Michigan Business Review.

5.4 The relation of the consumer and the product

As mentioned above, understanding how consumers will behave is essential to companies and the subject is being studied for more than half a century. However, guaranteeing that one specific product will be selected over other similar products available in the market is not a minor issue and the relation between the consumer and the product can influence this process.

Two main variables play a significant role in the relation consumer has with products, being the consumers themselves and the product itself. As illustrated by Figure 01, consumers and products are in constant interaction, constantly influencing the purchase decision.
5.4.1 Attitudes towards products

In their famous book ‘Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behavior’, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, p. 11) define attitude as “the amount of affect for or against some object” and defend the existence of three basic and interrelated aspects for it: it has a favorable or unfavorable consistency towards the object, it predisposes actions and it can be learned.

Regarding attitude consistency, the authors Fishbein and Ajsen (1975) explain that there are three main types of consistency. First, the person consistently presents the same response towards an object (stimulus – response consistency). Second, the person responds differently to an object, but all the responses are consistent to each other (response-response consistency). The third type refers to multiple behaviors towards the object but present consistency over time (evaluative consistency).

Attitudes are, in general, seen as variables, visible or not, that guide or shape people’s behavior, being a predisposition. Due to this, the attitude per se needs to be understood by observing the consistency in someone’s behavior. The stimulus – response consistency states for a consistent response, therefore, by knowing someone’s past behaviors towards some object, it is possible to predict the next behavior. The response – response consistency implies that a positive or negative set of different but congruent behaviors in the past will lead to a positive or negative behavior in the future. The evaluative consistency makes no assumptions regarding the link the past and future behaviors.
As assumed in the stimulus - response and in the response – response approaches, past experiences have the power to shape future behaviors and many scholars accept that residual memories can influence current behavior, becoming a learned predisposition to respond to an object in a consistent way.

The belief that past experiences have the power to shape the future remains in more contemporary studies, as observed in Boulstrisidge and Carrignan (2000) study about how past events influence the current reputation of corporations on the consumer’s eyes. The authors mentioned that, in some cases, a company’s reputation is a criterion in purchasing decisions and have the capacity to contribute to the sales of a specific product.

Despite the importance of attitude in the elaboration process of future behaviors, it is important to highlight that the attitude per se it is not the behavior itself. Actually, the behavior itself is defined by the authors as “observable acts” (FISHBEIN; AJSEN, 1975, p.13) and it is influenced by attitudes, beliefs and behavioral intentions.

When focusing on attitudes, the concerns are about the predispositions and affect towards an object, as mentioned earlier. Beliefs refer the information a person has about a specific object, linking this object to an attribute. For example, in the belief “Fast fashion products are cheap”, there is the object – fast fashion products – and the attribute – cheap. The level of association between an object and an attribute differ between people, leading to different perceptions about how linked these two variables are (belief strength concept). Behavioral intention means the intention of a person to perform a behavior and, as well the beliefs, has a different strength to each individual (FISHBEIN; AJSEN, 1975).

Sheppard, Hartwich and Warshaw (1988) defend that the model proposed by Fishbein and Ajsen provides a solid basis for the identification of where and how consumers should be targeted since it correctly predicts consumer’s intentions and behaviors. In general, the model from Fishbein and Ajsen is applied in three scenarios. First, the target behavior is not totally under the subject’s willingness control. Second, the problem chosen is not originally addressed by the authors in the original model. Third, the assessment of intentions is made when it is impossible for the subject to have access to all information during the intention formation process.

The model developed by Fishbein and Ajsen (1975) focuses on predicting behaviors by understanding a person’s attitudes, beliefs and intentions. This way, the model does not deal
with outcomes from the behaviors per se. For example, when dealing with the consumption of fast fashion products, the model facilitates the explanation of why a person buys a fast fashion product and not the outcome of this purchase, such as obtaining a new piece of clothing.

Furthermore, Sheppard, Hartwich and Warshaw (1988) explain that the original model is only valid when the behaviors are under the person’s willingness control. This way, behaviors that demand “knowledge, skills, resources, or others ‘cooperation, or necessities overcoming environmental obstacles’” (SHEPPARD; HARTWICH; WARSHAW, 1988, p. 326) cannot be analyzed under Fishbein and Ajsen’s model because these circumstances can impose a certain behavior due to the person’s incapacity in behaving in a certain way despite the intention of doing so.

Nevertheless, in general, consumer activity occurs under a certain level of limitations, e.g. the availability of the products. These limitations affect the consumer capacity to behave in a specific way or to generate a certain outcome (SHEPPARD; HARTWICH; WARSHAW, 1988). Another topic raised by Sheppard, Hartwich and Warshaw (1988) is the fact that Fishbein and Ajsen’s model does not deal with a range of possible behaviors. Therefore, the subject is not supposed to choose among a variety of potential outcomes. In real life, however, consumers are given a range of possibilities and must choose how the purchase process will develop, e.g. selection process of the store, the product, the brand, etc. and the existence of the choice may change completely the process of the intention formation.

5.4.2 Attributional thinking

Attributional thinking is another variable that influences consumer behavior. People purchase goods and these goods generate positive or negative outcomes and experiences, allowing the consumer to draw an “attributional conclusion” (WEINER, 2000, p. 383) about the specific product. This conclusion influences and shapes the next purchase behavior. Indeed, according to the Rational Choice Theory, the process of selecting a good to purchase is determined by earlier satisfaction with that product (WEINER, 2000).

This earlier satisfaction, however, is not necessarily linked to a personal experience of the consumer with the product. It is possible to create an anticipated satisfaction by non-attributional antecedents such as an advertisement or a recommendation made by a friend
In other words, if an advertisement in social media stands for the high quality of a piece of clothing, the client may create the expected satisfaction towards the quality of the fabrics without going through attributional thinking process.

Despite the possibility of creating an anticipated satisfaction in the consumer, it is important to highlight that attributional thinking is only possible after the product has its initial performance compared to the expectations about that performance, leading to an influence in the consumer´s next choice (WEINER, 2000).

5.5 A new concern about products and a perceived gap between intentions and real purchase behavior

“Consumers around the world are saying loud and clear that a brand’s social purpose is among the factors that influence purchase decisions” (NIELSEN, 2014).

In the past years, “ethical” products have experienced a boom in the market. There is no denial that “green”, “locally produced”, “responsibly produced” products have been gaining space in the market. A quick visit to a local supermarket or to a fast fashion ecommerce website proves this point.

This phenomenon seems to find no national boundaries and is spreading around the world. According to a global survey made across 60 countries by Nielsen (2014), fifty-five percent of online costumers demonstrated intention to pay higher prices for products and services offered by companies committed to have positive social and environmental impacts.

Table 01 shows that even regions that present lower rates of acceptance of the higher prices linked to ethical products still have a high percentage of people willing to pay more for socially and environmentally friendly products.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>PROPENSITY TO BUY SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BRANDS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia-Pacific</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East/Africa</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 01 – Propensity to buy socially responsible brands. Created by the author

Source: Nielsen (2014)

However, despite the intrinsic willingness to behave in an ethical way present in most consumers, (ZANE; IRWIN; RECZEK, 2016), it is rare that ethical concerned people have ethical purchasing habits, with most consumers buying non-ethical products despite the alleged intention of ethical consumerism, leading to a gap between intention and behavior (CARRINGTON; NEVILLE; WHITWELL, 2014).

The complexity in presenting a shopping behavior the way is intended is not an issue of a specific group but affects all types of consumers. In fact, even consumers that declare themselves as having a strong sense of ethics present difficult in buying solely ethical products.

5.5.1 The gap between intention and behavior in consumption

The reasons why consumers with an ethical concern tend not to present an ethical purchasing behavior still not well understood by academia. The existing literature is focused on quantitative research and fails to capture the complexity linked to consumer’s decision process towards the consumption of a specific product (CARRINGTON; NEVILLE; WHITWELL, 2014). In fact, Vitell and Muncy (1992, p. 596) discovered that “several important factors are likely to contribute to how consumers make ethical judgments”.

In a qualitative study that explored the ethical concerns and real purchase habits of thirteen people, Carrington; Neville; Whitwell (2014) found four factors that explain the gap between
consumer’s intention and behaviors, being, prioritization of ethical concerns, formation of plans and habits, willingness to commit and sacrifice and modes of shopping behavior.

**Prioritization: primary or secondary**

The prioritization of ethical concerns is a subjective, internal and individual process in which the person divides her/his ethical issues in two major categories, the primary importance issues and the secondary importance issues. This prioritization of ethical concerns allows the non-paralyzation of the concerns since the non-prioritization would demand an enormous amount of resource to guarantee their implementation.

The primary importance issues are, in general, linked to personal values and are mostly seen as a “way of living” and tend to not represent an extra option to the person’s life. These issues are responsible for the mobilization of the person and allow people to concentrate in changing their own behavior gradually. On the other hand, the secondary issues are, in general, forgotten and tend to not be incorporated into shopping decisions, being compared to other purchasing variables, such as cost (CARRINGTON; NEVILLE; WHITWELL, 2014).

**Plans and habits**

Formulating plans before going shopping has a high efficiency in achieving a more ethical consumption. On the other hand, the opposite, the absence of plan leads to a shopping behavior that is not aligned to the pre-established ethical concerns. Plans allows the person to stay focused during the shopping experience and avoid unnecessary last-minute purchases. Many formats can be considered as shopping plans, such as a simple list and all of them are effective.

The planning process, however, demands “commitment, effort and awareness” (CARRINGTON; NEVILLE; WHITWELL, 2014, p. 2763) and should not be seen as a simple task. Many times, the ethical consumption involves not just switching one product by another in the same store but other more difficult aspects as well such as finding new stores to buy and deciding the transportation to get to the selected store. On the other hand, this acquired knowledge lead to repetition of behavior, gradually creating a habit.

**Commitment and sacrifice**

The consumer’s willingness to sacrifice and a high commitment level to purchase ethical products help to diminish the gap between intention and behavior. The sacrifice can be seen in
many ways, such as the higher prices attached to the ethical products and the convenience during the shopping experience. Other sacrifices such as time, energy and potential psychological costs are also linked to a more ethical consumerism behavior (ZANE; IRWIN; RECZEK, 2016). According to Carrington, Neville and Whitwell (2014), the acceptance of this sacrifice is only possible with a high level of commitment and this is mostly linked to the primary importance issues mentioned above.

**Shopping Modes**

The modes of shopping behavior are the last variable that explains the gap between intention and behavior while shopping. Carrington; Neville; Whitwell (2014) identified three modes and how they are linked to a smaller or bigger intention – behavior gap.

The first mode is the pre-determined and rapid shopping behavior. When acting according this behavior, the consumer practices a fast and effortless purchase since the decision process was made before arriving to the store. In this mode is easier to establish an ethical consumption. The second mode is the effortful decision-making at the point of purchase in which the consumer did not decided about the product to be bought previously. The decision process is done *in loco* and it is common to disregard ethical issues in this mode due to the amount of options presented in the store. The third mode is the spontaneous shopping. Despite the spontaneity of this mode, it does not always lead in non-ethical consumption (CARRINGTON; NEVILLE; WHITWELL, 2014).

The four factors interact with each other and can be categorized in three levels, creating an interconnected hierarchy as seen in Figure 02.
According to the hierarchy proposed by Carrington; Neville; Whitwell (2014), when presenting ethical concerns that are classified as primary issues, it is more likely that consumers will elaborate plans and be more willing to do sacrifices and to commit. The repetition of these actions leads to the establishment of purchasing habits that are aligned with the ethical concerns. In the end, the behavior becomes automatic, effortless and repetitive, generating a shopping behavior consistently aligned to the ethical concerns. However, if the ethical issue presents a secondary importance, is much less likely that the process mentioned is started.

**Shopping Modes – a focus on spontaneous shopping**

Despite the fact that spontaneous shopping does not necessarily lead to non-ethical consumptions, it is important to understand how a non-planned purchase can lead to consumers buying products that are not ethical.

Impulse buying occurs when a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful and persistent urge to buy something immediately. The impulse to buy is hedonically complex and may stimulate emotional conflict. Also, impulse
buying is prone to occur with diminished regard for its consequences. (ROOK, 1987, p. 191)

The consumer’s impulsiveness can occur in any type of environment. Furthermore, it is a fact that impulsive purchase behavior challenges the assessment of the real necessity of a product and its strength relies on the instant gratification offered by the shopping experience (ROOK, 1987).

The reasons for such impulsive behavior is commonly explained by a dual process in which this behavior is an outcome of the clash of two psychological opponent variables (LADES, 2014).

These variables have received many names in academic literature, such as “desire” and “willpower”, proposed by Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) and “System 1” and “System 2” by Kahneman (2011) and Lades (2014). Despite the incongruous naming process, it is highly agreed that impulsive behavior is a result of two opposite psychological forces. Following Lades (2014) and Kahneman (2011), this study goes for “System 01” and “System 02” when identifying these variables.

The “System 01” is responsible for intuitively guiding many economic decisions, looking for immediate satisfaction. Meanwhile, the “System 02” is in charge of setting long-term goals and guaranteeing that these goals are reached. This way, “System 02” is responsible for controlling “System 01” (LADES, 2014).

This controlling power over “System 01” however, is dependent on personal determination to achieve that specific goal. The problem is that the personal determination can be weakened due to previous experiences, leading to a higher possibility of impulsive behavior. In fact, the lack of personal determination is linked to the impulsive consumption of products such as junk food, alcohol, fashionable clothing among others (LADES, 2014).

### 5.5.2 Acceptation of unethical consumption

As mentioned before, the majority of consumers that claim to have ethical concerns when purchasing a product does not necessarily buy in an ethical manner and the reasons behind this discrepancy are still not well comprehended by academia.
In an extra attempt to produce deeper knowledge on the subject, Lau and Choe (2009) looked at the problem from a different perspective. Unlike Carrington, Neville and Whitwell (2014) that tried to understand the factors that can increase or diminish the gap between intention and behavior, the authors explored variables to understand why some people accept more unethical consumer practices.

Both studies have a similarity: Lau and Choe (2009) and Carrington, Neville and Whitwell (2014) present a strong focus on understanding the consumer and not the products, as seen in the Figure 03 below.

The study was conducted among undergraduate students in Malaysia and analyzed three variables, namely: gender, exposure to ethics education and amount of allowances received per month. Twenty different purchasing situations that presented ethical ramifications were analyzed in four dimensions, being: actively benefiting from an illegal activity, passively benefiting at the expense of others, actively benefiting from questionable action and no harm/no foul.
It is important to note that two out of three variables studied in Lao and Choe (2009) are not new in the academia and conflicting results were found by authors across the years (BORKOWSKI; UGRAS, 1998; WYND; MAGER, 1989). Furthermore, the last studied variable – income – has not a robust literature, being only possible to treat Lau and Choe (2009) study as exploratory, not leading to concrete conclusions about the topic.

The relation between (un)ethical consumption behavior and gender

The relation between gender and ethical behavior is not new nor an unexplored topic in academic literature. In fact, Ford and Richardson (1994) stated that sex is the most reported variable in empirical studies focused on ethical decision-making.

Lau and Choe (2009) found that gender partially influences someone’s behavior towards ethical beliefs in consumption. Their study showed that the level of eagerness to benefit from a clearly unethical consumption situation was lower in female shoppers than in male shoppers. In addition to that, female shoppers presented a lower level of acceptance to passively receive benefits from other person’s mistakes, e.g. receiving more exchange than the necessary and not inform the cash desk.

Beltrami, Peterson and Kozmetsky (1984) also found similar results when they studied college student’s ‘attitudes towards ethics. The authors collected a national sample formed by students from business, liberal arts/social sciences and engineering/natural science in the United States of America.

The results showed that, in general, gender significantly led to different levels of ethical concerns in eight out of ten items studied, with female students being steadily more concerned with ethical issues than their male colleagues are.

Despite the results positively linking the female gender with ethical behavior found by Lau and Choe (2009) and Beltrami, Peterson and Kozmetsky (1984), conflicting results were also found during the development of literature (BORKOWSKI; UGRAS, 1998). In fact, during a review of empirical literature Ford and Richardson (1994) detected that half of the literature studied showed that gender has no impact on ethical beliefs.

To address this problem Borkowski and Ugras (1998) performed a meta-analysis of the existing studies to test if indeed, there is no important difference observed in the ethical
behavior of female and male business students. The results found support the relation between gender and ethical behavior across business students, with twenty-nine academic studies showing that females are indeed more concerned about ethical behavior than men are.

**The relation between (un)ethical consumption behavior and ethics education**

Lau and Choe (2009) detected that students who have never been exposed to ethical classes had, in fact, more ethical behavior in two out of the four dimensions studied, namely: actively benefiting from questionable action and no harm/ no foul. These results contradict past research (WYND; MAGER, 1989).

The academic investigation about the connection between the exposure to ethical education and ethical behavior is not new and it is possible to identify a shift in the main purpose of these studies over the years.

In 1989, Wynd and Mager noted that ancient studies were focused in understanding how ethical attitudes differed among business students and business people and the vast majority of these investigations discovered that, in general, business students aren’t more ethical than business people.

After this phase, the academic literature started to focus on understanding how the exposure to ethics courses can affect the students ‘attitudes towards ethical behaviors and it was found no big differences when comparing students prior and after the exposure to the ethics courses (WYND; MAGER, 1989).

In their own study, Wynd and Mager (1989) tried to determine the existence or not of a significant discrepancy in students’ attitudes towards ethical decisions before and after taking an ethics course. The authors found that “there is no difference between student’s attitudes toward ethical/social responsibility issues before and after taking a course in Business and Society.” (WYND; MAGER, 1989, p. 489).

Furthermore, the authors pointed out that the judgment of situation is built over time and depends on variables such as family and religion, meaning that a solely ethics course is not capable of changing this long built internal judgment process of what is ethical and what is not.

Lyonski and Gaidis (1991) conducted a survey with business students from USA, Denmark and New Zealand to understand their responses when facing ethical dilemmas in five areas
and their conclusion can summarize the conflicting results found by different authors. According to them, increasing student’s knowledge about ethical issues, such as providing ethic classes, produces ambiguous impacts.

**The relation between (un)ethical consumption behavior and income**

In their study with Malaysian undergraduate students, Lau and Choe (2009) observed that the amount of allowances received by the students had no influence in the ethical beliefs in all the dimensions studied. However, it is important to mention that the authors used students with no income as their sample, being necessary to replace income by the allowance received by these students and this fact can influence these results.

The influence of the income on the ethical behavior of a consumer is the less studied of the three variables. As Lau and Choe (2009) point out, is not possible to find robust empirical evidence in the academic literature that explains how the income can influence the consumer’s decision-making process.

Vitell (2003) also advocated for the necessity of a deeper academic research regarding the relation between income and ethical behavior since the majority of the existing literature about ethics is focused on the seller’s side.

**5.6 External variables that could influence the consumer behavior**

The interaction between the consumer and the product is not only dependent on variables linked to them, as this is not a closed system. In fact, there are external variables that can also shape and influence the consumer behavior, with two main variables mentioned in recent academic literature, being: corporate reputation and information availability. Figure 04 explains how they permeate the connection between costumers and products.
Figure 04 – Interaction between consumer, products, and other variables affecting the consumer and the external environment

Source: The Author
5.6.1 Corporate reputation

Boulstridge & Carrigan (2000, p. 357) define company’s reputation as the “public beliefs about it based upon their experience or behavior, its products and what they have heard and read about it.”

Company’s reputation is an important element because, in some cases, it is used by consumers as a criterion in the purchasing process, with good reputation leading to more sales of a product and a bad reputation diminishing the revenues (BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN, 2000).

It is possible to infer that the past plays an important role in creating the current reputation of an organization and that consumers are affected by these experiences when in a purchasing situation. Indeed, the belief that experiences have the power to influence and shape ongoing purchasing habits can be found in the academic literature under a range of classifications, as seen in Weiner (2000) with attributional conclusion and in Fishbein and Ajsen (1975) with their response-response consistency concept.

In the beginning of the nineties, the study published by Dragon International, pointed out that, at that time, the link between corporate reputation and consumer’s purchasing behavior was at its early stages, forecasting a development of it in the future. (BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN, 2000; CARRIGAN; ATALLA, 2001)

In the recent past of academic literature, authors have tried to understand how much the past reputation of a company affects consumers in the present. The results that emerged from their studies are contradictory, as explained below.

Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) found that corporate image influences the perceived quality of a product and the customer satisfaction. In fact, in a consolidated market, the reputation of a company represents extra information to the consumer and affects the way he/she buys.

Jeng (2011) analyzed if and how much the company’s reputation could influence the consumer when in a process of cross selling. The results showed that there is a positive relation between these variables, since the corporate reputation positively influences the levels of trust and emotional commitment of the client. The author suggests companies to invest in their reputations to increase the effectiveness of cross selling activities amongst their consumers.
Çek studied management students and found that the corporate reputation has a significant impact on the costumer’s purchasing behavior and advises companies to focus on creating an image of being an organization that delivers quality and good price. The author concludes: “company reputation and image are very important factors influencing the customer’s behaviors.” (CEK, 2016, p. 124).

On the other hand, when studying a group formed by different profiles, ranging from managers to retired people, Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) discovered that none of the participants believed the past behavior of a company influenced their purchasing behavior in an important way. Actually, the general agreement was that if the company produced a product they liked and had always purchased, it would be unlikely to them to boycott the company.

In another study, Carrigan and Atalla (2001) analyzed young university educated males and females and how the past of a company would influence their decisions when buying a product. The authors found that, for the majority of the respondents, the company’s track in the environmental and societal dimensions had no influence in the purchasing decision process.

5.6.2 Information availability

Another variable that is present in academia as a possible influencer on consumer behavior during shopping moments is the information’s availability. Consumers tend to intentionally remain in their ignorance about the ethical aspects of a specific product if the ethical information is not available to them (ZANE; IRWIN; RECZEK, 2016). In other words, people tend not to ask about ethical issues when buying products if this information is not promptly provided.

There are two major problems with consumers that decide to intentionally remain ignorant about the ethical attributes of a product. First, when the person decides to initiate this ignorance cycle by not proactively asking about the ethical attributes of a products, it is very likely that he/she will remain with this behavior in the future, being less inclined to be ethical in future purchases across the time.

Second, it is common that these consumers initiate a public “denigration phenomenon” (ZANE; IRWIN; RECZEK, 2016, p. 338) towards consumers that proactively search for
ethical information when buying. By being able to directly compare their own acts to other’s consumer’s ethical conduct, people that intentionally remain ethically ignorant create a sense of “self-threat”, culminating in the defamation of others due to social comparison. It is important to highlight that this denigration solely occurs in the moral field, meaning that if the additional information is not regarding ethical issues, the denigration does not occur (ZANE; IRWIN; RECZEK, 2016).

The development of media channels and technology allow consumers to have instant, permanent and abundant information (HUANG, 2018). Corporate actions are being more often covered by media (BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN, 2000), being this last channel the major conductor of news regarding corporate behavior (CARRIGAN; ATALLA, 2001).

The Internet represents a mark in the ethical relation between the marketing of companies and consumers. Consumers can easily track corporate actions and group of consumers can coordinate their activities in a global level, such as the homepage of boycott to Nike products – www.saigon.com/Nike/. This closer and clearer relationship represents the rupture in the tendency created in the 1960s, when companies did not show any public interest in their social responsibilities or completely ignored those (CARRIGAN; ATALLA, 2001).

Having such amount of information available however does not necessarily leads to a change in the consumer purchase behavior. In fact, having access to more information can make “buying difficult.” (CARRIGAN; ATALLA, 2001, p. 363)

BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN (2000) studied the impact of the availability of information regarding corporate actions in the purchasing behavior of consumers. Their results showed that a higher amount of information available to consumers does not lead to a significant change in the purchase process. Therefore, the authors defend that it is possible to refuse the idea of an existing sophisticated and well aware consumer.

Carrigan and Atalla (2001) found similar results in their study. When participants were inquired about having the possibility to access more information in their purchasing process, they stated that it would have small impact in their decisions. Some respondents mentioned that more information would lead to confusion.

The relation between a higher amount of information and purchase behavior however seems to behave in a different way when the first variable is presented to the consumer in a different way.
When in a purchase moment in an offline site that already has a big amount of information presented at the same time – traditional brick and mortar stores – consumers tend to respond positively and increase their purchase intentions when informed that more facts about the products are available online. The reason behind is that customers delegate to the Internet the responsibility of retaining this extra information and believe that they can access this information when needed, boosting their buying intentions (BHARGAVE; MANTONAKIS; WHITE, 2016).

The results found by Bhargave, Mantonakis and White (2016) do not contradict the findings from Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) or Carrigan and Atalla (2001). In fact, they complement each other.

In order to make a conscious decision, people do need information. However, the process of obtaining, accessing and interpreting this information has a cost to individuals (effort and time, for example). These costs are different to each person, personally affecting the way people use the information available (BAXTER; GLENDINNING; CLARKE, 2008).

Carrigan and Atalla (2001, p. 570) noted that the additional effort to process ethical information apace with price, quality and other variables seemed too much to people to deal with when in a purchase moment and “consumers are unwilling to undergo any extra inconvenience in order to purchase ethically.”

By examining together the recent findings of Bhargave, Mantonakis and White (2016) and the past results from Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) and Carrigan and Atalla (2001) it is possible to infer that more information can influence consumers in their purchase process if the additional information’ storage responsibility is not personally taken by the consumer, but delegated to the Internet.

5.7 Reducing the gap between intention and behavior in consumption

Despite all the existing complexity in the relation between consumers and products, academic studies identified techniques that can make consumers effectively act in more ethical ways when buying a product.
According to Lades (2014) it is possible to induce the consumption of ethical products and as well as it is possible to decrease the impulsive consumption of unethical goods. In fact, there are some strategies that can be used by consumers in order to reduce the gap between intention and actual behavior when consuming goods.

The first technique to reduce impulsive purchases is strengthening the consumer self-determination. This can be achieved, for example, by the use of external controlling devices. Devices are “arrangements that people make to formalize and facilitate their goals” (BRYAN; KARLAN; NELSON, 2010, p. 672) and can represent soft and hard commitments. While the hard commitments represent real economic punishments for failure or rewards in case of success, soft commitments are linked to psychological consequences (BRYAN; KARLAN; NELSON, 2010).

The external devices can present innumerable formats, such as going to a restaurant with a limited amount of money and no credit card to avoid impulsive consumption of wine (Lades, 2014) or setting the bank account for limited cash withdraws (ASHRAF; KARLAN; YIN, 2006). The main idea is to externally control the variable that triggers the impulsive purchase.

Strengthening self-determination, however, is not a solely external process. Internal control mechanisms can be used in order to increase it (LADES, 2014). One of the most common internal control tool is the cost-benefit analyses (HOCH; LOEWENSTEIN, 1991) that individuals make to access the real costs of purchasing a good that is impulsively wanted. Although, it is important to highlight that relying on costs assessments to block a possible impulsive compulsion is not easy due to the intangibility of the costs (LADES, 2014). Indeed, Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) confirm that the experience of shopping gives an immediate gratification while the economic results are difficult to be defined.

The second technique that can be used to reduce impulsive consumption is to reduce the frequency in which the impulsive desire arises. The rationale is simple: when the urgency in buying something does not occur, self – determination is not necessary. Understanding the factors that are underlying the impulsive desire helps to elaborate new ways to deal with impulsive consumerism due to the fact that, once aware of these triggers, consumers can reduce their own exposure to specific variables (LADES, 2014). For example, a person that identifies that accessing a fast fashion website as a trigger can make a commitment of buying solely in physical stores.
Hoch and Loewenstein, (1991) propose three main strategies to a consumer maintain self-control and avoid desire, namely: avoidance, postponement and distraction, and substitution.

The Avoidance technique requires the consumer to maintain physical and/or sensorial distance of the object and is classified by the authors as the best tool consumers can use to avoid increasing their desire for items that were previously rejected.

The Postponement and Distraction technique calls for postponing the decision moment to a future date. For example, the consumer can decide to only buy new shoes after analyzing its closet or talking to his/her partner. This extra time is important to reduce the desire of buying that specific product. Distraction is a tool that consumer can use to push away the decision moment of buying a product or not and it can assume many formats, such as going to another aisle in the store.

The last technique, Substitution, consists in offering someone (even the self) a small reward for resisting the desire to buy. The main goal is to provide instant satisfaction. However, the real effectiveness of this technique is not clear.

These three techniques work on the neutralization of the desire caused by the proximity with the object and are visually shown in the Figure 05.

![Figure 05 – Strategies for maintaining self-control](source)

*Source: Hoch and Loewenstein, (1991, p. 499)*
5.8 The social responsibility of the consumer

Already in 1972, Kotler (1972) argued that the consumer movement has five main characteristics: (i) it is inevitable, (ii) it will endure, (iii) it will be beneficial, (iv) it is pro-marketing and (v) it can be profitable.

The author mentions that, by that time, consumer movement had as goal to establish three main rights: the right to have a satisfactory information about the product, the right to be additionally protected against suspicious products and marketing actions and the right to influence products and marketing towards directions that would increase the quality of life.

Following on consumer movement achievements over the years regarding the three initial goals, scholars that are more recent are calling for a stronger commitment from consumer side, defending that buying more ethically is now a consumer’s responsibility (QUAZI; AMRAN; NEJATI, 2016).

This responsibility has its base on a consumer’s right conquered by the consumer movement. Access to the right information about products and services is consumer’s right regardless of the impact of this information might have over the consumer behavior. Alongside with this right comes the responsibility to evaluate immoral corporate behavior and to point out practices that business can adopt to improve their citizenship behavior (QUAZI; AMRAN; NEJATI, 2016).

Despite this obligation, past research found that consumers tend to ignore corporate actions that do not affect them in a direct manner. Interest in an ethical issue and taking action are conditioned to the extent a bad corporate behavior affects the consumer directly (BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN, 2000; CARRIGAN; ATALLA, 2001).

It is important to note that academic research on the responsibilities of the consumers is new and rare despite the vital importance they have in sustaining the existence and growth of a business within a community (QUAZI; AMRAN; NEJATI, 2016).

The creation of a concept and a scale to measure consumer’s responsibilities is first seen at Quazi, Amran and Nejati (2016, p. 49). The authors define Consumer Social Responsibility (CnSR) as “the individual and collective commitments, actions and decisions that consumers
consider as the right things to do in their interactions with producers, marketers and sellers of goods and services.”

The definition implies that it is consumer’s responsibility to have ethical and responsible actions when in contact with businesses, for example, when purchasing goods. This critical evaluation of business is one out of six consumers’ social responsibilities proposed by the authors, as explained below.

- **CnSR #1: Supporting business growth**
  The main argument sustaining this responsibility is that business need to engage in profitable operations to guarantee their survival and existence within the community

- **CnSR #2: Critical appraisal**
  It is consumer’s responsibility to evaluate any unethical corporate behavior and to purpose actions to improve corporate citizenship

- **CnSR #3: Action**
  The critical appraisal must be converted into action, with costumers exercising their power to have access to a reasonable deal in the market

- **CnSR #4: Social impacts**
  Consumers must act in a responsible way, aiming to minimize their impact on the community and on other citizens by paying attention on how their purchase choices affect these stakeholders

- **CnSR #5: Environmental impacts**
  Consumers need to guarantee their buying behavior does not affect the environment in a negative manner. In addition, they should prioritize environmentally friendly products when buying.

- **CnSR #6: Solidarity**
  Consumers must act in a collective way to bring attention to their interests. Joining a consumer association and actively participating in it is one of the ways that allow consumers to exercise this responsibility.

Quazi, Amran and Nejati (2016) argue that there is an urgency for consumers to play their roles. Furthermore, they believe that if consumers were reminded about their social obligation, they would act in a more prudent manner when buying products and services.
However, it is important to note that some of these responsibilities are related to the external impacts of a purchase decision. As mentioned above, past research showed that consumers tend to care only when they are directly affected by corporate behavior, meaning that their purchases are driven by personal side rather than societal causes (BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN, 2000; CARRIGAN; ATALLA, 2001).

5.9 Defining the ethical consumer

The majority of consumers are willing to have ethical behavior when shopping (ZANE; IRWIN; RECZEK, 2016; CARRINGTON; NEVILLE; WHITWELL, 2014). Despite this positive intention, it is important to notice that this desire to purchase ethically it is not sufficient to classify a consumer as a real ethical purchaser. Recent scholars advocate that buying ethically is no longer a choice but a consumer’s obligation that results from the rights achieved in the past years (QUAZI; AMRAN; NEJATI, 2016).

Even though being a minority, it is already possible to find consumers that can be classified as truly ethical consumers (BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN, 2000).

According to Harrison, Newholm and Shaw (2005, p. 2), ethical consumers are purchasers who are “concerned with the effects that a purchasing choice has, not only in themselves, but also on the external world around them.”

Two major variables are essential to understand and limit the ethical consumer. First, there is infinity of causes that make people to prefer an ethical product over another, such as religion and political views. Hence, this study accepts as ethical consumer any person that chooses an ethical product over another despite his/her reasons to behave this way.

Second, ethical consumers are those that take into consideration the external consequences of their purchase when deciding over products (HARRISON; NEWHOLM; SHAW, 2005). Indeed, Shaw et al. (2005, p. 185) define that ethical consumers are “a group of consumers who are concerned about a broad spectrum of issues ranging from the environment and animal welfare to societal concerns including human rights.”

This way, a person that buys a “conscious t-shirt” because the touching characteristics of the piece are better can’t be classified as an ethical consumer since the benefit is only internal and
internal only. On the other hand, a person that buys the same “conscious t-shirt” due to its legal and fair labor process is an authentic ethical consumer. Correspondingly, this study only considers as ethical consumer those ones concerned with the external impacts of their purchasing habits.

It is important to remember that the ethical consumers do exist. However, this group is the minority of consumers (BOULSTRIDGE; CARRIGAN, 2000). In addition, there is a belief that they might remain as a minority in the predictable future (CARRIGAN; ATALLA, 2001).

5.10 Conclusions from the Literature Review

The summary of the main academic studies regarding the relation between consumer and the product, the intention behavior gap, the external variables, the mechanisms to reduce the gap and the definition/characteristics of the ethical consumer allows detecting academic conclusions and hypotheses on why consumers from fast fashion companies keep buying from companies that are constantly involved in public embarrassment.

A number of hypotheses with academic consensus is present in the literature. These hypotheses are considered as academic conclusions for the prosed Research Question since they were tested/proposed by different author over time and generated convergent results.

According to academia, the main conclusions over the topics covered by the Research Question, the sub Research Questions and the Secondary questions are:

- Past has the power to influence purchases in the present

  The power of past over the purchases made in the present is directly and indirectly proposed by authors under a variety of names. Fishbein and Ajsen (1975) propose it on the stimulus-response and response-response approaches used to predict the consumer behavior. Boulstrisdge and Carrigan (2000) also agree the past has the influence in the consumer when he/she is deciding over a product. The concept of “attributional conclusion” present in Weiner (2000) explains how experiences can lead to a purchase in the present.
- Most consumers have the willingness to behave ethically when buying but the majority does not behave ethically when buying. Many scholars find the gap between consumer’s intentions and real behavior. Zane, Irwin and RecZek, (2016) state the majority of consumers have the desire of buying in a more ethical manner. Carrington, Neville and Whitwell (2014) propose four reasons to explain why consumers tend not to buy ethically despite their intentions. Impulsive behavior is deeply explored by scholars – Hoch and Loewenstein (1991), Kahneman (2011) - to understand why people tend not to behave the way they intended.

- There is no robust literature to link income to ethical consumption. Lau and Choe (2009) and Vitell (2003) agree that there are no sufficient academic studies to link the variable income to ethical consumption. Indeed, during the literature review, no relevant study on the topic was found.

- Information availability per se does not affect consumer behavior. Having the information available is not a guarantee of a more ethical purchase. Indeed, Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) and Carrigan and Atalla (2001) found that consumers tend not to use the total of information available regarding the company when buying, with some even preferring to have access to less information to avoid confusion in the purchase moment.

- Consumers tend to not consider corporate actions that do not affect them directly. Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) and Carrigan and Atalla (2001) found that even consumers that declare to have high ethical concerns tend to ignore corporate actions that do not affect them directly. In fact, being concerned to a specific ethical issue and taking action is conditioned to the extent the consumer is directly impacted.

Alongside the hypothesis that presented similar results in different studies, resulting in an academic agreement on them, three hypothesis with ambiguous results are present in the current academic literature. They are:

- Gender influences on ethical consumption
  Despite being the most studied variable in ethical decision making studies, there is no academic agreement on how and if gender influences ethical decision-making process.
Past academic research shows contradictory results with Lau and Choe (2009), Beltrami, Peterson and Kozmetsky (1984) finding some relation on these variables while Ford and Richardson (1994) and Borkowski and Ugras (1998) defend that no link was found in other studies.

- Exposure to education about ethical related topics influences on ethical consumption
  There is no academic consensus on how the exposure to ethics education affects the consumer when buying as stated by Lyonski and Gaidis (1991). Lau and Choe (2009) found that there is a positive link between these two variables whereas (WYND; MAGER, 1989) did not find a link between them.

- Corporate reputation affects consumer’s decisions when buying
  There is no current consensus on how much the reputation of a company influences the consumer in the purchase moment. On one hand, the results found by Andreassen and Linestad (1998), Jeng (2011), Çek (2016) lead to the conclusion that corporate reputation has the power to influence the consumer behavior. On the other hand, Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) and Carrigan and Atalla (2001) found that the corporate past actions and reputation do not influence the consumer when he/she is buying a product.

6 THE FAST FASHION INDUSTRY

6.1 Context and definition
“Fast fashion […] revolutionized how clothes are distributed, manufactured and sold.” (CHAVERO, 2017, p. 56)

The fashion industry has experienced the creation and development of major disruptor in the past years (HYUNSOOK; HO; NAMHEE, 2013). The fast fashion emerged with the concept of reducing processes lead times and delivering new and fashionable products to stores in a shortened amount of time (SARICAM; ERDUMLU, 2016).

Firstly introduced by Zara and H&M (SARICAM; ERDUMLU, 2016; CHAVERO, 2017) fast fashion is currently the most well recognized business model within the fashion sector as
result of its financial and operational performances plus the innovative developments in areas such as supply management and merchandising methods.

Fast fashion represents an innovative approach towards fashion production and consumption and has unique characteristics. Recent academic literature points out many attributes when defining fast fashion (see Figure 06). However, it is possible to identify that there is a tendency on mentioning the short production and distribution lead times and the fashion of the products when defining fast fashion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTIC</th>
<th>AUTHORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRODUCTION &amp; DISTRIBUTION</td>
<td>Short production and distribution lead times</td>
<td>Bruce and Daly (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cachon and Swinney (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Caro and Martinez de Albeniz (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher, Lowson and Peck (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saricam and Erdumlu (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN STORE EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>Quick adaptation of merchandising assortments to the latest trends</td>
<td>Caro and Martinez de Albeniz (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sull and Turconi (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRODUCTS</td>
<td>The market defines what is fashion, not the designer</td>
<td>Sull and Turconi (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product has a short lifecycle</td>
<td>Christopher, Lowson and Peck (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product design focused on fashion trends</td>
<td>Cachon and Swinney (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Caro and Martinez de Albeniz (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Joy et al. (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product is offered at a low price</td>
<td>Caro and Martinez de Albeniz (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product design highly influenced by luxury brands</td>
<td>Joy et al (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Products have no links with a place or person/designer</td>
<td>Gabrielli, Baghi and Codeluppi (2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 06 – Fast Fashion characterization**  
*Source: Author*
6.2 The size of the market and the main global players

The global population buys more than 80,000 million pieces of clothing every year (CHAVERO, 2017). Projections forecast that the fashion market will increase by 63% the amount of garments produced by 2030 (CAMPIONE, 2017).

According to the 2018 Forbes Global 2000 list (DEBTER, 2018), the 25 largest apparel fashion companies have a combined market value of USD 833.7 billion, with sales of USD 378.7 billion (see Table 02).

To understand the dimension of these numbers, it is possible to highlight that the International Monetary Fund estimates that 165 economies in the world will not achieve the USD 378.7 billion as their Gross Domestic Product in 2018 (INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FOUND, 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Company name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Profits</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Market Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Christian Dior</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>$49.3 B</td>
<td>$2.5 B</td>
<td>$87.4 B</td>
<td>$76.4 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Inditex</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>$28.9 B</td>
<td>$3.8 B</td>
<td>$25.2 B</td>
<td>$99.5 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nike</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$35.3 B</td>
<td>$1.8 B</td>
<td>$22.6 B</td>
<td>$110.3 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kering</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>$17.5 B</td>
<td>$2 B</td>
<td>$30.7 B</td>
<td>$74.5 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>TJX Cos</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$35.9 B</td>
<td>$2.6 B</td>
<td>$14.1 B</td>
<td>$52.7 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Adidas</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>$24.9 B</td>
<td>$1.7 B</td>
<td>$18.2 B</td>
<td>$46.2 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Company Name</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Sales 2021 (B)</td>
<td>Sales 2022 (B)</td>
<td>Sales 2023 (B)</td>
<td>Sales 2024 (B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fast Retailing</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>$18.2 B</td>
<td>$1.1 B</td>
<td>$15.2 B</td>
<td>$45.7 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>H&amp;M</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>$23.7 B</td>
<td>$1.8 B</td>
<td>$13.1 B</td>
<td>$26.7 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ross Stores</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$14.1 B</td>
<td>$1.4 B</td>
<td>$5.9 B</td>
<td>$31 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hermès International</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>$6.3 B</td>
<td>$1.4 B</td>
<td>$8.1 B</td>
<td>$72.7 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$12.3 B</td>
<td>$707 M</td>
<td>$10.3 B</td>
<td>$30.7 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Swatch Group</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>$8.1 B</td>
<td>$745 M</td>
<td>$13.8 B</td>
<td>$25.5 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$15.9 B</td>
<td>$848 M</td>
<td>$8 B</td>
<td>$11.4 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>L Brands</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$12.6 B</td>
<td>$983 M</td>
<td>$8.1 B</td>
<td>$9 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>PVH</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$8.9 B</td>
<td>$538 M</td>
<td>$11.9 B</td>
<td>$11.8 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Nordstrom</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$15.5 B</td>
<td>$438 M</td>
<td>$8.1 B</td>
<td>$8.2 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Chow Tai Fook Jewellery</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>$7 B</td>
<td>$464 M</td>
<td>$7.1 B</td>
<td>$13.4 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Shenzhou International Group Holdings</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>$2.7 B</td>
<td>$557 M</td>
<td>$3.7 B</td>
<td>$17.2 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Rongsheng Petrochemical</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>$10.9 B</td>
<td>$304 M</td>
<td>$11.4 B</td>
<td>$9.4 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Anta Sports Products</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>$2.5 B</td>
<td>$458 M</td>
<td>$2.9 B</td>
<td>$16 B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since numbers and measurements of the fast fashion market solely are difficult to find, this study used the 25 companies mentioned in the Forbes Global 2000 list and summarized how they define themselves in their website in order to classify them as participants of the fast fashion category or not (see Table 03).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>HOW THE COMPANY DEFINES ITSELF</th>
<th>FAMOUS BRANDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian Dior</td>
<td>“Christian Dior changed the rules of elegance around the world with his debut collection in 1947. Today, this vision continues to be explored boldly and imaginatively”</td>
<td>Christian Dior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inditex</td>
<td>“We brought our customers closer than ever to the products they wanted at affordable prices”</td>
<td>Zara, Pull&amp;Bear, Massimo Dutti, Bershka, Stradivari us, Oysho, Zara Home and Uterqüe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nike</td>
<td>“We choose to push the limits of human potential”</td>
<td>Nike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kering</td>
<td>“A global luxury group”</td>
<td>Gucci, Saint Laurent, Bottega Veneta, Balenciaga, Alexander McQueen, Brioni, Boucheron, Pomellato, Dodo, Qeelin, Ulysse Nardin, Girard-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Quote</td>
<td>Brands/Companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TJX Cos</td>
<td>“The leading off-price retailer of apparel and home fashions in the U.S. and worldwide”</td>
<td>T.J. Maxx and Marshalls (combined, Marmaxx), HomeGoods, Sierra Trading Post, and Homesense,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adidas</td>
<td>“We produce over 900 million sports and sports lifestyle products”</td>
<td>Adidas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;M</td>
<td>“Our brands offer customers a wealth of styles and trends within fashion, beauty, accessories and homewares as well as modern, healthy food”</td>
<td>H&amp;M, COS, Monki, Weekday, &amp; Other Stories, Cheap Monday, H&amp;M Home, ARKET and Afound H&amp;M (2018c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross Stores</td>
<td>“Our focus has been on bringing our customers a constant stream of high quality department and specialty store brands at extraordinary savings”</td>
<td>Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hermès International</td>
<td>“Hermès’ action for sustainable development is founded on the values passed down through the generations by the artisans who have shaped our house and our objects since 1837”</td>
<td>Hermès</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VF</td>
<td>“VF Corporation is a Purpose-led, performance-driven and value-creating organization”</td>
<td>The North Face, Timberland, Kipling, Lee, Vans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatch Group</td>
<td>“We produce beauty, sensuality, emotionality in watches”</td>
<td>Breguet, Harry, Winston, Blancpain, Glashütte Original, Jaquet Droz, Léon, Hatot, Omega, Longines, Rad, Union, Glashütte, Tissot, Balmain,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Mission/Statement</th>
<th>Brands/Products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>“We’ve taken iconic American style from the streets of San Francisco around the world” (GAP, 2018)</td>
<td>Gap Inc., Gap, Banana Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L Brands</td>
<td>“We don’t just sell products...we sell experiences. We are L Brands. We are a segment leader. Forward-thinking. People-focused. Responsible. Influential” (L BRANDS, 2018)</td>
<td>Victoria's Secret, PINK, Bath &amp; Body Works, La Senza and Henri Bendel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVH</td>
<td>“We are PVH, one of the largest global apparel companies with nearly $9 billion in 2017 revenues” (PVH, 2018)</td>
<td>CALVIN KLEIN, TOMMY HILFIGER, Van Heusen, IZOD, ARROW, Speedo, Warner's, Olga, Geoffrey Beene and True&amp;Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordstrom</td>
<td>“For more than 100 years, we've worked to deliver the best possible shopping experience, helping our customers express their style—not just buy fashion” (NORDSTROM, 2018)</td>
<td>Company resells luxury brands such as Valentino, Balenciaga and Gucci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chow Tai Fook Jewellery</td>
<td>“The Group's iconic brand &quot;Chow Tai Fook&quot; has been widely recognised for its trustworthiness and authenticity, and is renowned for its product design, quality and value” (CHOW TAI FOOK, 2018)</td>
<td>Chow Tai Fook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shenzhou International Group Holdings</td>
<td>“The largest vertically integrated knitwear manufacturer in China. The Group is principally engaged in the manufacture of high-end knitwear on an OEM basis” (SHENZOU INTERNATIONAL GROUP, 2018)</td>
<td>Company manufactures clothes for Adidas, Nike, Puma and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rongsheng Petrochemical</td>
<td>“The company is specialized in the production and marketing of petrochemical and chemical fiber / continually develop new types of polyester products and promote the differentiation ratio of the products” (RONGSHENG PETROCHEMICAL, 2018)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anta Sports Products</td>
<td>“In recent years, we have started moving full steam ahead on the strategy of “Single-Focus, Multi-Brand, and Omni-Channel” to deepen our footprint in the sportswear market in China. By embracing an all-round brand portfolio including ANTÀ, ANTÀ KIDS, FILA, FILA KIDS, DESCENTE, SPRANDI, KINGKOW, KOLON SPORT and NBA” (ANTA, 2018)</td>
<td>ANTA, ANTA Kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapestry</td>
<td>“We are a global house of brands powered by optimism, innovation, and inclusivity. We believe true luxury is a freedom of expression that ignites confidence and authenticity” (TAPESTRY, 2018)</td>
<td>Coach, Kate Spade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pou Chen</td>
<td>“The largest branded athletic and casual footwear manufacturer in the world, is an OEM/ODM for major international brand name companies such as Nike, adidas, Reebok, Asics, Under Armour, New Balance, Puma, Converse, Salomon and Timberland” / ‘The leading sportswear retailer in the Greater China region” (POU CHEN GROUP, 2018a-b)</td>
<td>YYSports, Manufactures for international brands for footwear such as Nike and Adidas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Kors Holdings</td>
<td>“A world-renowned, award-winning designer of luxury accessories and ready-to-wear” (MICHAEL KORS HOLDINGS, 2018)</td>
<td>Michael Kors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burlington Stores</td>
<td>“Burlington is a leading off-price apparel and home product retailer. We operate 567 stores in 45 states and Puerto Rico, where you’ll find a large assortment of current, high-quality, designer and name-brand merchandise at up to 65% off other retailers’ prices” (BURLINGTON, 2018)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heilan Home</td>
<td>“Heilan Group is a domestic leader in apparel manufacturing” (HEILAN GROUP, 2018)</td>
<td>Heilan, Heilan Home, Sancanal, EICHITOOG and Hieiika</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 03 – How companies define themselves
Source: The author

After analyzing the companies’ profile and business model and comparing them to the fast fashion characteristics mentioned in Figure 06, it was possible to identify four companies that can be classified as fast fashion retailers, being: Inditex, Fast Retailing, H&M and Heilan Home.

Combined, these four companies have a market value of USD 181.3 billion - 22% of the market value of the 25 largest retail companies - and reported sales of USD 73.6 billion - 19% of the sales of the 25 largest retail companies (DEBTER, 2018). Furthermore, Index, Fast Retailing and H&M are amongst the eight largest companies. Due to this reason, this study focuses on the consumers of the most important brands of these companies. Below, the profiles from Zara, UNIQLO and H&M are presented.
Company overview: Zara

Zara, along with H&M is the pioneer in the fast fashion market (SARICAM; ERDUMLU, 2016). Its first store opened in Spain in 1975 under the values of beauty, clarity, functionality and sustainability. Currently, the company has presence in 96 markets and 48 online markets (INDITEX, 2018a) and it is the biggest contributor to the net sales of Inditex, with 16,620 million EUR reported in 2017 (INDITEX, 2017).

The close relationship with the costumers – fashion demands are studied by local teams in the store – allows the company to recognize the fast trends that need to be provided in the next collections.

The vertical integration of the whole process – design, production and logistics – permits that the demands of the consumers, previously identified at the store by the local teams, are offered in the shelves as new products in five weeks. The time decreases to two weeks if the process only includes the update in an existing model (INDITEX, 2005).

Company overview: UNIQLO

With Japanese roots and major presence in Asia, UNIQLO is currently focusing on international expansion and estimates that the revenues from overseas to surpass the Japanese’s for the first time in the Fiscal Year of 2018. This expansion is part of the plan to become the number one apparel retailer in the world. Flagships in the main streets of London, Paris and Berlin were recently inaugurated (FAST RETAILING, 2017a).

The clothes have as basis the Japanese values of simplicity, quality and longevity. The company aims to make the combination of simple designs and good quality accessible to everyone (UNIQLO, 2018c).

UNIQLO controls the entire process of its clothes production, from planning phases to retail. The company attributes this centralized control to the production of its amazing number of unique products (UNIQLO, 2018b). An important difference from Zara and H&M is that UNIQLO spends a longer time in the development process of its products, since quality of the final product has more weight than fashion trends (PETRO, 2012). In fact most of UNIQLO clothes have a basic design.
**Company overview: H&M**

The first H&M store had a focus on female fashion and was established in Sweden 1947. Currently, the group is present in more than 70 markets with almost 5 thousand physical stores and 47 online markets (H&M, 2018a;e).

The brand H&M is one of the nine brands of the H&M group and offer products to men, women, teenagers and children. The main goal of the brand is to put in the market products that combine the best price, quality and fashion trends (H&M, 2018a;e).

The brand and Zara have a very similar production process since both are seen as the pioneers of the fast fashion market (SARICAM; ERDUMLU, 2016), with fast response to costumer’s demand in the heart of their operation and vertical integration enabling it.

H&M is currently focusing on the global integration of its online and physical stores, with a focus on the optimization of the portfolio, space and relocations.

The three companies have different approaches towards their processes: Zara is completely focused on fast response and developed a smart supply chain that can respond almost instantly to consumer’s demands, UNIQLO is focused on the quality of its products with a longer development phase and H&M is a mix, with a bigger focus on quality than Zara but faster developing phases than UNIQLO.

Despite the differences, the three companies share the same importance in understanding consumer’s desires. This is basic for Zara since it is the start of all the production process, for UNIQLO because it shapes the developing phase of products and for H&M to keeps its positioning as trend predictor (PETRO, 2012).
Furthermore, similar operating cycles are seen in fast fashion companies. Chavero (2017) states that their business model can be outlined by the Figure 07 (see below).

*Figure 07: Stages in multinationals’ operation

I.T = International Transport

Source: Chavero (2017, p. 58)*

Uniqlo presents one major difference from the model presented by Chavero (2017). Its design process does not occur in Europe. Due to its Japanese roots and its aim to internationalize the business, the design phase occurs on the cities of Tokyo and New York (UNIQLO, 2018a)

**6.3 The other side of fast fashion**

The fast fashion sector is responsible for bringing many innovations to the fashion sector, especially in areas such as production and distribution, that has their lead times expressively diminished (BRUCE; DALY, 2006; CACHON; SWINNEY, 2011; CARO; MARTINEZ DE ALBENIZ, 2014; CHRISTOPHER; LOWSON; PECK, 2004; SARICAM; ERDÜMLÜ, 2016).

Furthermore, fast fashion retailers played an active role in altering the traditional summer-spring and autumn-winter collections schedule by quickly changing their assortments in physical and online stores, with new products arriving on weekly basis.
Despite all the disruptive and innovative characteristics that surround the fast fashion sector, the sector is also associated to the creation of a significant amount of waste, pollution and Green House Gases (GHG) emissions. On top of the environmental impact, claims of transgression on labor rights and gender discrimination are common (CHAVERO, 2017).

6.3.1 Environmental Impact of Fast Fashion

According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the current business model of fashion sector, that support a “take – make – dispose” approach is the original cause of numerous environmental impacts that lead to a net economic loss (ELLEN MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, 2017).

These significant impacts cause to important organizations such as the United Nations (UN) to declare that the fast fashion mode of buying needs to be reevaluated (DORY, 2018).

Below, the main environmental impacts from fast fashion over the environment are presented.

Waste production

Fast fashion contributes to waste production in two major ways: firstly, by producing the wastewater that goes to rivers and secondly by creating the solid waste, that is composed by, for example, samples and the garments themselves (CHAVERO, 2017).

Regarding the wastewater, fast fashion contributes to it by emitting solvents and other monomers to water systems when factories produce the polyester, a material largely used in garment’s fabrics (LUZ, 2007). In fact, China, that holds a major portion of the fast fashion factories, has 70% of its water systems polluted by 2.5 billion gallons of wastewater from the textile industry (WEBBER, 2017).

Solid waste also has a major impact in the environment with 25.5 billion pounds of textiles going directly to trash annually only in the United States, an average of 70 pounds per American citizen (SNYDER, 2014).

More recent numbers show that the corresponding amount of one truck of garbage of garments goes to landfills or are burnt every second, summing a total loss of almost USD 500 billion every year (ELLEN MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, 2017). The Copenhagen
Fashion Summit reported that the fashion industry produced 92 million tons of waste in 2015 (CAMPIONE, 2017).

Concerning the solid waste of textiles, it is important to highlight that Western women are major contributors to its increase, since they buy more quantities than men, generating an global amount of female used clothes seven times higher than male (LUZ, 2007).

**Pollutants**

Producing a piece of garment involves the processes of coloration and weaving. These two processes produce significant amount of pollutants, such as the NPEs- nonylphenol ethoxylates (CHAVERO, 2017). Globally, in 2012, these processes originated 20% of industrial water pollution (BANKS, 2017).

These pollutants go to the aquifer system, polluting the water. Indeed, the pollution caused by synthetic microfiber is increasing fast, with clothes sending half a million tons of microfibers to the oceans each year (ELLEN MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, 2017). As a result, almost 100,000 marine animals died due to plastic waste present in the oceans (DORY, 2018).

However, polluters are not concentrated on the final stages of the creation process. Cottons crops and polyester production plants are also responsible for polluting the environment with the heavy usage of pesticides, fertilizers, solvents, monomers among others (CHAVERO, 2017; LUZ, 2007). In fact, the cotton crop is responsible for a quarter of the total amount of pesticides used in the USA, country that has the biggest production of cotton in the world (LUZ, 2007).

**Green House Gases emissions**

Fast fashion has a deeply globalized operational chain as seen in Figure 07. This globalization leads to a high amount of Green House Gases (GHG) emissions. Trips to Asia to negotiate the best price for the samples, designers traveling around the world to get to know the latest fashion trends, consumers making trips to the store are some examples on how this industry contributes to increase the global emissions level (CHAVERO, 2017).

According to the Baeck (2017), fashion industry is responsible for five per cent of global GHG emissions. This amount is similar to the emissions from the aviation industry and
corresponds to the whole emissions of Russia. In fact Banks (2017) estimates that the textile industry emitted 1.2 billion tons of Carbon Dioxide (CO$_2$) in 2015.

A significant part of the GHG emissions comes from the production of polyester, as seen below in the Figure 08.

**Polyester Production is Carbon Intensive**

![Diagram of polyester production and GHG emissions]

*Source: MIT*  
*WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE*

*Figure 08: Polyester Production is Carbon Intensive*

*Source: Drew and Yehoume (2017)*

However, it is important to remember that the whole chain, from raw materials to final disposal in landfills emits GHG into the atmosphere, as seen in Figure 09.
Natural Resources Exploitation

Water is the mostly used natural resource in order to produce a piece of clothing. It is used in the manufacturers and also in the crops of cotton (CHAVERO, 2017). In fact, it is necessary to use 2.700 litters of water to produce one shirt made by cotton. This amount is equivalent to the human consumption of water for 2.5 years (see Figure 10) (BAUCK, 2017).

In a global scale, textiles use 93 billion of cubic meters of water per year, leading to water scarcity problems in some regions. This amount corresponds to 4 per cent of the universal freshwater usage by year (BANKS, 2017).
6.3.2 Social Impact of Fast Fashion

According to the United Nations (2011), businesses need to respect human rights by avoiding their violation and solving cases in which the company is involved. Also, is corporate responsibility to minimize violations in the supply chain. Despite that, fast fashion companies are constantly associated to labor rights infractions, insalubrious working conditions and gender discrimination across their supply chain (CHAVERO, 2017).

Labor Rights Violation

Forced extra hours, use of child labor and nonstop journeys are the reality in many factories that produce the garments sold by the main fast fashion chains.
It is common for workers to have aggressive daily targets of garment production and to receive threats of dismissal in case of noncompliance. These two factors together lead to the lack of resting times and no time for breaks for toilet usage and water consumption.

In one contractor that supplies directly to H&M in Cambodia, it was found that workers had to work on Sundays and public holidays without receiving payment for the extra hours (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2015).

The bad practices towards workers are so hard and frequent that in a Turkish Zara supplier, factory’s employees manually wrote help and protest pledges in the tags (BUCHANAN, 2017).

It is also imperative to remember about the emblematic Rana Plaza episode in 2013. The factory in Bangladesh that was producer for many leading fast fashion companies collapsed, killing more than one thousand workers and injuring about 2.5 thousand people (BBC, 2013; SIEGLE, 2014).

The episode was largely mentioned in the worldwide media and revealed the unsafe conditions workers had in their workplace.

All the practices mentioned above are worst in the subcontractors than in the direct suppliers. As these factories are smaller in their physical structure and do not have direct contact with the major brands, it is common that they are not monitored at all, allowing more exploitation (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2015).

**Labor Rights Violation – a gender perspective**

Fast fashion is highly dependent on female work. Women compose most of the Asian garment producers’ workforce – around 80% - with men generally occupying managerial positions (see Figure 11). Female workers are a good option for the producers because they have the longest working hours but are paid less (CHAVERO, 2017).
However, being the majority of the workforce does not guarantee benefits to women working in these companies. On top of all the violations to the worker’s rights, gender discrimination is a fact in the producers. Female workers face sexual harassment, are forbidden to take maternities leaves, and are discriminated when they get pregnant.

In fact the discrimination generated by pregnancy and sexual harassment were the two main concerns of Cambodian female workers interviewed by Human Rights Watch. It is important to highlight that according to the country’s law, pregnant women have right to three months maternity leave and cannot be fired. Furthermore, the law forbids sexual harassment (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2015).
A recent report released by a coalition formed by Asia Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA), CENTRAL Cambodia, Global Labor Justice, Sedane Labour Resource Centre (LIPS) Indonesia, and Society for Labour and Development (SLD) India revealed that female workers from a H&M supplier are not only exposed to harassment and violent practices in the work place. Such practices are also common in the commutes and in the housing provided by the contractor.

These abusive practices cannot be considered as rare events in H&M supply chain. In fact, it was found that there is a chain of violence towards female employees that is composed by: short-term contracts, targets for the daily production, disciplinary practices, salary related rights abuses, abusive working hours, and unsafe workplaces (GLOBAL LABOUR JUSTICE, 2018).

7 METHODOLOGY

7.1 Topics explored in this study

As mentioned in the section “Conclusions from the Literature Review”, there is no academic agreement over three hypotheses, being (i) gender influences on ethical consumption, (ii) exposure to education about ethical related topics influences on ethical consumption and (iii) corporate reputation affects consumer´s decision when buying.

The present study aims to contribute to the academic discussion by performing an exploratory study on the gender topic. The exposure to ethical education is not explored in this study due to the sample profile, in which 78% of the respondents declared to have had ethical courses in the university.

The topic regarding the possibility that company´s reputation affects the consumer behavior is not tested in this study due to the profile of the respondents, that are, in majority current or former business students, meaning the sample has a deeper access and knowledge about corporate actions than the average consumer has. In case this topic was explored in this sample, the study would assume a considerable bias in the results.
7.2 A Quantitative approach

Three research approaches are available to scholars when conducting an academic study: the qualitative approach, the quantitative approach and the mixed method approach.

The qualitative approach is recommended for understanding a social or a human issue in the spectrum of the individual or of the group. It has its base on images and texts, with unique characteristics such as the data collection occurring in the field in which the respondents live, the situation addressed the observation of the phenomenon by the scholars and the examination of documents. In this approach, the researcher plays a major role in the data collection.

The quantitative approach is designed to test theories by the analysis of the relation existing between two or more variables. The variables tested can be measured and are, in general, tested by using statistical tools. The basis of this method relies on surveys that can have the data collection occurring in one point of the time – cross sectional data – or occurring over an extended time – longitudinal data.

The final approach, the mix method, is a combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches, with the integration of both types of data used to test, in general, frameworks and philosophical theories (CRESWELL, 2014).

Considering that this study aims to explore the variable gender in order to collaborate on the understanding on why consumers keep buying from fast fashion companies that are often involved in societal and environmental controversies, a quantitative approach is adopted. In view of the data collection being executed solely on the month of November, 2018, this survey can be considered cross sectional.

7.3 The Questionnaire

According to Creswell (2014), the survey is responsible for providing a measurable description of tendencies, perspectives and opinions from a population by analyzing a sample from that population. From the results obtained in the survey, it is possible to generalize the results to the whole population.
This way, the study created a survey with ten affirmative sentences regarding the factors considered when buying fast fashion pieces, the concerns about the impacts of fast fashion on society and environment and the pre-disposition to buy in another way. The respondents had to indicate their level of agreement to those sentences. The sentences presented to the sample in the questionnaire are presented below (for the complete questionnaire, refer to Appendix 1):

- Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece
- Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece
- Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece
- The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece
- I care about the labor conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to
- I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China
- I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made
- I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made
- I will definitely stop buying from fast fashion companies if another major scandal regarding human rights violation in their supply chain was reported by the media
- I believe fast fashion companies generate a good net impact on the countries that produce their clothes by generating jobs and economy heating up despite applying working and environmental practices that are not good

The levels of agreement to each sentence were measured by the Likert scale with the following options being presented to the respondents: Strongly disagree, Somehow disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somehow agree and Strongly agree. The Likert scale was used due to two main factors.

First, the respondents were not submitted to any prior discussion regarding the topic studied in the survey as well as they did not have a long time to judge the affirmative sentences, with
the focus being solely in their first and almost immediate response to the affirmation being presented. These two characteristics match the general usage of the Likert scale described by Brooke (2014). Second, the usage of the Likert scale has consistently demonstrated to be a relevant tool of evaluation by providing a good correlation between the studied variables.

7.3.1 The Sample Selection

Creswell (2014) states three possibilities to select a sample in a quantitative survey. First, the random sample, characterized by the identical possibility of each person from the population to be selected as sample. Second, the systematic sample, in which the sample is formed by the selection of a random start and the chosen of people every X persons. Finally, there is the convenience sample that uses availability of the respondents and convenience to form the sample.

This study used the convenience sample to obtain its results. Reasons behind this choice are three, being: the focus on young consumers with background on Business education, the amount of financial resources available to collect the data and the length of the data collection phase.

The focus on young consumers with background on Business education is considered part of the convenience factors due to the easy access of the author to this profile of consumer.

7.3.2 The Data Collection Procedure

The survey was developed in the paid online application Survey Monkey. Using an online tool allowed the author to easily reach the sample, control the amount and profile of respondents, access the results and use a friendly interface to analyze the data.

The link containing the online survey was disseminated via the applications Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp.
8 SURVEY RESULTS

8.1 Respondents’ profile

The survey dissemination generated 100 valid responses. Below, the profile of the sample is presented in the following perspectives: gender, age, nationality and attendance to a course focused on ethics at the university.

Respondents’ profile : Gender

The sample has 50 male and 50 female respondents, representing a percentage of 50-50 from the total. The options “Other” and “Prefer not to say” were not selected. The Figure 12 demonstrates the gender distribution in the sample.
Figure 12: Gender distribution in the study’s sample
Source: The author

Respondents’ profile: Age

The respondents from the survey are young, with 98 people being in the range of 20 and 35 years old – representing 98% of the sample. The Figure 13 presents the age distribution in the sample.
Respondents’ profile: Nationality

Nationality is the most varying characteristic of the respondents. Despite Brazilians being the basis for the study, with 58 people, there are other 28 nationalities in the sample.

In fact, the “Other” nationality option has the second highest number of representatives, with 19 people. Inside this option, the sample has 2 Russians, 2 Americans, 1 Serbian, 1 Romanian, 1 Canadian, 1 Estonian, 1 Japanese, 1 Ukrainian, 1 Dominican, 1 Mexican, 1 Indonesian, 1 South African, 1 Hungarian, 1 Chilean, 1 Pakistani, 1 Bulgarian and 1 Argentinian. The Figure 14 shows the nationalities distribution in the sample.

Figure 13: Age distribution in the study’s sample

Source: The author
**Figure 14: Nationality distribution in the study’s sample**

*Source: The author*
Respondents’ profile: Attendance to a course focused on ethics at the university

The majority of the respondents – 78 people representing 78% of the sample – have attended to at least one ethics-focused course in the university. It is important to mention that the survey did not asked for a specific profile of ethics course. The idea was to access if ethical considerations from any perspective were presented to the respondents at some point during their studies since these ethical considerations are considered a first step towards a more ethical behavior in the adulthood. The Figure 15 highlights the distribution in the sample.

![Figure 15: Attendance to a course focused on ethics at the university distribution in the study’s sample](source: The author)

**RESPONSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Yes (Sim)</th>
<th>No (Não)</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78.00%</td>
<td>22.00%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the absence of concrete numbers, it is possible to affirm that the convenience method generated a sample highly composed by young people with Business background from two main academic institutions: Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo – Fundação Getulio Vargas and CEMS – The Global Alliance in Management Education. The students
from the first institution are, in majority, Brazilians. On the other hand, respondents from CEMS represent a big range of countries due to the international profile of this institution.

This affirmation is possible due to the control over the amount and profile of respondents exercised by the author of the study, as mentioned in previous section.

8.2 Analyzing the results on gender perspective: Female respondents

This section presents the profile’s characteristics – age and nationality – of the female respondents of this study, as well as explicit and analyze the group’s results to the survey.

8.2.1 The characteristics of the female respondents

Respondents’ profile : Age

The female group that participated in the survey has 74% - 37 people - of its members in the range between 20 and 30 years old. The Figure 16 presents the age distribution in the group.
Respondents’ profile: Nationality

The female group has a high representation of Brazilians, phenomenon presented in the full sample as well. Brazilians represent 52% of the group, with 26 respondents, followed by the option “Other”, that is composed by 1 Serbian, 2 Russians, 1 Canadian, 1 Estonian, 1 Ukrainian, 1 American, 1 Chilean and 1 Bulgarian, representing 18% of the group, with 9 respondents. Figure 17 presents the nationality distribution in the group.

*Figure 16: Age distribution in the female group*

*Source: The author*
Figure 17: Nationality distribution in the female group

Source: The author
8.2.2 The results of the female respondents

Question 05: Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The female group results show a weighted average of 2.76, as seen in Figure 18, showing that, as a group, females do not agree that quality is not a determinant factor when buying fast fashion clothes. Indeed, as seen in Figure 19, only 16% of the group strongly believes that quality is the most important factor, while 40% present, at least, a slight disagreement to the question.

![Female Group - Weighted Average - Q5](image)

*Figure 18: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q5*

*Source: The author*
Question 06: Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses of the group generated a weighted average of 2.18, as shown in Figure 20. The average closer to 2 indicates that the group has a higher agreement on price being the most important factor when shopping fast fashion clothes. As seen in Figure 21, 78% of the respondents, at least, somehow agree to the fact that price is the most important to consider in the purchase moment, with 20% strongly agreeing to the question.
Figure 20: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q6
Source: The author

Figure 21: Female Group – Distribution of results – Q6
Source: The author
Question 07: Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The female group presents a weighted average of 3.1, as showed in Figure 22, meaning that, as a group, females are indifferent when considering availability as the main factor when shopping fast fashion pieces. As seen in the distribution of the results (Figure 23), 24% of the group is indifferent and 38% disagree, at some extent, with the question.

Figure 22: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q7

Source: The author
Question 08: The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The female group has its weighted average at 2.98, as exhibited in Figure 24, showing that, as a group, females are indifferent to the social and environmental impacts generated when buying their clothing from fast fashion companies. It is important to note that the group weighted average is concentrated between the “Somehow disagree” and “Neither agree nor disagree” options. This result is highly influenced by the fact that none of the respondent totally agreed to this question as shown in Figure 25.
Figure 24: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q8  
Source: The author

Figure 25: Female Group – Distribution of results – Q8  
Source: The author
Question 09: I care about the labor conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The female respondents have a weighted average of 4.14 for this question, showing that, females are concerned about the labor conditions that workers from fast companies are exposed to, as showed in Figure 26. Actually, 80% of the female respondents claimed to be agree to this question, with 48% presenting a high level of agreement, as presented in Figure 27.

Figure 26: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q9

Source: The author
Question 10: I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The female group responses generated a weighted average of 4.08, as exhibited in Figure 28, showing that, as a group, females somehow agree to care about the environmental impacts generated in Asian countries in which fast fashion pieces are mostly produced. Indeed, 80% of the group showed, at least, some agreement to the question, with 40% strongly agreeing to it, as presented in Figure 29.
Question 11: I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made.
The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The group achieved a weighted average of 3.22 as shown in Figure 30, indicating that the females of the sample are, in general, indifferent to this question with a slightly tendency to some disagreement. Figure 31 shows that, in fact this result comes from the non-predominance of any the alternatives presented to the respondents. However, it is important to notice that the options “Somehow disagree” and “Strongly disagree” have a combined percentage of 46% of the answers (against 36% from 3 “Somehow agree” and “Strongly agree, leading to the tendency to disagreement seen in the group).

**Figure 30: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q11**

*Source: The author*
Question 12: I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made.

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The women obtained a weighted average of 3.4 in this question (Figure 32), demonstrating that they are indifferent, with a tendency to agreement regarding this question. The 58% of people agreeing, at least at some point, generates this effect, as seen in Figure 33 (against 36% of people disagreeing at some level).
Figure 32: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q12
Source: The author

Figure 33: Female Group – Distribution of results – Q12
Source: The author
Question 13: I will definitely stop buying from fast fashion companies if another major scandal regarding human rights violation in their supply chain was reported by the media.

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The female group has a weighted average of 3.32 in this question, as exhibited in Figure 34. The group shows to be indifferent with a slight tendency to agree to stop buying from fast fashion companies if another major scandals pops up. As seen in Figure 35, the group has 50% of its members agreeing, at some level to stop their shopping in case of a new scandal.

Figure 34: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q13
Source: The author
Question 14: I believe fast fashion companies generate a good net impact on the countries that produce their clothes by generating jobs and economy heating up despite applying working and environmental practices that are not good.

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The women participating in the study obtained a weighted average of 3.12 for this question, as showed in Figure 36. The result demonstrates that females tend to be indifferent with a very small tendency to disagreement in their opinion regarding the positive net benefits generated by fast fashion companies in the countries in which their clothes is produced. Figure 37 shows the explanation of this result: the level of the options “Somehow agree” and the “Strongly disagree” and “Somehow disagree” combined have the same percentage, 36%.
Figure 36: Female Group – Weighted Average – Q14
Source: The author

Figure 37: Female Group – Distribution of results – Q14
Source: The author
8.2.3 Analysis of the results of the female respondents

Survey topic: The most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (questions 05, 06, 07 and 08 of the questionnaire)

The female group evaluated their level of agreement to four options as being the most important factor to be taken into consideration when they are buying a fast fashion piece: quality (question 05), price (question 06), availability (question 07) and social & economic impacts (question 08).

For the variables quality, price and availability the weights according to the Likert scale ranged from 1 to “Strongly agree” to 5 to “Strongly disagree”. For the variable social and economic impacts, the weights in the Likert scale were the opposite, going from 1 to “Strongly disagree” to 5 to “Strongly agree”.

The results (Figure 38) show that women tend to be indifferent regarding the quality of the piece as the most important factor when they buy from fast fashion companies, with a weighted average of 2.76. Despite being closer to the neutral option, it is important to note that there is a light tendency towards some agreement to classify quality as the most important factor when shopping fast fashion clothes.

On the other hand, price comes with a higher level of agreement as being the most important factor, presenting 2.18 as weighted average (Figure 38), meaning that, for women, price is more important than quality when they buy fast fashion.

Availability was also classified as neutral in regards of being the most important factor to be considered, despite being one of the main pillars of the fast fashion industry, with an weighted average of 3.1 (Figure 38). In fact, despite its importance within the business model of fast fashion companies, the group presents a slight tendency to disagree that availability is the most important factor. As a result, it is possible to conclude that females believe that price is more important than quality that is more important than availability.

The social and environmental impacts generated during the production of the piece are not seeing by women as the most important factor to take into consideration when buying from fast fashion, with an weighted average of 2.98 (Figure 39). In fact, the group presents a light
tendency to disagree to that, showing that these effects are the seen as the less important amongst the four options presented to the participants.

Figure 38: Female Group Results – Weighted Averages – Q05, Q06 and Q07
Source: The author

Figure 39: Female Group Results – Weighted Average – Q08
Source: The author
Survey topic: the self-proclaimed concern about social and environmental impacts generated by the fast fashion industry (questions 09 and 10 of the questionnaire)

The female respondents evaluated their agreement level regarding their concern on two main impacts commonly generated by fast fashion companies in the countries that produced their clothes: social impacts (question 09) and environmental impacts (question 10). For both variables – social impact and environmental impact – the weights on the Likert scale were the same, ranging from 1 to “Strongly Disagree” to 5 to “Strongly Agree”.

Results (Figure 40) show that, despite not considering social and environmental impacts the most important to be consider when buying a fast fashion piece, females self-declare themselves concerned about these issues, with an weighted average of 4.14 for labor conditions (social impacts) and 4.08 for environmental impacts.

It is important to note that 48% of the group declared to “Strongly agree” to the affirmation that they care about the labor conditions that workers that produce fast fashion piece are submitted to. On regards of the concerns about the environmental impacts generated in the producing countries, 40% declared themselves to “Strongly agree” to the proposition made (Figure 41).

Two interesting points emerge from this set of questions concerning the social and environmental impacts created in the countries where the clothes are produced. First, the respondents contradict themselves by declaring to be concerned about these issues and indicating that price, quality and availability are factors more important than the social and environmental effects when they purchasing the product.

Second, females seem to be more worried about labor conditions than the environmental impacts, since this variable has a higher weighted average and a higher number of people “Strongly agreeing” to be concerned about it.
Figure 40: Female Group Results – Weighted Averages – Q09 and Q10
Source: The author

Figure 41: Female Group – Distribution of results – Q09 and Q10
Source: The author
Survey topic: Prior consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to the social and environmental impacts produced by these companies (questions 11 and 12 of the questionnaire)

This topic covered the existence of past intention to stop buying from fast fashion companies due their social and environmental impacts created during the production process, in general located in Asian countries.

Women evaluated their level of agreement to two sentences. First, if they have never considered stopping buying fast fashion due to the working practices (question 11). Second, if they already considered stop buying due to the environmental impacts created by fast fashion companies in the producer's territory (question 12).

For the question 11, the weights according to the Likert scale ranged from 1 to “Strongly agree” to 5 to “Strongly disagree”. Question 12 had the Likert scale in the opposite direction, going from 1 to “Strongly disagree” to 5 to “Strongly agree”.

The results (Figure 42) show that the female group is indifferent regarding their past willingness to stop buying fast fashion items due to the working practices adopted in the countries in which these are produced. The weighted average of 3.22 however, indicates a light tendency towards a disagreement with the sentence. In fact, options “Somehow disagree” and “Strongly disagree” have a combined percentage of 46% of the answers, as previously showed in Figure 31.

From these results, it is possible to infer that despite considering themselves concerned about the labor conditions surrounding the workers during the production process, females still neutral to these factors when purchasing, with 46% of the respondents declaring to have not considered boycotting the companies in the past, as shown in Figure 31.

On the other hand, the group presented a better weighted average when indicating past intentions on stop buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts. Despite showing a slight lower concern over environmental than social impacts, the group’s results generated 3.4 as weighted average when declaring past boycott intentions (Figure 43).

It is important to note, however, that despite presenting a better result than the one found for labor practices (0.18 points better), females still closer to be neutral than to agreeing on
previous intention to stop buying from fast fashion clothes due to environmental impacts, since 36% of the respondents do not agree to have had past boycotting intentions as shown in Figure 33.

The analysis of the results show that despite declaring to be concerned with the environmental and social impacts created by fast fashion in present days, females did not had a strong consideration in the past to stop buying from fast fashion companies due to their bad impacts in the same areas they declare to be currently concerned.

**Figure 42: Female Group Results – Weighted Average – Q11**

Source: The author

**Figure 43: Female Group Results – Weighted Average – Q12**
Survey topic: Future consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to human rights violation (question 13 of the questionnaire)

Females evaluated their level of agreement regarding the possibility of definitely stop buying fast fashion if a major scandal regarding human rights violation is reported in the future. The weights in the Likert scale ranged from 1 to “Strongly disagree” to 5 to “Strongly agree”.

The group obtained a weighted average of 3.32, showing neutrality regarding possible future boycotts due to human rights violation scandals involving fast fashion companies. Despite the light tendency towards at least, some level of agreement, the results still closer to the neutral position, as shown in Figure 44.

Since 16% of respondents are neutral and 34% disagree at some level to the possibility of future boycotts due to human rights scandals (Figure 35), it is possible to infer that women will tend to remain neutral in the future if a major scandal pops up, despite declaring to be currently worried about the social and environmental impacts generated by fast fashion.
Survey topic: Beliefs about the impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries where the clothes are produced (question 14 of the questionnaire)

The group evaluated the agreement level on the belief that despite all the bad impacts created in the countries where their pieces are produces, fast fashion companies still generating a positive net impact in them. The weights in the Likert scale ranged from 1 to “Strongly agree” to 5 to “Strongly disagree”.

The weighted average generate by the group was 3.12 (Figure 45), showing that females do not have a strong opinion on evaluating the impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the producing countries. In fact, only 18% of the respondents selected the options “Strongly agree” – 2% or “Strongly disagree” – 16% (Figure 37).

![Female Group Results - Question 14](image)

*Figure 45: Female Group Results – Weighted Average – Q14*

*Source: The author*
8.2.4 Conclusion on the analysis of the results of the female respondents

Women consider price as the most important factor to be taken into account when they are buying a fast fashion piece. Quality and availability of the products rank second and third places in their consideration as most important factor they consider when buying from fast fashion companies. The environmental and social impacts received the lower level of agreement amongst all options presented to the respondents in the survey.

The female group self-declare to be concerned about the labor conditions that workers that produce fast fashion clothes are exposed to and the environmental impacts generated by the supply chain of fast fashion companies in the countries where their pieces are produced.

Despite this statement, females were neutral in the past and did not present a strong boycott behavior towards fast fashion companies because of their social and environmental practices in the producing countries. This neutrality is also forecasted for the future, since the group manifested to be neutral towards the possibility of stop buying from fast fashion companies in the future in case of another major scandals involving human rights violation.

Finally, the group does not have a strong positioning on the net impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries that produce their pieces, with only 18% of the respondents presenting a strong positioning on this topic.

The compilation of the results for the female group is presented in the Table 4 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
<th>Weighted Average closer to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 05: Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 06: Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 07: Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 08: The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SURVEY TOPIC : THE SELF-PROCLAIMED CONCERN ABOUT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS GENERATED BY THE FAST FASHION INDUSTRY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 09: I care about the labor conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 10: I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SURVEY TOPIC : PRIOR CONSIDERATION TO STOP BUYING FROM FAST FASHION DUE TO THE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS PRODUCED BY THESE COMPANIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 11: I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 12: I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SURVEY TOPIC : FUTURE CONSIDERATION TO STOP BUYING FROM FAST FASHION DUE TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 13: I will never consider stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to human rights violation in the countries where the pieces are made</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.3 Analyzing the results on gender perspective: Male respondents

This section presents the profile’s characteristics – age and nationality – of the male respondents of this study, as well as explicit and analyze the group’s results to the survey.

8.3.1 The characteristics of the male respondents

Respondents’ profile : Age

The males participating in the study are young, with only 2 people older than 35 years. There is a high concentration on the range from 25 to 35 years old, with 80% of the respondents. Figure 46 shows the age distribution within the men.
Respondents’ profile: Nationality

Men are highly represented by Brazilians in this study, with this nationality representing 64% of the group. The option “Others” is the second most representative, with 10 people -20% of the group, being 1 Romanian, 1 Japanese, 1 Dominican, 1 Mexican, 1 Indonesian, 1 South African, 1 American, 1 Hungarian, 1 Pakistani, and 1 Argentinian. Figure 47 shows the nationality distribution for the male group.
Figure 47: Nationality distribution in the male group

Source: The author
8.3.2 The results of the male respondents

Question 05: Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The male group has a weighted average of 2.56, as presented by Figure 48, meaning that as a group, men do not fully agree that quality is the most important factor. It is important to notice that this average shows a tendency towards the option “Neither agree nor disagree”. The distance until this option is 0.44 points while the distance to the “Somehow agree” is 0.56 point.

In fact, as it is possible to see in Figure 49, 62% of the group showed to agree to the question at least, at some level, but the remaining neutral/disagreeing pushed the average weight towards the “Neither agree nor disagree” option.

![Male Group - Weighted Average - Q5](source.png)

*Figure 48: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q5
Source: The author*
**Figure 49: Male Group – Distribution of results – Q5**

*Source: The author*

**Question 06: Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece**

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results from the male group show a weighted average of 1.96, as seen in Figure 50, demonstrating a cohesive opinion agreeing that price is the most important factor to be considered when buying fast fashion items. In fact, 80% of the respondents agree to this point, as demonstrated in Figure 51.
Question 07: Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece.

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:
The male group presented a weighted average of 3.44, as showed in Figure 52, demonstrating to be indifferent to considering the availability of the pieces as the most important factor to consider when buying. As it is possible to see in Figure 53, this result comes from the fact that only 30% of the respondents agree, at least, at some level, with this point, while 70% disagree to this point, at some level, at least or are indifferent to it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 52: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q7*

*Source: The author*
Question 08: The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The group obtained a weighted average of 3.16, as exhibited in Figure 54, demonstrating neutrality towards considering the social and environmental impacts as the main factor to consider when buying from fast fashion companies. Indeed, as it is possible to see from Figure 55, 36% of the men declare to be indifferent to this point, while 40% agree at least, at some level with it.
Figure 54: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q8
Source: The author

Figure 55: Male Group – Distribution of results – Q8
Source: The author
Question 09: I care about the labor conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The male group has a weighted average of 4.14, as presented in Figure 56, demonstrating that men are concerned about the labor conditions imposed to the workers that produce fast fashion pieces. In fact, 36% of the group declared to strongly agree to this topic, as seen in Figure 57. By summing up the 46% from the “Somehow agree” option, it is possible to see that 82% of the men agree to the question at least, at some level.

Figure 56: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q9

Source: The author
Question 10: I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Males obtained a weighted average of 3.7 regarding their concern about the environmental impacts generated in producing countries, as exhibited in Figure 58. The result shows that men tend to somehow agree to this point. In fact, as it is possible to see by Figure 59, 42% of the respondents selected the option “Somehow agree” in this question.
**Figure 58: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q10**

*Source: The author*

**Figure 59: Male Group – Distribution of results – Q10**

*Source: The author*
Question 11: I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The male respondents generated a weighted average of 3.1, as seen in Figure 60, demonstrating that men are neutral in terms of already having considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to their working practices. As it is possible to see in Figure 61, this result comes from the highly spread distribution amongst the options presented in the survey, with none of them standing out and with the options “Strongly agree” and “Somehow agree” presenting similar summed percentages of the option “Strongly disagree” and “Somehow disagree”.

![Male Group - Weighted Average - Q11](image)

*Figure 60: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q11*

*Source: The author*
Question 12: I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in Figure 62, the male group has a weighted average of 3.08, demonstrating to neither agree nor disagree to already having considered stop buying fast fashion companies due to the environmental impacts generated by their supply chain in the producing countries. Figure 63 shows that the sum of the percentages from the disagreeing side is close to the sum of the percentages of the agreeing side, generating the neutral result.
Figure 62: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q12
Source: The author

Figure 63: Male Group – Distribution of results – Q12
Source: The author

Question 13: I will definitely stop buying from fast fashion companies if another major scandal regarding human rights violation in their supply chain was reported by the media
The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The weighted average for the male group in this question is 3.42, as presented by Figure 64, showing that men still neutral regarding future boycott towards fast fashion companies if another major scandal is reported by the media. Despite the neutral total average, it is important to note that 24% of the respondents strongly agreed to this option, leading to a slight tendency of agreement in the group (Figure 65).

*Figure 64: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q13*

*Source: The author*
Figure 65: Male Group – Distribution of results – Q13

Source: The author

Question 14: I believe fast fashion companies generate a good net impact on the countries that produce their clothes by generating jobs and economy heating up despite applying working and environmental practices that are not good

The question had the following weight for each alternative presented to the participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somehow disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The male group has a weighted average of 2.84, as shown in Figure 66, revealing that men tend to neutrality in their opinion regarding the net impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries that produce their pieces. As it is possible to see from Figure 67, the group had no cohesive responses, with none of the options excelling the others.
Figure 66: Male Group – Weighted Average – Q14
Source: The author

Figure 67: Male Group – Distribution of results – Q14
Source: The author
8.3.3 Analysis of the results of the male respondents

Survey topic: the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (questions 05, 06, 07 and 08 of the questionnaire)

In similarity to the female respondents, the male participants evaluated their level of agreement in regards of four variables being considered the most important factor to be taken into consideration when buying a fast fashion piece – quality (question 05), price (question 6), availability (question 7) and social and environmental impacts (question 08).

Quality, price and availability had the weights in the Likert scale varying from 1 to “Strongly agree” to 5 to “Strongly disagree” option while the social and environmental impacts had the opposite weight distribution, being correspondent to the weights applied for the female group.

The male group’s results (Figure 68) show that men tend not to have a strong positioning in regarding quality as being the more important factor to consider when buying. By presenting an weighted average of 2.56, it is possible to say that men tend to be neutral in their opinion about the quality being the major factor to be taken into consideration.

However, it is important to notice that, despite having a higher proximity to neutrality, this distance has a small advantage over the ‘Somehow agree” option, only 0.12 points. In fact, 52% of the male respondents declared to “Somehow agree” with the quality being the most important factor (Figure 49).

The neutrality presented for the variable quality is not found for price. As exhibited in Figure 68, the male group had a cohesive agreement that price is the main factor to be taken into consideration when buying fast fashion items. The weighted average of 1.96 obtained by the price compared to the weighted average of 2.56 for quality variable allows the conclusion that men consider price to be more important than quality when purchasing from fast fashion companies.

Regarding availability, the male group also had its weighted average – 3.44 – closer to the neutral position (Figure 68). Despite that, it is necessary to highlight that this neutrality has a small advantage over the “Somehow disagree” option - only 0.12 points. This small advantage comes from the fact that 52% of the respondents disagree, at least, at some level to
this topic, as showed in Figure 53. From these results, it is possible to understand that availability is no more important than quality that is no more important than price when buying fast fashion.

The male respondents neither agree nor disagree with social and environmental impacts being the most important factor to consider in their fast fashion shopping habits. The 3.16 weighted average (Figure 69) suggest that the group has a slight tendency to somehow agree to this topic. Also, this result shows that, for men, the social and environmental impacts are more important than availability, generating the final ranking for the variables: price, quality, social and environmental impacts and finally, availability.

Figure 68: Male Group Results – Weighted Averages – Q05, Q06 and Q07

Source: The author
Survey topic: the self-proclaimed concern about social and environmental impacts generated by the fast fashion industry (questions 09 and 10 of the questionnaire)

In similarity to the female group, the men participating in the survey stated their agreement in regards to the two major impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries that where their clothes are produced: social impacts (in question 09 represented by labor conditions) and environmental impacts (question 10). As in the female group, the weights for both questions on the Likert scale ranged from 1 to “Strongly Disagree” to 5 to “Strongly Agree”.

The results presented in the Figure 70 show that men tend to agree to be concerned about the social and environmental impacts in the producing countries, with a weighted average of 4.14 for social impacts and 3.7 to environmental impacts.

These results show that, despite considering price and quality more important factors than the social and environmental impacts when buying a fast fashion piece, men self-declare themselves to be concerned about these impacts. Therefore, it is possible to detect a discrepancy between the self-declared concerns and the actual considerations taken when buying from fast fashion companies.
Furthermore, the results demonstrate that the male group tend to be more concerned about the social impacts than the environmental impacts, with 0.44 points separating both weighted averages. Indeed, as it is possible to see from Figure 71, 36% of the respondents strongly agree to care about the labor conditions while only 22% present the same positioning towards environmental impacts.

Figure 70: Male Group Results – Weighted Averages – Q09 and Q10
Source: The author

Figure 71: Male Group – Distribution of results – Q09 and Q10
Source: The author
Survey topic: Prior consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to the social and environmental impacts produced by these companies (questions 11 and 12 of the questionnaire)

As in the female group, this survey topic aimed to understand if, in the past, male respondents had the intention to stop buying from fast fashion companies due to their social and environmental track in the countries where the pieces are produced.

In similarity to the female group, the male respondents demonstrated their agreement level for two sentences, the first one covering the non-existence of boycott intention due to the social impacts (question 11) and the second one covering the existence of boycott intention due to the environmental impacts (question 12). Also, the weights in the Likert scale were the same as the female group, with question 11 ranging from 1 to “Strongly agree” to 5 to “Strongly disagree” and question 12 going from 1 to “Strongly disagree” to 5 to “Strongly agree”, the opposite direction.

Despite declaring themselves to be currently concerned about the labor conditions that workers are exposed to, as seen in Figure 70, men presented a weighted average of 3.1 when asked about never having considered to stop buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices commonly adopted by these companies in the producing countries (Figure 72). This result shows that, despite the slight tendency to disagreement, the group is neutral to the social impacts when purchasing, not demonstrating past intentions to stop buying from fast fashion companies because of them.

Similar results are seen when males were asked about having already considered to boycott fast fashion companies in the past due to the environmental impacts generated by their supply chain. Despite declaring to be currently worried about the environmental impacts, as seen in Figure 70, the male group presented a weighted average of 3.08 (Figure 73). This result shows that men are neutral in regards of having considered to stop buying from fast fashion companies in the past due to their environmental track, with a slight tendency to agreement.

Combined, the male results obtained from questions 11 and 12 demonstrate that in spite of the self-declaration to be currently concerned about the social and environmental impacts in the producing countries, men did not present such a strong consideration in the past in their
shopping behavior, with a clear absence of past boycotting intentions towards fast fashion companies.

**Figure 72: Male Group Results – Weighted Average – Q11**

*Source: The author*

**Figure 73: Male Group Results – Weighted Average – Q12**

*Source: The author*
Survey topic: Future consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to human rights violation (question 13 of the questionnaire)

In a similar process to the female group, the male participants of the survey, declared their level of agreement to the prospect of definitely stop buying form fast fashion companies in the future in case of a major scandals regarding human rights violation is reported by the media. The weights in the Likert scale were the same as the female group, going from 1 to “Strongly disagree” to 5 to “Strongly agree”.

The male group obtained a weighted average of 3.42, as seen in Figure 74, showing neutrality in regards to the possibility of a future boycott of fast fashion products. However, it is important to highlight that the neutral option has a small advantage over “Somehow agree”. As showed in Figure 65, 26% of the respondents somehow agree to this topic and 24% strongly agreed to it, leading to a net 0.16 advantage of the “Neither agree nor disagree” option over “Somehow agree”.

From the results, it is possible to infer that, as a group, men will still neutral in the future in case of a major scandals and will not stop purchasing fast fashion items in case this scenario really occurs.

Figure 74: Male Group Results – Weighted Average – Q13
Source: The author
Survey topic: Beliefs about the impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries where the clothes are produced (question 14 of the questionnaire)

As in the female group, men evaluated how much they agreed to the belief that fast fashion companies still generating a positive net impact in the producing countries despite all the bad impacts created in them. The weights in the Likert scale ranged from 1 to “Strongly agree” to 5 to “Strongly disagree”.

As a result, the male group obtained a weighted average of 2.84 (Figure 75), demonstrating that, despite having a slight tendency to agreement, men do not have a strong position over the net impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries where their pieces are produced. Indeed, as seen in the previous section, in Figure 67, the group presented no cohesive responses, with none of the options standing out the others.

![Male Group Results - Question 14](image)

*Figure 75: Male Group Results – Weighted Average – Q14*

*Source: The author*
8.3.4 Conclusion on the analysis of the results of the male respondents

According to men, price is the most important factor to be considered during their purchases of fast fashion items. Quality appears in the second place in the group’s consideration as the main factor, with social and environmental impacts in the third place. The availability of the pieces is not a main consideration of males when buying since it ranks fourth amongst the variables presented in the survey.

The male respondents of the survey self-declare themselves to be concerned about the social and environmental impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries that produce their pieces.

Regardless this self-declared concern about the social and environmental pacts caused by fast fashion companies, men did not have a strong past consideration of stop buying from fast fashion clothes due to these factors. This neutral position is also perceived for future consumer behavior, with no strong agreement amongst the group about future boycott intention if a major scandal involving human rights violation is reported.

Lastly, the male group presents no cohesive opinion about the net impact generated by fast companies and their supply chains in the producing countries, with 32% of the respondents disagreeing, at least at some level, with a positive net impact while 42% agree to this point, at least, at some level.

The Table 05 below consolidates the results for the male group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
<th>Weighted Average closer to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 05: Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 06: Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 07: Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 08: The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SURVEY TOPIC: THE SELF-PROCLAIMED CONCERN ABOUT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS GENERATED BY THE FAST FASHION INDUSTRY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
<th>Weighted Average closer to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 09: I care about the labor conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 10: I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SURVEY TOPIC: PRIOR CONSIDERATION TO STOP BUYING FROM FAST FASHION DUE TO THE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS PRODUCED BY THESE COMPANIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
<th>Weighted Average closer to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 11: I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 12: I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SURVEY TOPIC: FUTURE CONSIDERATION TO STOP BUYING FROM FAST FASHION DUE TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION**
Question 13: I will definitely stop buying from fast fashion companies if another major scandal regarding human rights violation in their supply chain was reported by the media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
<th>Weighted Average closer to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 14: I believe fast fashion companies generate a good net impact on the countries that produce their clothes by generating jobs and economy heating up despite applying working and environmental practices that are not good</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SURVEY TOPIC : BELIEFS ABOUT THE IMPACTS GENERATED BY FAST FASHION COMPANIES IN THE COUNTRIES WHERE THE CLOTHES ARE PRODUCED*

*Table 05: Compilation of the results - male group*

*Source: The author*

8.4 Cross analysis of the results: female x male group

This section aims to compare the results of the female and male group in all the survey topics. The consolidations of the results is presented in Table 06, in the end of the section.

*Survey topic : the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (questions 05, 06, 07 and 08 of the questionnaire)*

Quality is not the most factor to be considered when purchasing a fast fashion item neither for women nor for men. Both groups presented results that lead to neutrality, as seen in Figure 76, with a weighted average of 2.76 for females and 2.56 for males. Despite the neutral positioning presented in both groups, it is important to highlight that men seem to be more sensitive towards the quality of the piece than women, being 0.20 points closer the option “Somehow agree” than the female group.
This higher consideration towards quality seen in the male group can be explained by Figure 78, where it is possible to see that 62% of the male respondents, at least, somehow agree to consider factor the major factor when buying, against 52% of the female group presenting the same opinion. It is interesting to note that, despite the global result for quality, the percentage of women strongly agreeing to this topic is higher than men, with 16% against 10%.

Price, on the other hand, shows to be agreed by both groups as the most important variable to be taken into account when fast fashion items are bought. Females obtained a weighted average of 2.18 and males a 1.96, as seen in Figure 76, showing a cohesive agreement on the belief of price being the most important factor for women and men.

In similarity to the variable quality, men show a higher level of agreement towards considering price the most important factor than women, being 0.22 points above women in the agreement level to the topic. As shown by Figure 79, this result comes from the considerable higher proportion of men strongly agreeing to the point – 36% against 20% of the female respondents.

The availability of the pieces is not the most determinant factor for none of the groups. Females presented a weighted average of 3.1 and males a 3.44, both leading to a neutral position, as presented by Figure 76.

Despite both groups presenting neutrality in regards availability of the pieces as the main factor to be considered, it is possible to notice that women are more sensitive towards it than men, with a weighted average 0.34 points lower. In fact, as seen in Figure 80, 38% of the female respondents somehow agree or strongly agree to this topic and 24% is indifferent while only 30% of the male respondents, at least, somehow agree to this topic and 18% are indifferent to it.

Neutral positions are also found for both groups in regards of considering the social and environmental impacts as the most important factors to be taken into account during the purchase. Females obtained a weighted average of 2.98 and males a 3.16, as presented in Figure 77.

In spite of the neutrality, the male presented a higher level of agreement than the female group, with 0.18 points separating both results, making men closer to the option “somehow agree” than women. From Figure 81, it is possible to see that this result is influenced by the
fact that none of the female respondents highly agree to this topic while 10% of the males declared to have a high level of agreement to this point.

From the comparison of both groups, it is possible to conclude that women and men consider price the most important factor when they are buying a fast fashion item. The variable quality ranks second for both groups, by presenting the second higher weighted score.

The groups present different results for the variables availability and social and environmental impacts. While women results make availability rank third and social and environmental impacts rank fourth, men have social and environmental impacts in third place and availability in fourth.

Figure 76: Female x Male Results – Questions 05, 06, 07

Source: The author
Figure 77: Female x Male Results – Weighted Averages – Q08
Source: The author

Figure 78: Female x Male – Distribution of results – Q05
Source: The author
Figure 79: Female x Male – Distribution of results – Q6
Source: The author

Figure 80: Female x Male – Distribution of results – Q7
Source: The author
Survey topic: the self-proclaimed concern about social and environmental impacts generated by the fast fashion industry (questions 09 and 10 of the questionnaire)

Despite not considering the social and environmental impacts as the main factor to be taken into consideration when buying fast fashion products, both groups self-declare to be concerned about these two impacts, as seen in Figure 82.

Regarding the concern about the labor conditions that are imposed to the workers that produce fast fashion pieces, women and men presented the same weighted average of 4.14, leading both groups towards the option “somehow agree”, with a small global tendency to strongly agree to this point, with 48% of women and 36% of men self declaring to strongly agree to be worried about the labor conditions, as presented by Figure 83.

Both groups also presented a cohesive level of agreement about their concern on the environmental impacts generated by fast fashion companies’ supply chain in the producing
countries, such as China and Bangladesh. The female group obtained a weighted average of 4.08 and men a 3.7, as seen in Figure 82.

The results from the concerns about the environmental impacts show that women are more sensitive about this topic than men, with weighted average 0.38 points higher than the male’s. Indeed, as it is possible to see in Figure 84, while presenting similar percentages on the option “somehow agree”, 40% of the women declare to strongly agree to this concern, while only 22% of the men presented this same level of agreement.

**Figure 82: Female x Male Results – Weighted Averages – Q09 and Q10**

*Source: The author*
Figure 83: Female x Male – Distribution of results – Q09
Source: The author

Figure 84: Female x Male – Distribution of results – Q10
Source: The author
Survey topic: Prior consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to the social and environmental impacts produced by these companies (questions 11 and 12 of the questionnaire)

Despite both groups declaring to be currently concerned about the labor conditions workers are submitted to in the producing countries, no strong past consideration to stop buying from fashion companies due to their working practices in the producing countries was found in none of the groups.

The females presented a weighted average of 3.22 while the males obtained a 3.1, leading both groups towards a similar neutrality in terms of past boycott intentions due to the labor practices adopted by fast fashion companies, as seen in Figure 85. The neutrality is a result of the spread distribution of the percentages for each option presented in the survey. As it is possible to see from Figure 87, none of the options stands out from the others in both groups, with all of them receiving a similar amount of votes.

The neutrality concerning the existence of past boycott intentions due to the environmental impacts generated in the producing countries is also an outcome for both groups, with women obtaining an weighted average of 3.4 and men of 3.08, as seen in Figure 86.

However, in this topic, it is possible to see that women presented a weighted average 0.32 higher than men, showing a higher level of boycotting actions than men in this topic. This fact can be explained by the fact that women are more concerned about environmental impacts than men are, as discovered by the analysis of the previous survey topic. In fact, as seen in Figure 88, 26% of the female respondents highly agree to have had boycott intentions in the past due to the environmental impacts, against only 14% of the male respondents declaring the same.
Figure 85: Female x Male Results – Weighted Averages – Q11
Source: The author

Figure 86: Female x Male Results – Weighted Averages – Q12
Source: The author
Figure 87: Female x Male – Distribution of results – Q11
Source: The author

Figure 88: Female x Male – Distribution of results – Q12
Source: The author
Survey topic: Future consideration to stop buying from fast fashion due to human rights violation (question 13 of the questionnaire)

In similarity to what was found for the past boycott intentions to fast fashion products to the their social and environmental impact, men and women show tendency to neutrality in terms of future consideration to stop buying fast fashion articles in case a major scandal involving humans rights violation is reported.

The female group obtained a weighted average of 3.32 while men had a 3.42, demonstrating very similar group behavior between both groups. It is important to notice that both groups present a tendency towards somehow agreeing to stop buying in the future in case of scandal, with males showing a very light higher predisposition to that, as seen in Figure 89. In fact, as seen from Figure 90, this higher predisposition is the result of 24% of men highly agreeing to definitely stop buying in case of scandals against 22% the females declaring the same opinion.

Figure 89: Female x Male Results – Weighted Averages – Q13
Source: The author
Survey topic: Beliefs about the impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the countries where the clothes are produced (question 14 of the questionnaire)

There is no strong opinion about the net impact generated by fast fashion companies in the producing countries nor in the female nor in the male group. While the first group obtained a weighted average of 3.12, the second had a 2.84, as seen in Figure 91. The results make both groups closer to the “neither agree nor disagree” option.

Despite the neutrality presented in both groups, it is possible to note that females have a slight tendency to disagree to the positive net impact of the fast fashion companies, while men have a slight tendency towards agreement of the positive net impact. As seen from Figure 92 this difference between the groups is an outcome of 14% of males highly agreeing to a net positive impact, while only 2% of the females agree to that on the same level.
Figure 91: Female × Male Results – Weighted Averages – Q14
Source: The author

Figure 92: Female × Male – Distribution of results – Q14
Source: The author
All the results obtained by the female and male group are summarized in the table below:

### COMPILATION OF THE RESULTS – FEMALE X MALE GROUP

#### SURVEY TOPIC: THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR TO CONSIDER WHEN BUYING A FAST FASHION PIECE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>FEMALE RESULT</th>
<th>MALE RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 05: Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 06: Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 07: Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 08: The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SURVEY TOPIC: THE SELF-PROCLAIMED CONCERN ABOUT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS GENERATED BY THE FAST FASHION INDUSTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>FEMALE RESULT</th>
<th>MALE RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 09: I care about the labor</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Somehow agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to

Question 10: I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>FEMALE RESULT</th>
<th>MALE RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 11: I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 12: I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SURVEY TOPIC : FUTURE CONSIDERATION TO STOP BUYING FROM FAST FASHION DUE TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>FEMALE RESULT</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 13: I will definitely stop buying from fast fashion companies if another</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
major scandal regarding human rights violation in their supply chain was reported by the media

SURVEY TOPIC: BELIEFS ABOUT THE IMPACTS GENERATED BY FAST FASHION COMPANIES IN THE COUNTRIES WHERE THE CLOTHES ARE PRODUCED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>FEMALE RESULT</th>
<th></th>
<th>MALE RESULT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>Weighted Average closer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 14: I believe fast fashion companies generate a good net impact on the countries that produce their clothes by generating jobs and economy heating up despite applying working and environmental practices that are not good</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 06: Compilation of the results – female x male group

Source: The author

9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

9.1 Conclusion

The present study set out to explore the reasons why consumers that are young and have business background keep buying products from fast fashion companies even with these companies being constantly involved in environmental and societal scandals.

The Literature Review revealed the existence of four explanations that are accepted by the majority of scholars, being: (i) past has the power to influence purchases in the present, (ii) most consumers have the willingness to behave ethically when buying but the majority does not behave ethically when buying, (iii) information availability per se does not affect consumer behavior and (iv) consumers tend to not consider corporate actions that do not affect them directly. Additional to these, there is not robust academic literature linking income to ethical consumption.
Alongside with these four broadly accepted explanations on why consumers keep buying from fast fashion companies, the study identified three variables with no academic consensus over their impact in the consumer behavior, namely: gender, exposure to ethical education and corporate reputation.

This study focused on exploring the relation between the variable gender and the purchasing behavior and ethical concerns of fast fashion consumers. A hundred respondents completed a survey containing 10 questions that were grouped in five survey topics.

From the outputs, it is possible to understand that, regardless the gender, price is the most important factor to fast fashion consumers. Also, despite declaring to be concerned about the social and environmental impacts generated by fast fashion companies, consumers did not demonstrated a strong boycott intention in the past due these factors and this same behavior is forecasted for the future. Consumers also do not have a strong opinion regarding the net impacts generated by fast fashion companies in the producing countries.

Results show no significant difference between the female and the male groups in none of the 10 questions, leading to the inference that gender has no influence over the consumer behavior of fast fashion buyers.

9.2 Limitations of the study and future research

The limitations of the study come from the sample used in the research. As mentioned in previous section, the method used to select the sample was convenience. This led to a sample heavily composed by Brazilians with no other nationality having a strong weight in the survey. In addition, the respondents are, mostly, young people ranging from 20 to 35 years old.

Both sample characteristics make hard to extrapolate the conclusions to groups composed by other characteristics since a larger and random sample could lead to different results. The profile of the sample calls for future studies to validate the findings in a bigger and international scale, allowing a deeper knowledge on the relation between gender and consumer behavior.
However, despite these drawbacks, the paper contributes to the literature and to the market by exploring the purchase behavior and ethical concerns of young people that are far from the end of their consuming cycle. In addition, the focus on fast fashion products brings light to the consumer behavior of a specific sector that has been mostly studied by its operational side.

One important topic that comes out from the realization that the young consumer with a business background have no intention to stop buying from companies constantly involved in environmental and societal scandals is the necessity to further discuss the theory of the consumer sovereignty.

Consumers have been gaining rights over the past years and “the client is king” mentality is starting to be reevaluated with the creation of consumer’s responsibilities, as proposed Quazi, Amran and Nejati (2016) and the non-assumption about existing coherence in the consumer preference when discussing the sovereignty of the client (SUGDEN, 2004).

The mindset revaluation is as an important topic that demands deeper discussions amongst scholars, private companies, governments and civil society due to its potential to change the way business are made until now. For this importance, this paper calls for a stronger academic participation in this topic in the future.
REFERENCES


KAHNEMAN, D. Thinking, fast and slow. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2011


APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – The Questionnaire

Fast fashion consumption

Reasons behind fast fashion items’ purchase (Razões por trás da compra de itens de fast fashion)

First of all, thank you so much for giving me a little of your time.
This survey aims to understand the reasons that make people buy fast fashion clothing.
It is super fast - less than 3 min, I promise you.

(Primeiramente, muito obrigada por me proporcionar um pouco do seu tempo respondendo a
essa questão.
Essa pesquisa objetiva compreender as razões que levam as pessoas a comprarem em redes
de fast fashion.
Ela é super rápida - menos que 3 min, eu prometo.)

OK

* 1. Please indicate your gender (Por favor, indique seu gênero)

- Female (Feminino)
- Male (Masculino)
- Other (Outro)
- Prefer not to say (Prefiro não dizer)

* 2. Please indicate your age (Indique sua idade)

- 15-20
- 20-25
- 25-30
- 30-35
- 35-40
- 40-45
- 45+

* 3. Please indicate your nationality (Indique sua nacionalidade)

- Brazilian (Brasileiro/a)
- German (Alemão/a)
- Italian (Italiano/a)
- French (Francês/a)
- Dutch (Holandês/a)
- Belgian (Belga)
- Portuguese (Português)
- Indian (India/c/a)
- Chinese (Chinês/a)
- South Korean (Coreano/a)
- Other - please specify (Outra - especifique)
4. Have you ever attended a course focused on ethics at the university? (Você cursou alguma matéria com foco em ética na universidade?)

- Yes (Sim)
- No (Não)

5. Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Qualidade é o fator mais importante a ser considerado quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion)

6. Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Preço é o fator mais importante a ser considerado quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion)

7. Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Disponibilidade - conhecimento de que a peça não estará mais disponível em poucos dias ou semanas - é o fator mais importante a ser considerado quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion)

8. The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Os impactos sociais e ambientais gerados durante o processo de produção são os fatores mais importantes a serem considerados quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion)
9. I care about the labor conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to (Eu me importo com as condições de trabalho às quais estão submetidos os trabalhadores que fabricam as peças de fast fashion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree (discordo completamente)</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree (discordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (indiferente)</th>
<th>Somewhat agree (concordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (concordo completamente)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China (Eu me importo com os impactos gerados pelas cadeias de suprimentos das empresas de fast fashion em países como Bangladesh e China)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree (discordo completamente)</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree (discordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (indiferente)</th>
<th>Somewhat agree (concordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (concordo completamente)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made (Eu nunca considerei parar de comprar de empresas de fast fashion por conta das práticas laborais adotadas por elas nos países em que suas peças são produzidas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree (discordo completamente)</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree (discordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (indiferente)</th>
<th>Somewhat agree (concordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (concordo completamente)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made (Eu já considerei parar de comprar de empresas de fast fashion por conta dos impactos ambientais causados por suas cadeias de suprimentos nos países em que suas peças são produzidas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree (discordo completamente)</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree (discordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (indiferente)</th>
<th>Somewhat agree (concordo parcialmente)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (concordo completamente)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
13. I will definitely stop buying from fast fashion companies if another major scandal regarding human rights violation in their supply chain was reported by the media (Eu irei parar definitivamente de realizar compras em redes de fast fashion se algum outro grande escândalo envolvendo desrespeito aos direitos humanos for noticiado pela mídia).

14. I believe fast fashion companies generate a good net impact on the countries that produce their clothes by generating jobs and economy heating up despite applying working and environmental practices that are not good (Eu acredito que empresas de fast fashion geram um saldo positivo nos países em que as roupas são produzidas ao aquecerem a economia e gerarem empregos apesar de adotarem mais práticas ambientais e sociais).
### Appendix 2 – Weights given on alternatives presented in the Questionnaire

**Q5**

| Quality is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Qualidade é o fator mais importante a ser considerado quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion) |
| :-----------------:
| **Columns**       | **Weight** |
| Strongly disagree (Discordo completamente) | 5 |
| Somehow disagree (Discordo parcialmente)    | 4 |
| Neither agree nor disagree (Indiferente)     | 3 |
| Somehow agree (Concordo parcialmente)        | 2 |
| Strongly agree (Concordo completamente)       | 1 |

**Q6**

| Price is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Preço é o fator mais importante a ser considerado quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion) |
| :-----------------:
| **Columns**       | **Weight** |
| Strongly disagree (Discordo completamente) | 5 |
| Somehow disagree (Discordo parcialmente)    | 4 |
| Neither agree nor disagree (Indiferente)     | 3 |
| Somehow agree (Concordo parcialmente)        | 2 |
| Strongly agree (Concordo completamente)       | 1 |
### Q7
Availability (awareness the piece will no longer be available in few days/weeks) is the most important factor to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Disponibilidade - Conhecimento de que a peça não estará mais disponível em poucos dias ou semanas - é o fator mais importante a ser considerado quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Columns</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree (Discordo completamente)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somehow disagree (Discordo parcialmente)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree (Indiferente)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somehow agree (Concordo parcialmente)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree (Concordo completamente)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Q8
The social and environmental impacts generated during the production process are the most important factors to consider when buying a fast fashion piece (Os impactos sociais e ambientais gerados durante o processo de produção são os fatores mais importantes a serem considerados quando estou comprando uma peça de fast fashion).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Columns</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree (Discordo completamente)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somehow disagree (Discordo parcialmente)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree (Indiferente)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somehow agree (Concordo parcialmente)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree (Concordo completamente)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>I care about the labor conditions workers who produce pieces for fast fashion companies are exposed to (Eu me importo com as condições de trabalho às quais estão submetidos os trabalhadores que fabricam as peças de fast fashion).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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| Q10 | I care about the environmental impacts caused by fast fashion supply chains in countries such as Bangladesh and China (Eu me importo com os impactos gerados pelas cadeias de suprimentos das empresas de fast fashion em países como Bangladesh e China). |
|     | Make this a single-row rating scale (remove row choices).                                                                                                                                               |
|     | **Columns**                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|     | Strongly disagree (Discordo completamente)                                                                                                                                                            |
|     | Somehow disagree (Discordo parcialmente)                                                                                                                                                               |
|     | Neither agree nor disagree (Indiferente)                                                                                                                                                                |
|     | Somehow agree (Concordo parcialmente)                                                                                                                                                                  |
|     | Strongly agree (Concordo completamente)                                                                                                                                                                |
|     | **Weight**                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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Q11

I have never considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to the working practices adopted in the countries where the pieces are made (Eu nunca considerei parar de comprar de empresas de fast fashion por conta das práticas laborais adotadas por elas nos países em que suas peças são produzidas).

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Q12

I have already considered stopping buying from fast fashion companies due to environmental impacts generated by their supply chains in the countries where the pieces are made (Eu já considerei parar de comprar de empresas de fast fashion por conta dos impactos ambientais causados por suas cadeias de suprimentos nos países em que suas peças são produzidas).

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### Q13
I will definitely stop buying from fast fashion companies if another major scandal regarding human rights violation in their supply chain was reported by the media (Eu iria parar definitivamente de realizar compras em redes de fast fashion se algum outro grande escândalo envolvendo desrespeito aos direitos humanos for noticiado pela mídia)

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### Q14
I believe fast fashion companies generate a good net impact on the countries that produce their clothes by generating jobs and economy heating up despite working and environmental practices that are not good (Eu acredito que as empresas de fast fashion geram um saldo positivo nos países em que as roupas são produzidas ao aquecerem a economia e gerarem empregos apesar de adotarem mais práticas ambientais e sociais)

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