



THE IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY TO CLAS OHLSON'S CUSTOMERS

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ABSTRACT

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Sustainability and particularly environmental sustainability have raised a lot of interest and concern during the recent years. Even though there are different interpretations of sustainability, the United Nations' definition from 1987 is still one of the most used: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". According to Eurobarometer Survey 2020 every third European believes that the best way to actively contribute for the well-being of the environment is to change the way people consume or change the way companies produce products. This sends a clear message to retail companies.

The focus of this thesis is on environmental sustainability from the point of view of customers of Clas Ohlson, a Swedish retail company established in 1918. According to Sustainable Brand Index 2020 Clas Ohlson was the most sustainable company in category Leisure & Home electronics both in Sweden and Norway but not in Finland. Out of all nominees Clas Ohlson was 55th in Norway, 53rd in Sweden and 100th in Finland. Clas Ohlson has also conducted three own brand tracking studies in 2019–20 and only every tenth Finnish respondent connected Clas Ohlson with sustainability. The purpose of this thesis is to find out the opinion Finnish customers have on Clas Ohlson and overall on environmental sustainability.

The study was conducted as a quantitative research using a questionnaire. In total 591 people answered to the questionnaire. The results show clearly that environmental sustainability is important to Clas Ohlson's customers. For example, almost half of the respondents buy ecological products at least on a weekly basis and nearly 60 per cent of the respondents answered that it is important that companies they use are active promoters of sustainability. The results show also that respondents are not familiar with Clas Ohlson's actions on sustainability nor are they familiar with Clas Ohlson's sustainable products.

Based on the results it is clear that Clas Ohlson has not been able to get the message of sustainability through to its customers, thus has not been able to use sustainability as a competitive advantage. This thesis aims also to suggest first steps on how to improve the image customers have on Clas Ohlson regarding sustainability. As the results show, by focusing on sustainability companies can attract more customers, making it is crucial for retail companies to have a solid plan on how to work sustainably in order to attract more customers.

Key words: sustainability, retail, business, environment, sustainable development

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	Background and motivation for the thesis	4
1.2	Research objectives and structure	6
2	BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	8
2.1	Research topic	8
2.1.1	Sustainable development by the United Nations	11
2.1.2	Sustainable development by the European Union.....	15
2.2	Case company: Clas Ohlson.....	17
2.2.1	Case company: Sustainability work at Clas Ohlson.....	17
2.2.2	Case company: Clas Ohlson's sustainable products and ecolabels.....	20
2.2.3	Case company: Clas Ohlson's brand tracking study	21
2.3	Sustainable Brand Index	22
3	RESEARCH RESULTS.....	25
3.1	Research approach and data collecting method	25
3.1.1	The effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the reliability of the research.....	26
3.2	Research results to demographic questions	28
3.3	Research results to questions concerning environmental sustainability	33
3.4	Research results to questions concerning Clas Ohlson	44
3.5	Research results to questions for Clas Ohlson's employees	58
4	DISCUSSION.....	63
4.1	Suggestions for further development	64
4.2	Conclusions	66
	REFERENCES	68
	APPENDICES.....	75
	Appendix 1. Ekologisuuden ja kestävän kehityksen merkitys Clas Ohlsonin asiakkaille	75
	Appendix 2. Kysely Clas Ohlsonin henkilökunnalle	85

1. INTRODUCTION

"All the ants on the planet, taken together, have a biomass greater than that of humans. Ants have been incredibly industrious for millions of years. Yet their productiveness nourishes plants, animals and soil. Human industry has been in full swing for little over a century, yet it has brought about a decline in almost every ecosystem on the planet. Nature doesn't have a design problem. People do." (McDonough & Braungart 2002, 16.)

"Evidence is increasingly clear. If we simply persist in our current ways of producing, consuming and discarding, much of the planet will become uninhabitable before too long." (Sustainable development in the European Union 2019, 4.)

1.1 Background and motivation for the thesis

Clas Ohlson is a Swedish company that has stores in Finland, Norway and Sweden. It has a wide range of products in the following categories: home, multimedia, electrical, hardware and leisure. Improving the ways of working has always been important at Clas Ohlson and this applies also to the work towards sustainability. The writer of this thesis has worked at Clas Ohlson from the beginning of September 2017, first as a team leader and then as a store manager from October 2018. Before Clas Ohlson he has worked in different companies in different positions in retail sector from 2011. Because nature has always been close to the writer's heart, the idea to write a thesis about environmental sustainability and study the importance of it in retail sector was clear from the beginning.

As Ketola (2005, 32–49) states, companies have three core responsibilities: economical, social and ecological responsibility. From the point of view of economical responsibility, profit-making is the whole reason for the company's existence. Social responsibility covers all the people that are either directly or indirectly in contact with the company but can also be widened to for example charity work. Ecological responsibility according to Ketola can be divided to three categories, which companies should take into account: 1) the carrying capacity of the Earth, 2) the limited amount of non-renewable resources and 3) the limited

production of renewable resources. The importance of ecological responsibility does not limit only to the well-being of the environment but can also have a positive economical impact. As Grimmer & Bingham (2013, 1945) remind, there are consumers who make purchasing decisions based on the actions company has made for the environment and the amount of people who are concerned about the environment is increasing all the time.

According to Pew Research Center (A look at how people around the world view climate change, 18.4.2019), 88 per cent of the respondents in 26 surveyed countries saw climate change as a threat to their country. In September 2019 millions of people around the world took part in what was called "the biggest climate protest in history" (Across the globe, millions join biggest climate protest ever, 21.9.2019). In a study conducted by Nielsen (Global consumers seek companies that care about environmental issues, 9.11.2018), 68 per cent of Europeans said that it is extremely or very important that companies have programs that aim to improve the environment. Similar result was seen in Finland's Sustainable Brand Index 2020 report (2020, 14), where 71 per cent of consumers told their shopping behaviour is influenced by sustainability. Finland in general is among the most active countries in Europe when it comes to carrying out environmental activities (Report: Attitudes of European citizens towards the Environment, 101).

Eurobarometer Survey 2020 (Report: Attitudes of European citizens towards the Environment, 5) shows that 94 per cent of Europeans thought that protecting the environment is important to them and according to the same survey 68 per cent believed their consumption habits have direct effects on the environment. Every third respondent believed that the most effective way to tackle environmental problems is to change the way people consume or change the way products are produced. According to the aforementioned studies it is clear that people are both locally and globally interested in the well-being of our planet and are expecting companies to do so as well.

During the recent years Clas Ohlson has made multiple decisions aiming to increase sustainability, yet for example according to three brand tracking studies made by Clas Ohlson in 2019–20 only 9 per cent of the respondents named Clas

Ohlson as a company that promotes sustainability. When comparing the results to the aforementioned results of Nielsen, Sustainable Brand Index and Eurobarometer Survey, Clas Ohlson does not seem to be in a position where customers would choose it based on Clas Ohlson's sustainability efforts and this thesis tries to find out why.

1.2 Research objectives and structure

The purpose of this thesis is to find out the importance of environmental sustainability to Clas Ohlson's customers in Finland and to study if they make purchasing decisions based on their motivation to increase sustainability. This thesis also aims to give valuable insight of the image Clas Ohlson's customers have regarding the sustainability work Clas Ohlson does.

Based on these two purposes the research questions of this thesis are defined as follows:

1. Do the Finnish customers of Clas Ohlson take environmental sustainability into account when making purchasing decisions?
2. What is the image Finnish customers have on Clas Ohlson regarding environmental sustainability?

The second chapter of this thesis begins with a presentation of the theoretical framework. First alternative definitions of sustainability will be presented, followed by a brief history summary of sustainable development from the point of view of the United Nations. In this part the thesis will focus especially on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which are also used as the basis for Clas Ohlson's own sustainability goals. The Sustainable Development Goals are also used to narrow the approach angle of this thesis. The study will be conducted from the point of view of two Sustainable Development Goals: Responsible consumption and production and Climate action. The reasoning of this choice will be presented also in the second chapter. The second chapter will in addition consist of the history of sustainability from the point of view of the European Union. This is done in order to describe what kind of requirements the European Union has made for its member countries. Because Sweden is a member country of the European Union, also Clas Ohlson is affected by the legislation.

Case company presentation is also included in the second chapter. Here the history of Clas Ohlson will be shortly presented and examples of the sustainability work Clas Ohlson does will be given. As mentioned above, Clas Ohlson has conducted three brand tracking studies in 2019–20 and those results will be studied in order to present the current situation of Clas Ohlson's brand, especially regarding sustainability. After the company presentation Sustainable Brand Index will be furthermore discussed. It is the the largest independently working brand study in Europe that is focused on companies sustainability brand and image. Sustainable Brand Index will be used as a reference for the results of this thesis, because its trustworthiness and extensive study allow it to act as a benchmark. In the thesis the results of Clas Ohlson Finland will be highlighted, but also the results of Norway and Sweden will be presented shortly in order to be able to compare the differences between different countries.

Third chapter begins with an analysis of the research approach and will go through the data collecting method as well as the survey questions. The reliability of the research is discussed in general but also from the point of view of COVID-19 pandemic and the effects it had on people's opinions and shopping behaviour. What third chapter consists mostly are the survey results and the analysis and cross comparison of the results. A short study was conducted also for the employees of Clas Ohlson, which aimed to give information of the knowledge store workers have. The results of this study will be used as background for the main research. Finally, the fourth chapter summarises the whole thesis and gives suggestions based on the results on how Clas Ohlson should proceed in the future regarding environmental sustainability.

2. BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Sustainable development and sustainability in general have provoked a lot of discussion during the recent years, yet even the scholars have difficulties defining unambiguously what for example sustainability exactly means. As Moore, Mascarenhas, Bain & Straus (2017) argue, "the lack of a comprehensive definition of sustainability has been a foundational challenge to moving the field forward."

The theoretical framework of this thesis starts from a general, wider literature review of defining sustainability as a whole and proceeds to a more specific, narrower review of environmental sustainability, which this thesis focuses on. The United Nations' and the European Union's actions and regulations regarding environmental sustainability are introduced, since they create the basis for the sustainability work done at Clas Ohlson as well as they partly create the basis for the terminology used in this thesis.

2.1 Research topic

Depending on the topic, the word "sustainable" can have various meanings. In general it means that someone is able to continue doing something over a long period of time (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). The Oxford Dictionary (n.d.) describes sustainability as such: "The ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level." The description of the latter is fairly similar to the description by Gruen, Elliott, Nolan, Lawton, Parkhill, McLaren & Lavis (2008): "Capability of being maintained at a certain rate or level." Elkington has defined sustainability as the "principle of ensuring that our actions today do not limit the range of economic, social and environmental options open to future generations" (1997, 20).

According to Lesca (2011, 1) sustainable development "includes the idea of taking a step back from economic reductionism by putting forward a multidimensional aspect --." The multidimensional aspect presented by Lesca includes social, economical and environmental objectives. Lesca (2011, 8) goes even further and explains that the concept of sustainable development has two parts that both need to be fulfilled in order to be able to define something as sustainably developed. Sustainability according to Lesca means "ecological

efficiency, prudence, ecological resilience and intergenerational equality” and development ”meeting needs and providing intragenerational equality”.

Lesca (2011, 13) uses the so-called profit-planet-people trilogy to describe the connection between all three aspects. For example, Pesqueux (2009, 13) and Kakabadse, Kakabadse & Kalu (2009, 195) have used the same trilogy when describing sustainable development. Profit-planet-people trilogy is based on the triple bottom line framework introduced by John Elkington in 1994 (Elkington 2004). Triple bottom line is a sustainability framework that takes into account the impacts of company’s social, environment and economic actions and has been widely used ever since. The term refers to bottom line, which is known as net income in accounting and has the most important role when looking businesses from the accounting point of view. Elkington (What is the Triple Bottom Line (TBL)?, 31.1.2020) suggests that instead of one bottom line, profit, companies should have three instead: profit, planet and people.

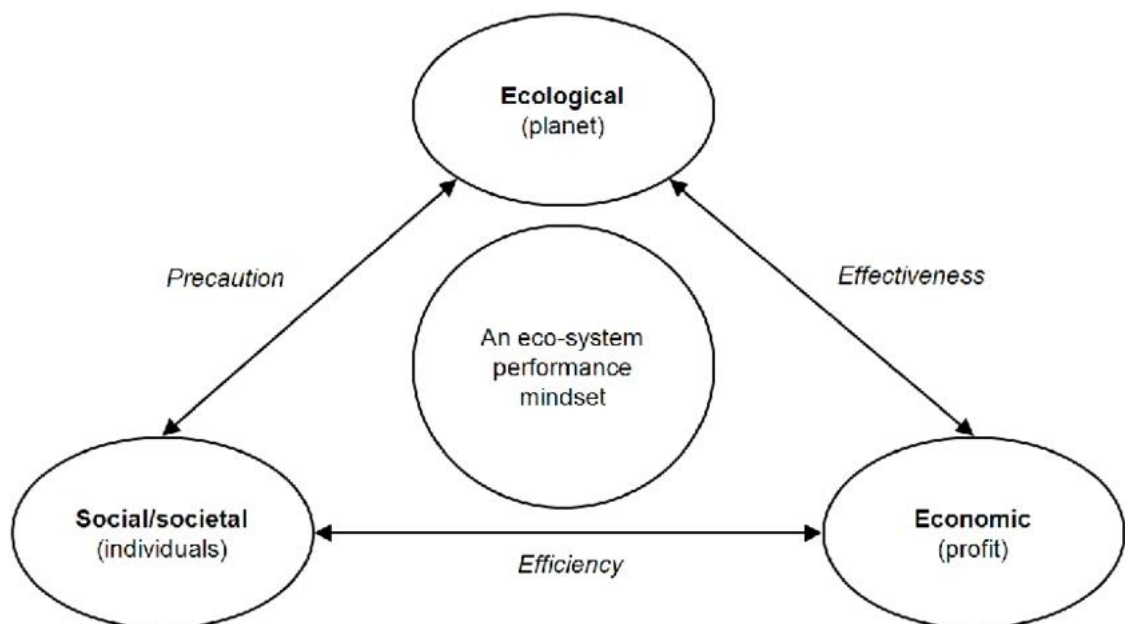


FIGURE 1. The profit-planet-people trilogy.

In Finland the concept of sustainable development was tried to be defined already in 1990’s by Malaska (1994, 3), who describes that sustainable development consists of three dimensions: environmental, societal and cultural sustainable development. Environmental sustainable development means the ability of adapting all economical actions aiming to preserve the biodiversity. Societal

sustainable development is used to describe the equal possibilities for example in creating well-being or the global completion of fundamental rights. Cultural sustainable development means people's ability to grow spiritually as well as the preservation of diverse cultures.

As Zorpas (2014, 1) states, the terminology describing sustainable development and sustainability is becoming extremely important because the whole field of sustainability is developing rapidly and also the awareness of the importance of sustainability is increasing constantly. In order to be able to present one holistic definition, Moore et al. (2017) studied 209 articles to give one: "(1) after a defined period of time, (2) the program, clinical intervention, and/or implementation strategies continue to be delivered and/or (3) individual behavior change (i.e., clinician, patient) is maintained; (4) the program and individual behavior change may evolve or adapt while (5) continuing to produce benefits for individuals/systems." When compared to other aforementioned somewhat shorter and simpler descriptions, the similarities are nevertheless clear: being able to continue something after a period of time.

In this thesis the phrases "sustainable development" and "sustainability" are used from the environmental point of view. According to Zorpas (2014, 2), the term environmental sustainable development goes as far as 1713 when German administrator Hans Carl von Carlowitz argued that timber should be "used with caution in a way, that there is a balance between timber growth and lumbering." Even 300 years later the idea of environmental sustainability can be seen the same way: the balance between growth and use. In United Nation's report *Our Common Future* (1987, 41) sustainable development was described as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition is still widely used when talking about environmental sustainability.

Environmental sustainable development goes hand in hand with sustainable production. According to Lowell Center for Sustainable Production (What is sustainable production, n.d.), in order a good or a service to be sustainably produced, it must be 1) non-polluting, 2) conserving of energy and natural resources, 3) economically viable, 4) safe and healthful for workers, communities, and consumers and 5) socially and creatively rewarding for all working people.

According to Li (2017, 6) the sustainability of manufacturing process of a product or a service can be measured with three indicators: 1) The total energy consumption, 2) the carbon footprint and 3) the total waste.

2.1.1 Sustainable development by the United Nations

The United Nations (hereinafter the UN) was established by 50 countries in 1945 after the end of the Second World War. Currently there are 193 member countries. Sweden has been a member from 1946. (History of the UN, n.d.) This chapter presents how the UN has taken into account sustainability. The relevance of this chapter comes from the fact that Clas Ohlson is a Swedish company and, as later presented in chapter 2.2.1, has used the UN's sustainability work as a basis for its own work.

When the UN was established, the responsibilities included "maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights" (History of the UN, n.d.) The Charter of the United Nations (1945) does not speak about sustainable development as such, but it states that the UN is promoting "better standards of life" such as the aforementioned human rights. First time the right to a healthy environment was mentioned by the UN was after the Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, Sweden, 1972. The report, Stockholm Declaration (1972), consists of 26 principles, which all aim "for the preservation and improvement of the human environment, for the benefit of all the people and for their posterity." Principle 21 suggests that "States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction." The word "sustainable" did not exist in the report at all, but Principle 21 can be seen as a preliminary stage to guidance on sustainable development. Even though it gave a right to exploit resources, the idea behind Principle 21 was that exploitation could not be done without protecting the environment, thus ensuring sustainability and sustainable development.

Portner (2015, 1) and Kuhlman & Farrington (2010, 1) date the introduction of sustainability as such to the Brundtland Report from year 1987. Gro Harlem Brundtland is a Norwegian physician and politician and in 1980s she was the chair of the World Commission of Environment and Development which published a report *Our Common Future*, also known as the Brundtland Report. In the report, the political concept of sustainable development was introduced. (United Nations Foundation, *Who we are*, n.d.) Already when *Our Common Future* was published, it was understood that sustainable development is not an easy task and it requires work: "Sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change in which the exploitation of resources -- are made consistent with future as well as present needs. We do not pretend that the process is easy or straightforward. Painful choices have to be made." (1987, 17.) *Our Common Future* continued to ask (1987, 43) how sustainable development would become a common interest, so that "individuals in the real world" would also take part in the work towards sustainable future. The answer, according to *Our Common Future* (1987, 44), lies in "education, institutional development, and law enforcement".

Our Common Future pointed out for the first time the urgent need to act globally in order to secure the globe for the next generations. Brundtland wrote in her foreword "If we do not succeed in putting our message of urgency through to today's parents and decision makers, we risk undermining our children's fundamental right to a healthy, life-enhancing environment" (1987, 8). *Our Common Future* focused on multiple different aspects of sustainable development, such as population and human resources, food security and species and ecosystems. The report stressed the importance of coworking: "Nations must turn away from the destructive logic of an 'arms culture' and focus instead on their common future" (1987, 250).

Our Common Future was followed by Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which was the result of the UN's Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992. Rio Declaration consists of 27 principles that act as guidelines for sustainable development, such as "States should cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries --." Also a longer, more

thorough report was published after the Earth Summit: Agenda 21. It is a 350-page long non-binding action agenda aiming for global sustainable development, improving human lives and protecting the environment (Report of the United Nations Sustainable Development, Agenda 21, 1992). After Rio's Earth Summit the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was established to ensure that the decisions made in Rio would be effectively taken into account (Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform CSD, n.d.)

In 2000 the UN held a Millennium Summit in New York. The results of the meeting, the Millennium Development Goals (hereinafter MDGs), consisted of eight different tasks:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat hiv/aids, malaria and other deceases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Global partnership for development

The target date for achieving all MDGs was set for 2015. The goals of ensuring environmental sustainability included for example integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and reducing biodiversity loss (Millennium Development Goals And Beyond 2015, n.d.)

In 2002 the UN held the World Summit on Sustainable Development (hereinafter WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa. Tens of thousands of participants, such as governmental and non-governmental leaders, were invited to the summit in order to find ways for "improving people's lives and conserving our natural resources in a world that is growing in population, with ever-increasing demands for food, water, shelter, sanitation, energy, health services and economic security" (Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform WSSD, n.d.) The result of WSSD, Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, was more of

an agreement to keep on continuing to "fight against the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of our people" (2002, 3).

In 2012, 20 years after the Rio Declaration, the UN held once again a conference in Rio de Janeiro. The UN Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio+20, was the birthplace of the report *The Future We Want*. In the report the participants decided to "renew our commitment to sustainable development and -- environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations" (2012, 1). In *The Future We Want* the UN decided to start developing the MDGs into the Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter SDGs) (2012, 47). The idea was to create a follow-up for MDGs, which, as mentioned above, had a target date in 2015. *The Future We Want* did not specify what the SDGs should be, but it stated that they should be "limited in number, aspirational and easy to communicate." In 2013 the General Assembly of the UN established the Open Working Group to work on the SDGs (Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform Post 2015, n.d.) Rio+20 also mandated the establishment of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (hereinafter the HLPF). The HLPF meets annually and is the main platform of the UN's sustainable development program. It replaced the CSD, established after the Rio Summit held in 1992. (Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform HLPF, n.d.)

When the Open Working Group introduced the SDGs after the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York, the United States, in 2015, the HLPF was nominated to be in charge of the follow-up and reviewing of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform HLPF, n.d.) The SDGs were introduced as part of *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The 2030 Agenda "provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet" and in the center of it are the 17 SDGs:

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality

6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnership for the goals

The SDGs are created to work hand-in-hand and the UN believes that the combination of all goals will "improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth -- all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests" (Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform SDGs, n.d.) Clas Ohlson has used the UN's SDGs as basis for its own sustainability goals, which will be presented more thoroughly in chapter 2.2.1.

2.1.2 Sustainable development by the European Union

This chapter focuses on the European Union (hereinafter the EU) and goes through shortly the different steps the EU has taken regarding sustainability. Sweden has been a member of the EU since 1995 (The 27 member countries of the EU, n.d.), so the regulations made by the EU concern also Swedish companies. For example, Clas Ohlson stopped selling disposable plastic items and removed such items from the employees' personal areas in stores and offices (Clas Ohlson stops selling disposable plastic items, 5.3.2019) due to the EU's directive, which banned the selling of certain single-use plastic products by 2021 (Directive (EU) 2019/904, OJ L 155, 12.6.2019).

The predecessor of the EU was established after the Second World War. European Economic Community was founded by the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, also known as Treaty of Rome. In 1967 the Euro-

pean Community, a common administration, was created. The European Community started to expand during the 1970s and 1980s and on February 7th 1992 the Treaty on European Union was signed in Maastricht, the Netherlands. The Treaty on European Union, which together with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (hereinafter TFEU) form the constitutional basis for the EU, was the beginning of the EU. (The history of the European Union, n.d.) The Treaty on European Union was based on three so-called pillars: 1) European Communities, 2) Common foreign and security policy and 3) Cooperation on justice and home affairs (Summaries of EU legislation, The Treaty on the European Union, n.d.)

Environmental aspects were mentioned in the Treaty on the European Union. Examples such as “Determined to promote -- environmental protection” (1992, 4) and “The Community shall have as its task -- sustainable and non-inflationary growth respecting the environment” (1992, 11) show how sustainable development was taken into account, even though it was not mentioned as such term. In addition, Title XVI of the Treaty on the European Union is based solely on the environment. Objectives such as “preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment” and “protecting human health” (1992, 58) can be seen as steps towards sustainable development, both for the environment and mankind. The member states of the EU held a meeting in 1999 in Helsinki, Finland, where they adopted the Millennium Declaration by the UN. In the meeting the member states of the EU decided that the Commission should “prepare a proposal for long-term strategy dovetailing policies for economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development to be presented to the European Council in June 2001” (Helsinki European Council 10 and 11 December 1999).

The TFEU originates from the Treaty of Rome and was last updated on October 26th 2012. Article 11 of TFEU states that “Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union’s policies and activities, in particular with view to promoting sustainable development” (2012, 7). In 2015 the EU signed up to the 2030 Agenda by the UN, but for example World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) has criticized the EU because “the EU’s progress has been slow, and it has not yet presented a coherent strategy on how to implement the Agenda in Europe” (WWF: Sustainable Development, n.d.) On

the other hand, Kaarto (2017) states that there has been a significant increase in the EU's actions during the past years regarding environmental protection.

2.2 Case company: Clas Ohlson

Clas Ohlson is a Swedish retail chain company that was founded in 1918 in Insjön, Sweden. The founder, Clas Ohlson, was interested in building products from the beginning and for the first years the company only sold do-it-yourself assembly drawings for like-minded, but later on started to sell actual products. Today Clas Ohlson has five product areas it focuses on: home, multimedia, electrical, hardware and leisure. (Clas Ohlson, history, n.d.) Out of all products sold at Clas Ohlson 69 per cent are produced in Asia, 23 per cent in Europe besides Sweden, 7 per cent in Sweden and 1 per cent elsewhere (Clas Ohlson Annual and Sustainability Report 2019–20, 20).

First Clas Ohlson store was opened in 1925 in Insjön. For a long time, this was the only store, as Clas Ohlson was focusing on mail orders, not on expansion. In 1989 the second store was opened in Stockholm. Third store, the first store outside of Sweden, was opened in Oslo, Norway, in 1991. In 2002 the first store in Finland was opened in Helsinki. (Clas Ohlson, our stores, n.d.) Clas Ohlson has previously had stores also in Germany and in the United Kingdom, but in 2018 the store network was closed in both countries due to unprofitability (Clas Ohlson six-month report 2018/19, 5.12.2018). Clas Ohlson has also had two franchise stores in Dubai, but both stores were closed in 2017 (Clas Ohlson ends franchise cooperation in Dubai, 26.10.2017). After the fiscal year of 2019–2020 Clas Ohlson had 40 stores in Finland, 90 stores in Norway and 97 stores in Sweden. The total sales of the company was 8,8 billion SEK (Clas Ohlson Annual and Sustainability Report 2019–20, 3.)

2.2.1 Case company: Sustainability work at Clas Ohlson

The second research question of this thesis tries to find out what is the image Finnish customers have on Clas Ohlson regarding environmental sustainability. This chapter will focus on the sustainability work done by Clas Ohlson and will give examples on some of the most recent actions which might have had impact on customers' opinions, thus possibly influencing the answers.

The goal of Clas Ohlson is that 25 per cent out of all products sold would be more sustainable by the end of the fiscal year 2020–21. In fiscal year 2014–15 the share of more sustainable products sold was only a little over 5 per cent. (Strindberg, Wickström & Alfredsson, 2019.) By the end of fiscal year 2019–20 it had quadrupled (Clas Ohlson Annual and Sustainability Report 2019–20, 5), reaching to 21 per cent of total share of net sales. Besides sustainable products, Clas Ohlson offers sustainable services. One example of such service is tool rental service, which was launched in all stores in September 2020 (Hiring instead of buying – tool hire is launched in all Clas Ohlson’s stores, 2.9.2020). The education of the employees is crucial so that staff members are able to inform the customers of sustainable solutions and also offer such products from the whole product range (Strindberg, Wickström & Alfredsson, 2019).

Clas Ohlson also targets to create opportunities to reduce the impact of carbon emissions by optimizing the flow of logistics, creating smarter packaging solutions, increasing the filling degree of shipments and decreasing the packaging material in deliveries (Strindberg, Wickström & Alfredsson, 2019). Clas Ohlson’s Annual and Sustainability Report 2019–20 shows that CO₂ emissions from transportation in relation to sales went down from 2018–19 1,63g CO₂/SEK to 2019–20 1,56g CO₂/SEK and that Clas Ohlson has so far removed 800 000 unnecessary plastic packages from products that are directly purchased from suppliers in Asia.

Clas Ohlson’s sustainability work is built around the SDGs presented in chapter 2.1.1. In fiscal year 2019–20 Clas Ohlson’s goals consisted of eight targets, all connected to the following SDGs: 4) Quality education, 5) Gender equality, 7) Affordable and clean energy, 8) Decent work and economic growth, 10) Reduced inequalities, 12) Responsible consumption and production, 13) Climate action, 14) Life below water, 16) Peace, justice, and strong institutions and 17) Partnerships for the goals (Strindberg, Wickström & Alfredsson, 2019).

The cross functional sustainability goals of Clas Ohlson are as follows:

1. Sustainable customer offer
2. Responsible supply chain

3. Sustainable customer meeting
4. Attractive and sustainable employer
5. Ensure compliance and high business ethics
6. Our role in society contributing to being a meaningful and trusted brand and company
7. Reduce CO2 emissions in our operations
8. Efficient and sustainable packaging throughout the value chain

This thesis tries to answer to the research questions using the following SDGs: 12) Responsible consumption and production and 13) Climate action. Even though Clas Ohlson as a company has committed to far more SDGs than those two, the other SDGs are not something that the customers of Clas Ohlson can actively promote when purchasing products, thus the customers most likely are not qualified to estimate them. It is also questionable, whether the customers would even know what Clas Ohlson has done for example to improve gender equality.

During the fiscal year of 2019–20 Clas Ohlson made choices that in the long run were believed to increase sustainability. In December 2019 customers were able to rent Christmas decorations from stores in Kamppi and Kaivokatu, both located in Helsinki, Finland (Clas Ohlson vuokraa joulun, 13.12.2019). It was seen that renting Christmas decorations is a better choice for the environment than purchasing new decorations. From June 2017 Clas Ohlson removed all free plastic bags from cash desks and changed the material of plastic bags to sugar cane (Clas Ohlson's new bags made of sugar cane, 31.5.2017) and from the beginning of 2020 Clas Ohlson's plastic bags are made entirely from recycled plastic, instead of sugar cane. On a video published on Clas Ohlson's internal forum December 2, 2019, Anna Strindberg, Sustainability Program Manager of Clas Ohlson, explained that the usage of recycled plastic is a better choice than creating new material into the world because the lifetime of plastic bags is not long, since they are not used that many times. In 2018 Clas Ohlson was named as the Sustainable Store Chain of the Year in Sweden (Clas Ohlson won award for being Sweden's 'Sustainable Store Chain of the Year', 22.5.2018). The jury highlighted for example the increasing sales of sustainable products and the investments on spare parts.

Even though environmental sustainability is important at Clas Ohlson, it is not visible in the mission, “To help and inspire people to improve their everyday life by offering smart, simple, practical solutions at attractive price”, in the business concept, “We will sell dependable products at low prices and with the right quality according to need” nor in the purpose of Clas Ohlson, “We are passionate about simplifying life in all kinds of homes” (Clas Ohlson concept and spirit, n.d.) In the Code of Conduct (Clas Ohlson Code of Conduct, 24.10.2018) environmental aspects are mentioned as such: “All Clas Ohlson units and partners shall operate in full compliance with applicable environmental legislation and Clas Ohlson-specific requirement. Relevant environmental aspects shall be identified and appropriate actions taken to address these, including resource consumption, emissions, chemicals and waste.”

2.2.2 Case company: Clas Ohlson’s sustainable products and ecolabels

Clas Ohlson has a large number of products that can be defined sustainable by two different ways (Clas Ohlson intranet: Sustainable products and ecolabels, n.d.) Either the product has a third-party ecolabel FSC, Nordic Swan Ecolabel, EU Ecolabel or OEKO-TEX or the product is categorised as a sustainable product by Clas Ohlson’s internal assessment. Clas Ohlson’s sustainability motto “From here to sustainability” is used in stores close to products that are produced sustainably so that it would be easier for customers and employees to quickly find products that support the sustainable way of living. Besides “From here to sustainability”, “Sustainable choice” can also be used next to sustainable products. (Clas Ohlson, our sustainability agenda, n.d.)

In the beginning of 2020, Clas Ohlson launched a new range of children’s toys made of FSC-certified sustainable wood. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification shows that a product is produced from wood taken from a forest managed according to the principles and criteria of the FSC (FSC – Forest Stewardship Council, n.d.) Anna Stenvi, Product Manager for Children and Play, explained (Clas Ohlson launches the “kid’s room” – sustainable wooden toys in focus, 4.2.2020) that both parents and children appreciate toys made out of environmentally friendly materials and because the toys are made using high quality materials, they can be used for a longer time.

Nordic Swan Ecolabel is awarded to a product that fills the criteria set by Nordic Swan Ecolabel. The criterias vary between 60 different product groups. (Nordic Swan Ecolabel product groups, n.d.) For example, many of the cleaning products Clas Ohlson sells and almost all own brand batteries Clas Ohlson sells have been awarded with Nordic Swan Ecolabel (Clas Ohlson intranet: Sustainable products and ecolabels, n.d.)

EU Ecolabel has been awarded since 1992 to products or services that meet the high environmental standards starting from the gathering of the raw material and ending to the disposal of the product, meaning they need to fulfil the standards during the whole life-cycle of the product (European Commission: Ecolabel, n.d.) For example, Clas Ohlson's own brand printing paper is awarded with EU Ecolabel (Clas Ohlson intranet: Sustainable products and ecolabels, n.d.)

OEKO-TEX-ecolabel is awarded to textile products that meet the criteria of for example being completely free from any harmful substances (Standard 100 by OEKO-TEX, n.d.) For example, all the outdoor work clothes sold at Clas Ohlson are awarded with OEKO-TEX-ecolabel (Clas Ohlson intranet: Sustainable products and ecolabels, n.d.)

Besides the products with an ecolabel, Clas Ohlson has products that do not have an ecolabel, but still support the sustainable lifestyle. One example of these products are own brand smart plugs and smart bulbs (Clas Ohlson intranet: Sustainable products and ecolabels, n.d.) For example, smart plug is a device that goes between the socket and the electric wire of for example a table lamp. Smart plug connects to Wi-Fi network and is controlled with an application so the lamp can be turned on and off easily. It is also possible to set a timer so that the lamp goes on and off at certain times. Due to these capabilities the person using it is able to save energy, making the smart plug a product that supports sustainable lifestyle.

2.2.3 Case company: Clas Ohlson's brand tracking study

Ipsos, a global market and research company, conducted a brand tracking study in 2019 between May and July (hereinafter Q1), between August and September (hereinafter Q2) and between November 2019 and January 2020 (hereinafter

Q3). All three studies were done in Finland, Norway and Sweden as online interviews, but this section will focus only on the Finnish results. All countries had 375 interviews done per month and 1125 per one quarter.

According to Q1 study 87 per cent of the respondents knew Clas Ohlson when they were asked “Which of the following brands are you aware of”. In Q2 study this so-called aided awareness question had decreased slightly to 84 per cent and in Q3 to 83 per cent. These results mean that for example in Q3 study 83 per cent of all the respondents recognised Clas Ohlson when they were given a list of different companies. When asked “Which companies selling a wide range of things for the home are you aware of”, so-called unaided awareness question, the result was 9 per cent in Q1 and Q2 and 10 per cent in Q3. This shows that Clas Ohlson is not among the first companies that comes in mind when people are thinking of buying new products, even though 63 per cent both in Q1 and Q2 and 62 per cent in Q3 said they could consider buying something from Clas Ohlson. When asked “Which of these brands have you used in the last 6 months to buy things for your home”, the result was 32 per cent in Q1, 30 per cent in Q2 and again 32 per cent in Q3.

Respondents were also given different statements and asked how well a company fits to that statement. When asked which companies promote sustainability, only 9 per cent of the respondents in all three studies named Clas Ohlson. Almost half of the respondents answered that Clas Ohlson is seen as a company for everyone, but sustainability is clearly not something that is easily connected to Clas Ohlson.

2.3 Sustainable Brand Index

Sustainable Brand Index is the largest independently working brand study in Europe that is focused on the sustainability brand and image of companies. It was established in 2011 by SB Insight AB, which still is responsible for the study. SB Insight AB is a Swedish insight agency but the Sustainable Brand Index is completely independent research and not linked to other products and services SB Insight AB offers. Sustainable Brand Index “measures and analyses how sustainability affects branding, communication and business development”. In total the study is conducted by more than 58 000 consumers in eight countries

and it focuses on the sustainability brand and image of over 1400 brands in 35 industries. (Sustainable Brand Index: About, n.d.) The study is conducted by asking consumers to rate company's sustainability efforts from environmental and social aspect on a scale 1–5. There is also an option "I don't know". The total result is calculated by the amount of consumers who see the efforts either good (4) or very good (5). Maximum score is 200 per cent, which means that all consumers have answered either 4 or 5 to both environmental and social aspect. (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 7.)

The report of 2020 shows that the amount of people who discuss about sustainability for example with family or friends has been increasing rapidly during the past years in Finland, Norway and Sweden. For example, in 2017 the percentage in Finland was 56 per cent, in Norway 51 per cent and in Sweden 64 per cent. In 2020 in Finland 70 per cent discuss about sustainability, in Norway 65 per cent and in Sweden 74 per cent. (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 13.) The amount of people who admit that sustainability impacts on how and what they buy has also been increasing slightly during the recent years. In 2014 67 per cent and in 2020 71 per cent of Finns told that sustainability impacts their shopping. At the same time in Norway the amount has risen from 60 per cent to 63 per cent and in Sweden from 68 per cent to 72 per cent. (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 14.)

Based on the studies Sustainable Brand Index has recognised and categorised four different behaviour groups: Ego, Moderate, Smart and Dedicated. Egoists are usually middle-aged men who have traditional values and are not interested in sustainability. They make shopping decisions based on simplicity and price. Egoists do not care about sustainability or global aspects because they are interested only on own existence and local matters. 24 per cent of Finnish people belong to this group. (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 22.) Second group is Moderate, which represents almost half of the population. Moderate people could be called ordinary people and they are quite satisfied with their current life and the overall situation locally and globally. Moderate people might sometimes worry for example about environmental problems but they do not let that affect their shopping behaviour. Moderate people prioritise quality, function and longevity. They are followers so if

sustainability is trendy, they will think sustainably. 44 per cent of Finnish people belong to this group. (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 23.)

Smart people, the third group, are interested in sustainability and want to learn more about it because they think it is interesting and important. They want to buy products that are good for themselves but also for the environment. Smart people want to make world helping decisions on a daily basis. Smart people might not always realise they are acting sustainably, for example when they make decisions based on own health or safety. 26 per cent of Finnish people belong to this group. (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 24.) The fourth group is the smallest: Dedicated. They actively try to find more information on sustainability so they read a lot or listen to other people who could be categorised as dedicated. Dedicated people need evidence in order to believe that companies are doing their best when it comes to sustainability. They are very eager to contact companies and question their actions, even though they quite often do not have enough knowledge on the company's actions. Dedicated people are focused always on sustainability and it is the only detail they prioritise. 7 per cent of Finnish people belong to this group. (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 25.)

According to Finland's Official Report 2020, Clas Ohlson has been listed in Finland's study since 2015 (2020, 35). In 2015 Clas Ohlson was 86th, 2016 95th, 2017 81st, 2018 90th, 2019 98th and 2020 100th. When comparing the results to Sweden and Norway to get an overview of the performance in other countries, it is clear that Clas Ohlson's sustainability image in Finland is lower than in other Nordic countries. According to Norway's Official Report 2020 (2020, 35) Clas Ohlson was 55th and in Sweden according to Sweden's Official Report 2020 (2020, 35) 53rd. Because there are different companies operating in all three countries, there are also different companies on the list, thus it is not possible to draw any detailed conclusions. Nevertheless they do give some insight of the differences of the image Clas Ohlson has regarding sustainability.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

In order to be able to answer to the research questions, a survey was conducted for the customers of Clas Ohlson. The survey was done by using a questionnaire. As Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2015, 37) state, questionnaire is a good way to gather information when the questions have been thought thoroughly and when the questions try to get answers to somewhat concrete phenomenon.

In order to get the attention of Clas Ohlson's customers, a link to the questionnaire was posted in Clas Ohlson Finland's Facebook page May 8, 2020. The questionnaire was open May 8–24, 2020 and during that time the link was opened 685 times. In total there were 591 answers, making the response rate 86,3 per cent. According to Heikkilä (2014, 27), one way to measure the reliability of a research is to analyse the response rate. In this case the response rate was high, suggesting that people who opened the link were interested in the research and also motivated to fill the questionnaire. The average response time was 9 minutes and 51 seconds, which also shows that people focused on their answers.

The questionnaire was created with Microsoft Forms and was analysed with Microsoft Excel's Pivot tool. The questionnaire consisted of three different areas: questions 1–6 focused on demographic factors, questions 7–17 focused on person's opinions and beliefs regarding environmental sustainability and questions 18–31 focused on person's opinions and beliefs regarding Clas Ohlson and the work Clas Ohlson does for environmental sustainability. All questions and response options were both in Finnish and Swedish since both languages are official languages in Finland (Ministry of Justice: Finnish and Swedish, n.d.) There was a small introduction in the beginning of the questionnaire which consisted of a definition of sustainable development made by the Ministry of the Environment of Finland and a definition of sustainable development made by the UN.

3.1 Research approach and data collecting method

There are three different ways to conduct a research: quantitative and qualitative method and a mixture where both techniques are used (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019, 175). According to Braun & Clarke (2013, 20), the biggest differences between quantitative and qualitative methods are for example that when a quantitative research tries to identify the broad relationships between variables, a qualitative research focuses more on understanding the local meanings. As

Saunders et al. (2019, 178) state, one of the methods to conduct a quantitative research is to use a questionnaire. One of the main reasons to use a questionnaire according to Saunders et al. (2019, 193) is the overall easiness: it is easy to understand, easy to answer and it is also easy to compare the results and draw conclusions. As Creswell (2009, 145) says, in quantitative research the researcher makes claims and generalizations of the population based on the results. This thesis was conducted as a quantitative research because it for example allowed a smart approach to answer the research questions by using a questionnaire and it also allowed the researcher to make generalizations of the customers of Clas Ohlson.

As mentioned above, questions were gathered May 8–24, 2020. Because of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, answers were gathered only online in order to avoid unnecessary human contacts. Heikkilä (2014, 67) reminds that whenever a survey is conducted as an online survey, it should still be done also either as a phone or face-to-face survey. In this particularly abnormal situation this advice was not followed. In order to ensure that the survey was understandable and to avoid misunderstandings, Heikkilä's (2014, 58) recommendation for pre-testing was followed. As Heikkilä states, before a research is published it should be tested with 5–10 people to see for example if all the questions and response options are understandable. Also Saunders et al. (2019, 178) remind that it is crucial to ensure that all the questions are understandable before using the questionnaire. The survey used for this thesis was tested according to Heikkilä's guidelines and necessary modifications were made according to the feedback.

3.1.1 The effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the reliability of the research

As mentioned in previous chapter, the research was conducted in May 2020 and due to COVID-19 pandemic the behaviour of consumers had changed, which raises a question of the reliability of the research. Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2015, 186) give two examples on how to define reliability: it means that if same researcher would ask same question two different times from same person, the answer would be same both times. Another way to define reliability is if two researchers would ask same question from same person, the answer would be same both times.

According to SB Insight's report (COVID-19 White paper, 30.4.2020) 50 per cent of Finnish respondents said that COVID-19 affects their interest for environmental responsibility to some extent and 20 per cent said it affects to a large extent. The report did not specify what kind of a change it was, so it is impossible to say if it had a positive or a negative effect. According to Talouselämä (Lomautukset kasvoivat rajusti – yli puolet uusista lomautetuista naisia, 23.4.2020), by the end of March 2020 there were 309 000 unemployed people in Finland, almost 71 000 more than by the end of March 2019. In general it is possible that people might prioritise price over sustainability if their future and financial situation is at risk. On the other hand, it is possible that COVID-19 made people think their ways of consuming and caused them to make a more positive change in order to improve the environment. As Inger Andersen, UN's environment chief, said about COVID-19: "Nature is sending us a message" (Coronavirus: 'Nature is sending us a message', says UN environment chief, 25.3.2020).

According to Talouselämä (Muotikauppa hyytyi kauppakeskuksissa – korona vei hetkessä yli 50% asiakkaita, 30.4.2020), in March 2020 the total sales of Finnish shopping centers decreased by 20 per cent compared to the sales in March 2019 and the number of visitors decreased by over 50 per cent during the last two weeks of March compared to the same weeks in March 2019. In March 2020 the sales of Clas Ohlson Finland decreased by 22 per cent (Strong online sales – measures to address the effects of COVID-19 in focus, 15.4.2020). Both examples show that the guidelines by the authorities were followed: people stayed home. Moreover, it shows that people changed their shopping behaviour drastically.

According to Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara (2009, 231–232) one way to measure the reliability is validity, which means if the research questions have focused on the actual research topic. Problems occur when the respondents understand questions differently than the researcher has meant them to be understood or if the researcher understands answers differently than the respondents have meant them to be understood. This research did not focus on the effects of COVID-19, thus there was not a question about the effects of COVID-19. Because the situation was nevertheless not normal, this research had to take into account for ex-

ample the financial effects COVID-19 might have on people. That is why the financial aspects affecting the interest on environmental sustainability were defined with more general questions:

- If your financial situation would significantly decrease, would you buy less environmental products?
- If your financial situation would significantly increase, would you buy more environmental products?

These two questions are general and simple enough to not cause misunderstandings, which might have been the case if the questions would have been based on the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, when asked about the possible decrease or increase in general and not connecting it to any specific situation, the results are more reliable and informative because they take into account the possible future events besides COVID-19.

Even though COVID-19 has caused for example the aforementioned rise in unemployment and created financial insecurity, it is not likely that this research would be invalid or that the answers would be different than without COVID-19. When thinking the questions concerning Clas Ohlson, none of them is related to current world situation so there should not be differences caused by COVID-19. The questions concerning customers interests on environmental sustainability are somewhat linked to the choices made in everyday life, but not to such extent that the results would give false signal of the importance of environmental sustainability. Thus, the risk of misunderstandings mentioned by Hirsjärvi et al., both from the respondent and researcher side, is really small. Based on these facts there is no clear risk that the research would not be reliable even though it is undeniable that COVID-19 changed people's behaviour.

3.2 Research results to demographic questions

Demographic data consists for example of people's age, sex and labour work status (Carmichael 2016, 5). The reason for asking demographic data in a survey is to be able to understand different patterns and differentials and to be able to connect them to certain demographic group (Carmichael 2016, 3). For example, in this research demographic questions were asked in order to see if there are differences between the opinions of men and women or young and old people.

The first question in the survey focused on the age of the respondents. According to the results, nearly 30 per cent were 18–39 years old and every fourth 30–39 years old. The percentages went down with every age group, which, when comparing the results to age distribution of Clas Ohlson’s Facebook page, is not a surprise. 27 per cent of the followers are 18–34, 25 per cent 35–44, 21 per cent 45–54, 15 per cent 55–64 and 11 per cent over 65.

There were noticeable differences between the age distribution of men and women. Whereas the age distribution of men was much more balanced between different age groups (18–29 19,4 per cent, 30–39 20 per cent, 40–49 27,5 per cent, 50–59 18,8 per cent, 60–69 8,1 per cent, over 70 6,3 per cent), the age distribution of women decreased a lot more towards the older age groups (18–29 34,6 per cent, 30–39 26 per cent, 40–49 14,5 per cent, 50–59 14,5 per cent, 60–69 7,6 per cent, over 70 2,6 per cent).

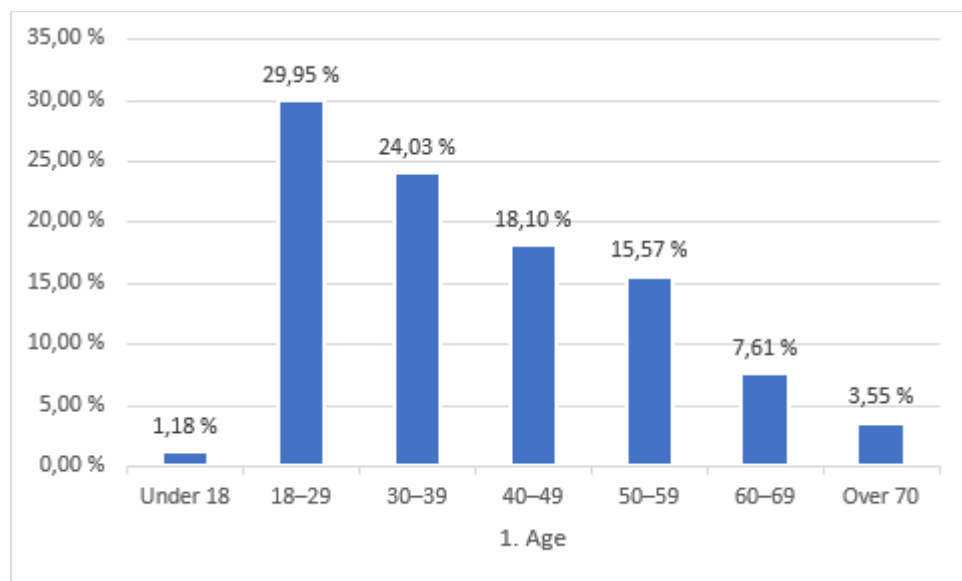


FIGURE 1. Age.

The second question focused on the gender of the respondents. The results show that the vast majority of the respondents were women. The percentages follow perfectly also the gender distribution of Clas Ohlson’s Facebook page: 72 per cent are women, 27 per cent are men, the remaining 1 per cent being other.

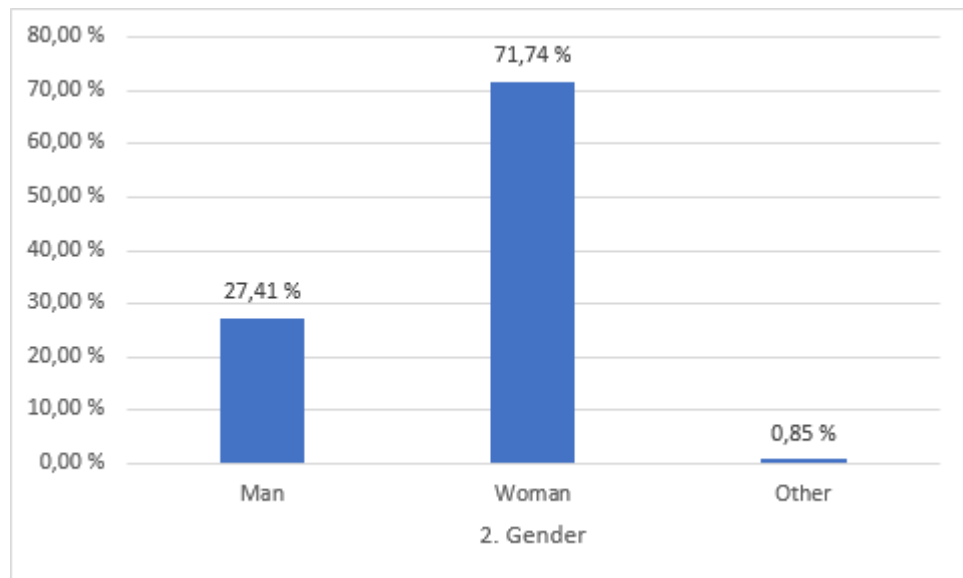


FIGURE 2. Gender.

The third question focused on the geographical area the person is living. Based on the results, almost half of the respondents live in South Finland, where Clas Ohlson has 21 out of all the 40 stores (Clas Ohlson our stores, n.d.) In Western Finland Clas Ohlson has 11 stores, nearly every fourth, so the amount of people living in Western Finland follow the number of stores as well. In Eastern Finland Clas Ohlson has four stores, meaning 10 per cent of all stores and in Central Finland only two stores, 5 per cent of all stores. When thinking the connection between stores and answers, Northern Finland seems to be the only part which is slightly over-represented: Clas Ohlson has only three stores located in Northern Finland.

There were some big differences between the age distribution in different areas. For example, out of all the people from Western Finland 26 per cent were 18–29 years old, whereas from Central Finland 41 per cent were of the same age. Almost each location got at least two respondents from each age group: in Central Finland there were no answers from people between 60–69 years old and from Northern Finland no one over 70 years answered. Gender distribution was somewhat the same in all areas: 30 per cent were men and 70 per cent women. Southern Finland made an exception with 22 per cent men and 78 per cent women. All in all, the results show that the respondents cover the whole operating area of Clas Ohlson Finland.

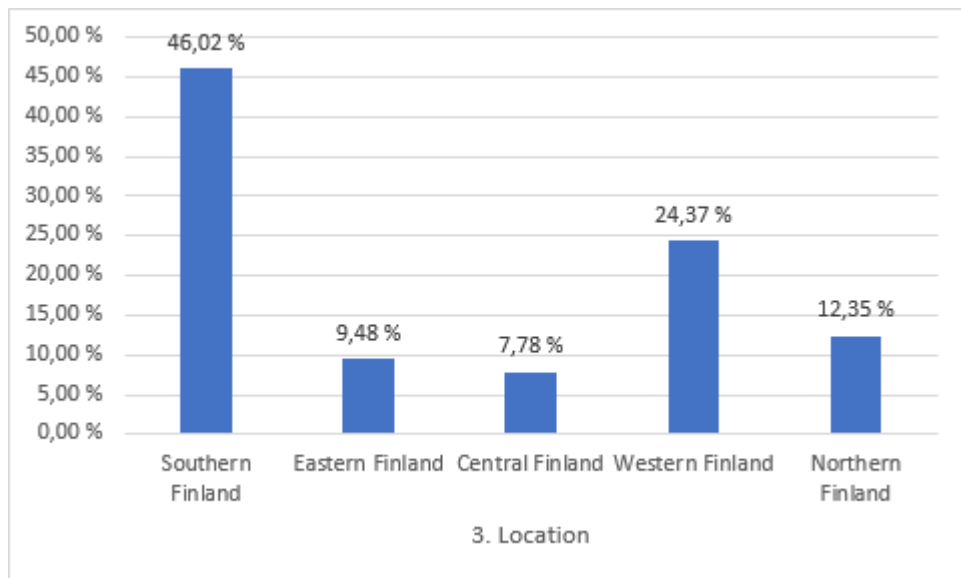


FIGURE 3. Location.

The fourth question focused on the work status of the respondents. According to the results, half of the people were wage workers and all the other options were divided somewhat equally, besides entrepreneurs. There were not many differences between genders: a little over 19 per cent of men were pensioners whereas 11 per cent of women were pensioners. On the other hand, 20 per cent of women were students and only little less than 9 per cent of men were students. Other categories did not differ between genders. When looking at work status compared to age there were neither any surprises. For example, vast majority of students were 18–29 years old.

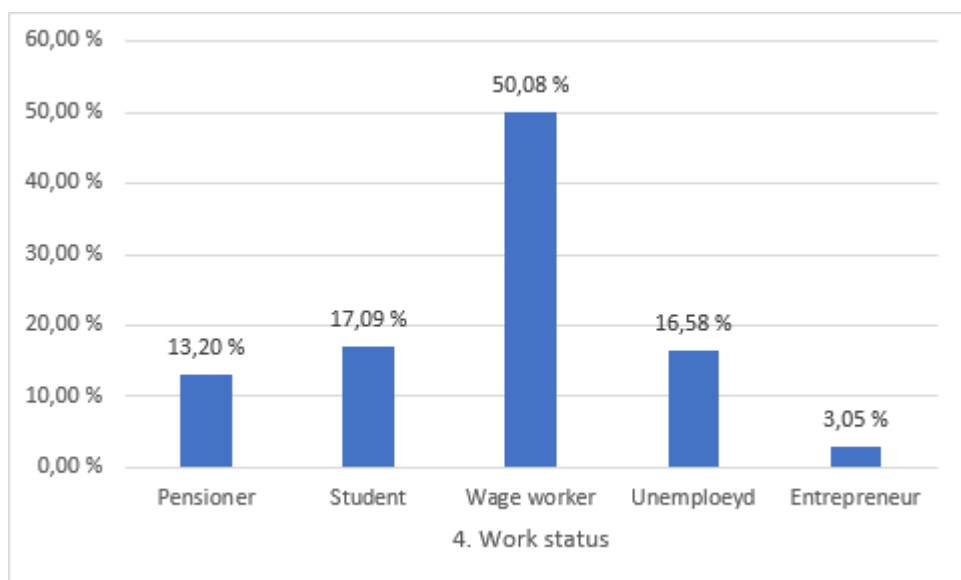


FIGURE 4. Work status.

The fifth question focused on the annual net income of the person. The response options were based on the definition by the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA (Näin väestö jakautuu tuloluokkiin, 31.7.2018). If the annual net income was below 18 999 euros, person would be categorised as low-income earner, between 19 000 and 26 999 euros as lower middle class, between 27 000 and 36 999 euros as middle class, between 37 000 and 49 999 euros as upper middle class and over 50 000 euros as high-income earner. There was also an option “I do not want to answer”.

According to the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA (Keskiluokalla pyyhkii hyvin, 5.2.2019), in 2018 13 per cent of Finnish people were low-income earners, 33 per cent lower middle class, 24 per cent of people middle class, 11 per cent upper middle class and 3 per cent high-income earners. 13 per cent were categorised between low-income earners and lower middle class and 3 per cent were categorised between upper middle class and high-income earners.

According to the results, every third earned less than 18 999 euros and almost every fifth either 19 000–26 999 euros or 27 000–36 999 euros. Based on the results, people with lower income were over-represented when comparing to the results of EVA. According to the result of people who were willing to tell their annual net income, men were more likely to earn higher salaries. 18 per cent of men earned more than 37 000 euros, whereas 10 per cent of women earned the same amount.

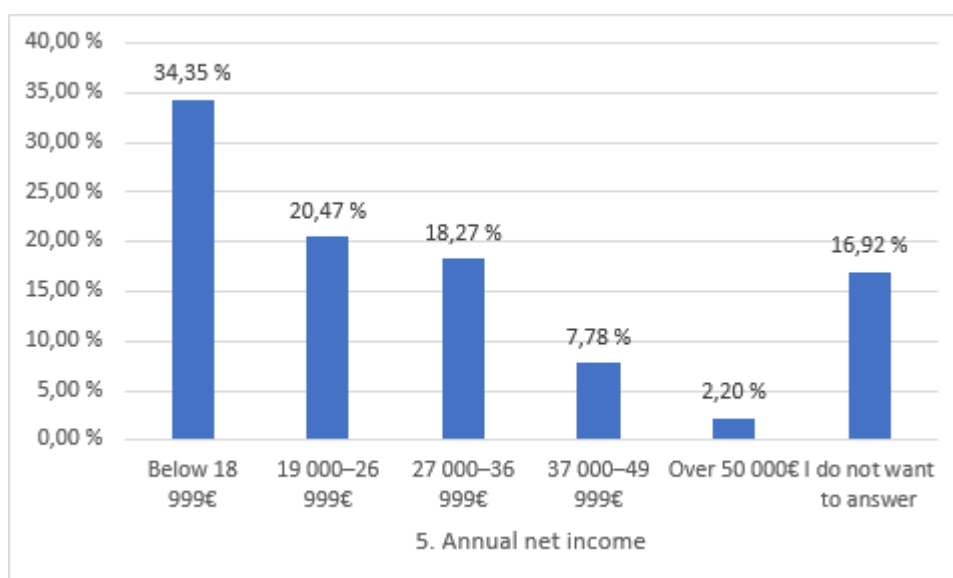


FIGURE 5. Annual net income.

The sixth question tried to find out if the person participates in purchasing decisions of the household he or she is living. This was asked in order to be able to take into account mostly the responses where the person is making purchasing decision, thus possibly taking into account environmental aspects. The results show that nearly 98 per cent of the people do participate in purchasing decisions, verifying that nearly all responses were from people who are in a position where they make purchasing decisions and have the chance to think the environmental aspects of bought products.

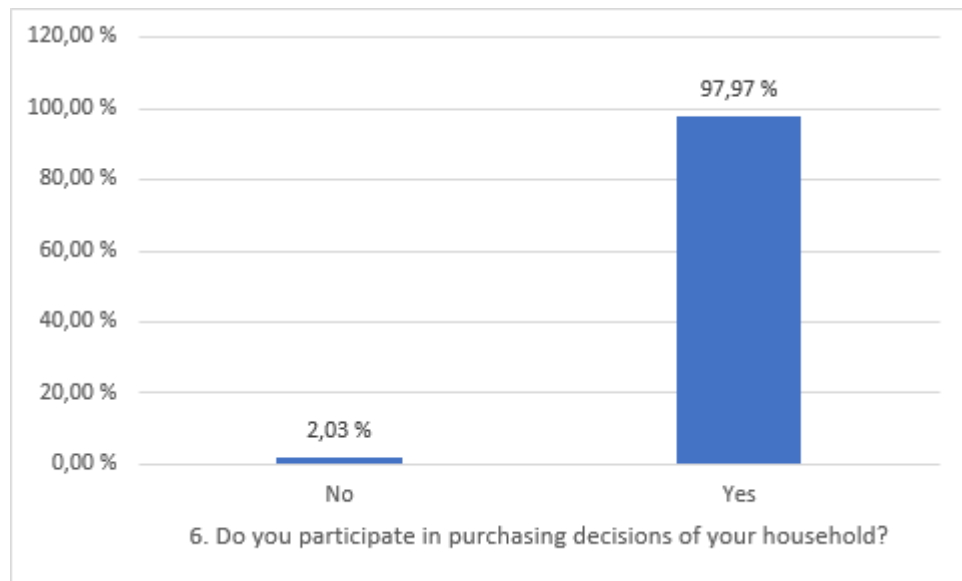


FIGURE 6. Do you participate in purchasing decisions of your household?

3.3 Research results to questions concerning environmental sustainability

Questions 7–17 consisted of questions concerning environmental sustainability in general and how the respondents take it into account in their everyday life. The aim of these questions was to be able to answer to the first research question of this thesis: Do the Finnish customers of Clas Ohlson take environmental sustainability into account when making purchasing decisions?

The seventh question asked if the person knew what sustainable development meant before reading the introduction, which was in the beginning of the questionnaire. This was asked in order to be able to find out the level of knowledge of the studied topic itself but mostly to be able to interpret the answers correctly. A little over 95 per cent of the respondents knew the meaning of sustainable development before answering the questions, verifying that the answers can be held

reliable from the point of view of topic knowledge. Because the percentage of people who knew the meaning was so high, the differences between age groups and gender were not significant.

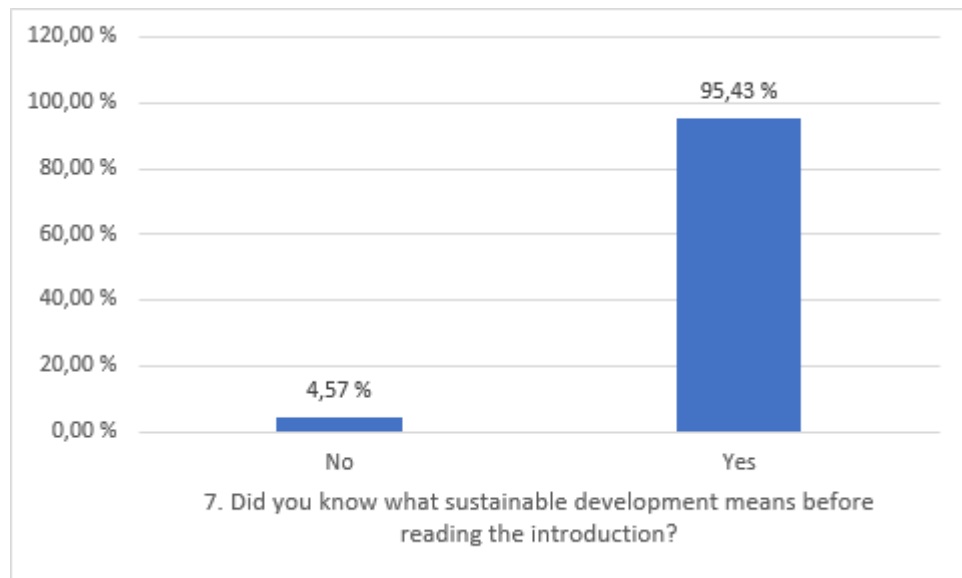


FIGURE 7. Did you know what sustainable development means before reading the introduction?

The eight question asked if the person knew how companies can promote environmental sustainability and sustainable development in general. This was asked also in order to be able to interpret the answers correctly and to see if people knew how companies can make a difference. As Nielsen's study (Global consumers seek companies that care about environmental issues, 9.11.2018) showed, 68 per cent of Europeans said that it is extremely or very important that companies have programs that aim to improve the environment thus it can be expected that people would also know what to expect from companies.

According to the results, a little over four out of five knew what companies can do in order to promote sustainability, but when comparing the results to general knowledge of sustainability, the result drops somewhat significantly. 40 per cent of age group 60–69 and 34 per cent of over 70 years old did not know how companies can promote sustainability. Other age groups were more or less similar to the overall results, besides age group 30–39, where 90 per cent knew what companies can do. Results based on gender were the same compared to overall results.

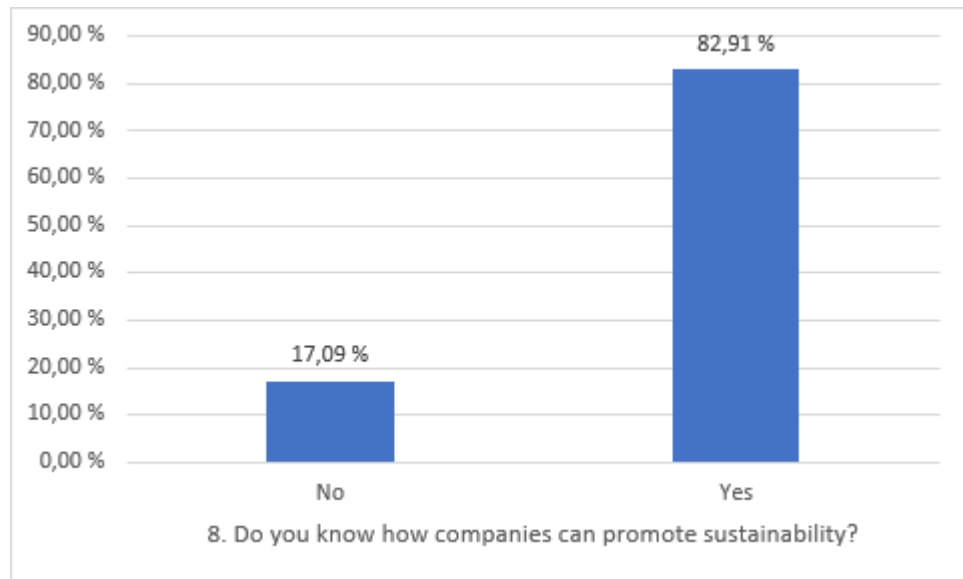


FIGURE 8. Do you know how companies can promote sustainability?

The ninth question showed four different statements and the respondents were asked to choose the one that fits the respondent best. The statements were based on the Sustainable Brand Index's four behaviour groups. This was done in order to be able to compare the results to Sustainable Brand Index's results and see if there are similarities between the respondents and the overall situation of Finnish people.

Statements were as follows:

- A. Being ecological or supporting sustainable development does not really matter to me. I make my purchasing decisions based on what I need and when I am buying something, I appreciate that the purchasing process is quick and practical. (Close to Sustainable Brand Index's Ego)
- B. I am somewhat interested in being ecological and supporting sustainable development, but I do not actively try to promote them. I make my purchasing decisions strongly based on the price of the product, but I also appreciate quality and longevity. (Close to Sustainable Brand Index's Moderate)
- C. I like to discuss with other people about being ecological or supporting sustainable development. I find the topics interesting and I would like to learn more about them. When I make purchasing decisions, I do not choose only based on what is good for the environment, but I emphasize

a lot such products that are for example healthier for me. (Close to Sustainable Brand Index's Smart)

- D. Being ecological and supporting sustainable development are the only reasons for me when I am making purchasing decisions. I try to find out how companies are promoting those topics and I actively use companies that are promoting sustainable development. I like to discuss a lot of these topics with people who are like-minded. (Close to Sustainable Brand Index's Dedicated)

According to the results, nearly 5 per cent of the respondents categorised themselves close to Ego. As mentioned earlier, according to Sustainable Brand Index 24 per cent of Finnish people belong to Ego. 45 per cent of the respondents categorised themselves close to Moderate, which is almost the same as 44 per cent according to Sustainable Brand Index. It seems that Clas Ohlson's customers are more interested in environmental sustainability than Finnish people in general, because 43 per cent categorised themselves as Smart, which is significantly more compared to Sustainable Brand Index's 26 per cent. The last group, Dedicated, is the same compared to 7 per cent by Sustainable Brand Index.

The biggest differences are in groups Ego and Smart. Almost half of the respondents (Smart and Dedicated) say they are interested in sustainability, which is significantly more than every third according to Sustainable Brand Index. There were big differences between answers of men and women: men were more likely to find themselves from groups A or B, whereas women more likely from groups C or D. Nearly 10 per cent of men answered they belong to group A, whereas only 3 per cent of women claimed the same. A little over 53 per cent of men found themselves belonging to group B, when 43 per cent of women felt the same. When looking at groups where sustainability was more important, women took over: almost 48 per cent of women answered C, while 32 per cent of men felt the same. Group D was not that popular, but still 7 per cent of women and 5 per cent of men identified themselves there.

When looking at the answers of different age groups, 18–29 years old was the only age group where B was not the most popular option. A little over 55 per cent of 18–29 years old answered C when all the other age groups percentages were between 33–41. 18–29 years old was also the only age group where C and D got

more than half of the answers. In all the other age groups A and B got over half of the answers, even 61 per cent in 50–59 years old.

Income did not seem to have a big effect on opinions. Answers were fairly same between all income groups and followed the overall percentages. One exception were people who earned over 50 000 euros: 8 per cent of these people answered A and 69 per cent B. This was a clear difference compared to the other age groups because second highest in group B were people who earned less than 19 000 euros, where 46 per cent categorised themselves.

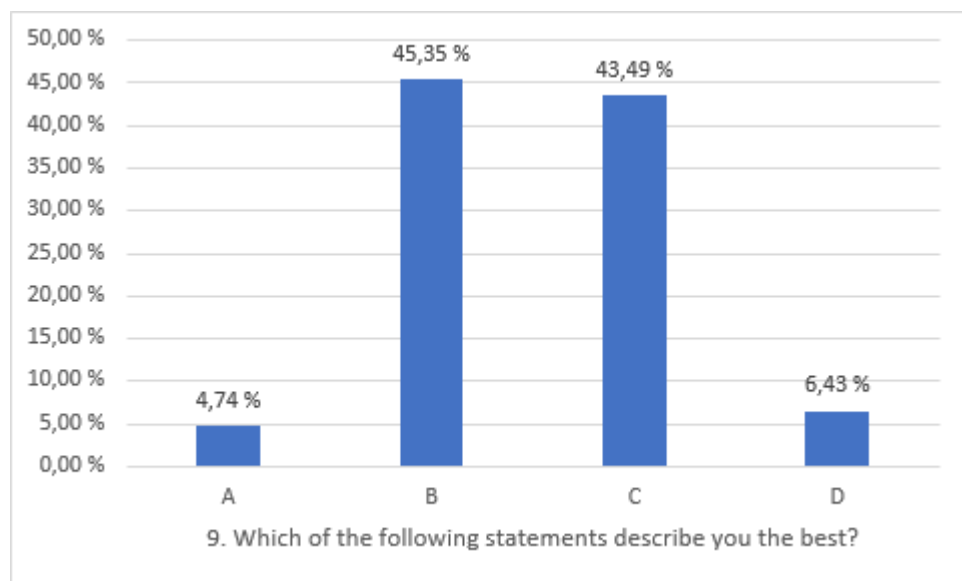


FIGURE 9. Which of the following statements describe you the best?

The 10th question asked how often the person buys ecological products or products that can help in being ecological. It was clarified in the question that this concerns all the stores person might visit and not only Clas Ohlson. According to a study by Accenture (More than Half of Consumers Would Pay More for Sustainable Products Designed to Be Reused or Recycled, Accenture Survey Finds, 4.6.2019) 72 per cent of the respondents answered they are currently buying more environmentally friendly products compared to what they bought five years ago. 81 per cent predicted they will buy even more over the next five years. According to these results, it can be expected that the sales of ecological and environmentally friendly products will keep on rising, thus the 10th question wanted to measure the current situation of Clas Ohlson's customers.

The results show that nearly half of the respondents buy ecological products either on a daily or a weekly basis, strengthening the claim that being ecological is important to the respondents. Younger people were somewhat more interested in buying ecological products. 54 per cent of 18–29 years old and 50 per cent of 30–39 years old bought either weekly or daily, when in all the other age groups 33–38 per cent bought on a weekly or a daily basis. Women were more likely to purchase ecological products than men. Nearly half of the women told that they buy ecological products either on a daily or a weekly basis, whereas every third men claimed the same. According to the results lower income was not a barrier for buying ecological products: 60 per cent of the people who bought daily and 68 per cent of the people who bought weekly earned less than 27 000 euros per month.

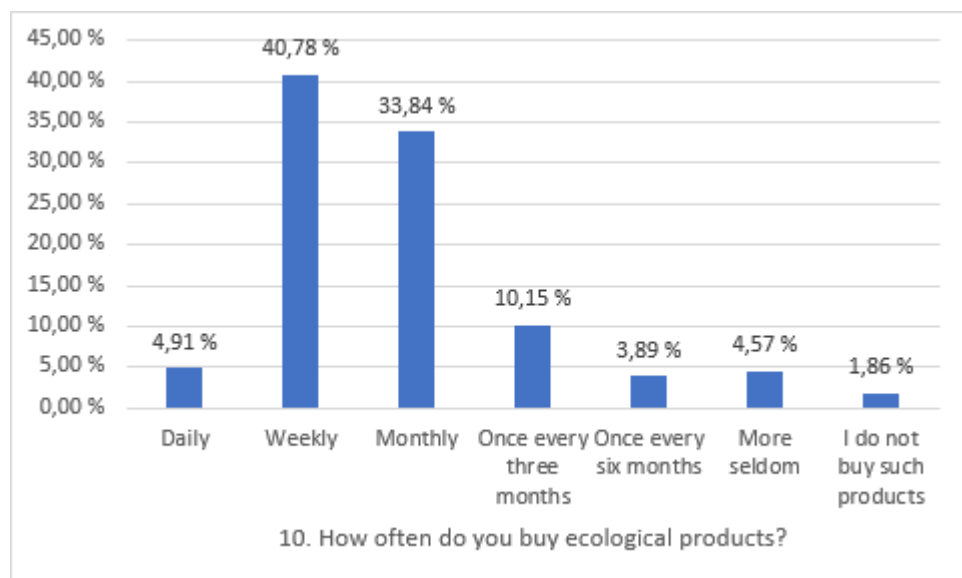


FIGURE 10. How often do you buy ecological products?

The 11th question focused on the person's behaviour when making a purchasing decision and especially how often the person tries to find out if the product is ecological. To make it easier to understand the question, two examples were given: going through the ingredient list and the origins of the ingredients or going through the manufacturing country might help the person to estimate if it is an ecological product. According to the results, 57 per cent of the respondents pay attention to what they are buying at least quite often. Only a little over 16 per cent of the respondents answered they rarely or never pay attention for example to

the origin of the product. As stated earlier, 71 per cent of Finnish people (Sustainable Brand Index Official Report 2020: Finland, 2020, 13) admitted that sustainability affects their shopping, which is a little less than 83 per cent of people who answered to at least sometimes pay attention to the origins of a product.

There were not that significant differences between the answers of different age groups. In all age groups besides people over 70 years old around 30 per cent answered they try to find out either always or often. According to the results, 40–49 years old were the least interested since nearly 50 per cent answered that they try to find out sometimes, seldom or never when in all other age groups these options got around 40 per cent of the votes.

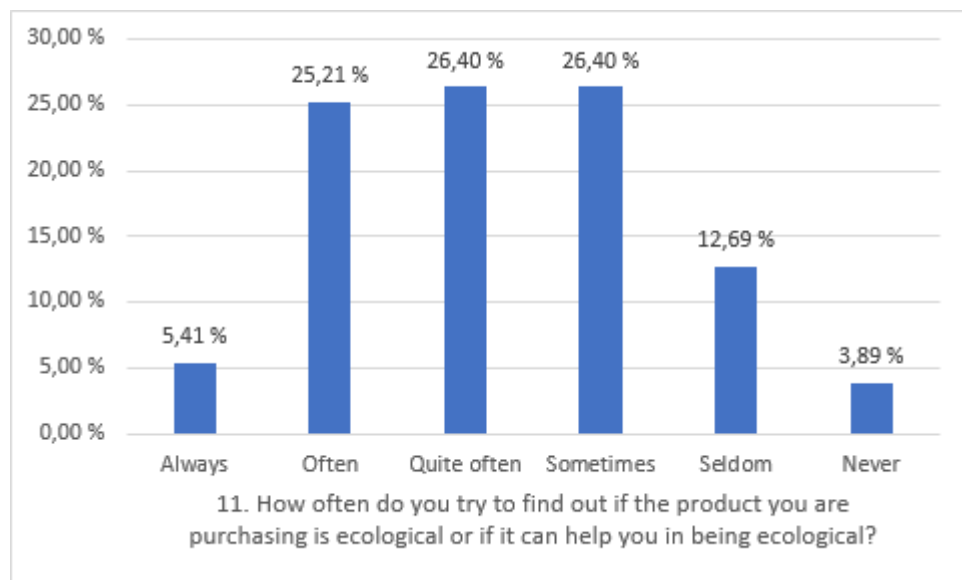


FIGURE 11. How often do you try to find out if the product you are purchasing is ecological or if it can help you in being ecological?

The 12th question tried to find out how much more people would be willing to pay in order to get an ecological product instead of non-ecological product. Results show that 10–25 per cent increase in price was seen acceptable by little over half of the people, but every fourth answered they are not willing to pay extra at all or no more than 5 per cent. Only nearly 2 per cent were willing to pay double in order to get an ecological product. For example, in a study conducted by FMCG (Sustainability in Europe, 9.11.2019) 55 per cent of the respondents answered they are willing to pay more in order to get environmentally friendly products and

according to a study by CGS (CGS Survey Reveals Sustainability Is Driving Demand and Customer Loyalty, 10.1.2019) a little more than every third were willing to pay 25 per cent or more for sustainable products. Compared to these results Clas Ohlson's customers willingness to pay more seems to be a bit stronger.

Younger people were more willing to pay extra: only 6 per cent of people between 18–29 and 9 per cent of 30–39 years old answered they would not pay more. For example, 20 per cent of age group 50–59 and 27 per cent of age group 60–69 answered they would not pay extra. The pattern was similar throughout the answers: younger people were willing to pay more than older people. In age groups 18–29 and 30–39 over half of the people were willing to pay 25 per cent or more, when in all the other age groups willingness to pay 25 per cent or more was between 30–38 per cent. In general women were somewhat more willing to pay more than men: nearly every fourth man answered he would not pay extra, when only 10 per cent of women claimed the same. Also 8 per cent of men were willing to pay either 50 per cent or more, when nearly 14 per cent of women answered the same.

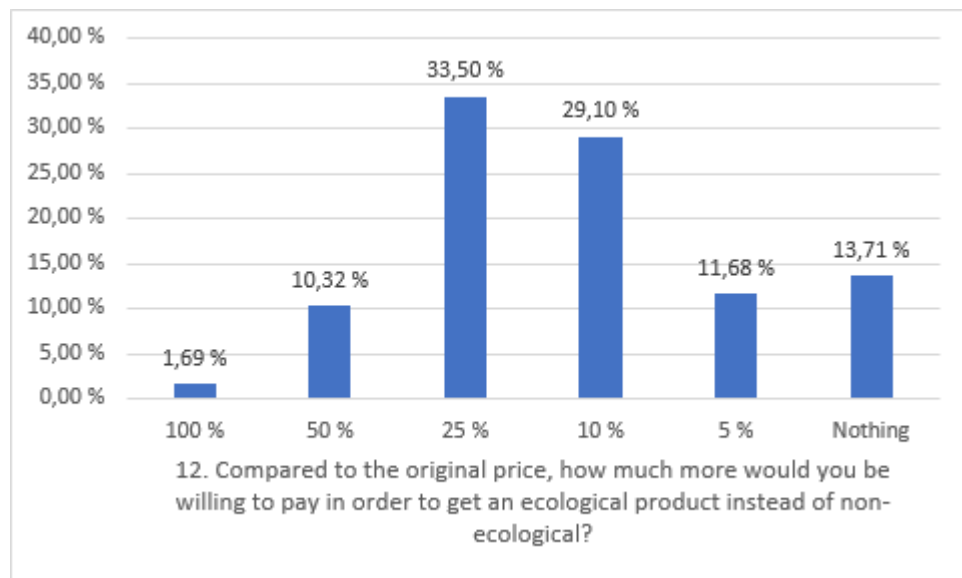


FIGURE 12. Compared to the original price, how much more would you be willing to pay in order to get an ecological product instead of non-ecological?

The 13th question asked when was the last time the respondent made a change in everyday life in order to promote ecological way of living. According to the results, four out of ten had made a change within a month and three out of ten within

three to six months. The 14th question was an optional follow-up to question 13 and asked the respondents to name the latest change. In total there were 290 answers and 61 of them had something to do with plastic, nearly all of them being either that the person had started to recycle plastic products or had stopped using or buying plastic bags. The amount of plastic related answers was not a surprise. For example, in a study by PwC (Study: Consumers want fast, sustainable shopping, 1.9.2019) 42 per cent of Europeans told they avoid plastic whenever possible and 41 per cent choose products with less packaging material. Eurobarometer Survey 2020 (Report: Attitudes of European citizens towards the Environment, 5) shows that 89 per cent of Europeans worry about the effects plastic products have and 88 per cent worry about the effects microplastics have on the environment.

In other answers 12 people mentioned that they had started to go to work by bicycle instead of a car. Five people had made a change in their diet: four had stopped eating meat and one had increased the use of Finnish lake fish. Other examples included changes such as using eco-friendly cleaning products or makeup products, buying mostly Finnish products or using ResQ Club, which is an application where people can buy food products from stores or restaurants that otherwise would be thrown away. According to Eurobarometer Survey 2020 (Report: Attitudes of European citizens towards the Environment, 6), Finnish people were among the top European countries when measuring environmental activities done by person: 33 per cent of Finnish people had done seven or more activities for the environment. Even though it is not directly comparable to the thesis results, it is nevertheless clear that the respondents had actively made changes, which is in line with the results of Eurobarometer Survey.

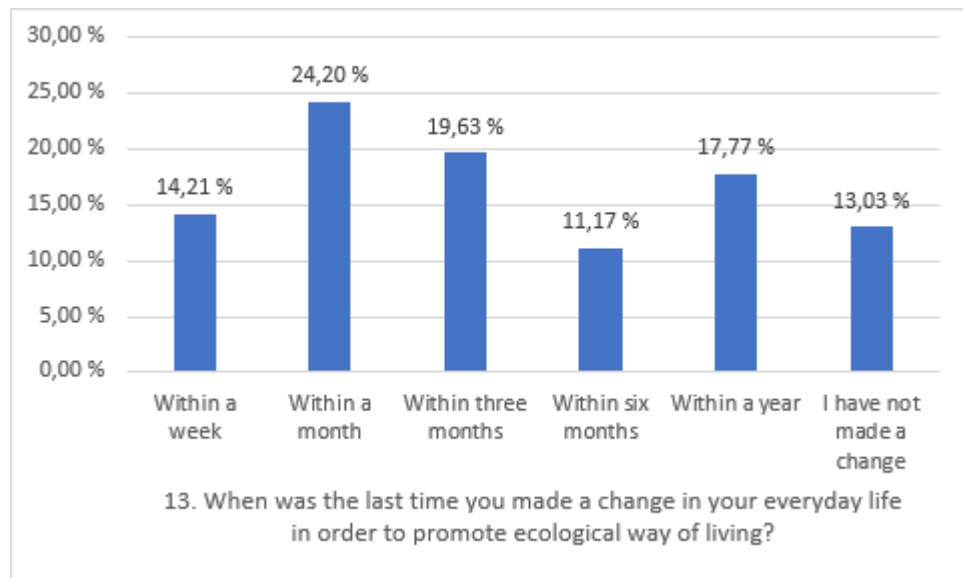


FIGURE 13. When was the last time you made a change in your everyday life in order to promote ecological way of living?

The 15th question asked how important it is for the respondents that companies they use are ecological and promote sustainable development. The results show clearly that it does matter to customers that companies do their own part: every fifth answered that it is extremely important and nearly 70 per cent admitted it is quite important or important. Only one out of ten thought it is not that important or at all important. The results are somewhat similar to aforementioned Nielsen's study (Global consumers seek companies that care about environmental issues, 9.11.2018), where 68 per cent of Europeans thought it is extremely or very important that companies aim to improve the environment. The results also support Grimmer's & Bingham's (2013, 1945) claim that customers choose companies based on their actions for the environment.

58 per cent of 18–29 years old and 64 per cent of 30–39 years old believed that it is important or extremely important that companies promote sustainability, but so did also 60 per cent of 60–69 years old. Age groups 40–49 and 50–59 were not that interested: half in both age groups thought that it is quite or not that important. Once again women were more interested than men: every fourth woman believed it is extremely important when only 10 per cent of men thought the same. As question 19 will show, every third respondent was a member of Club Clas loyalty program. 24 per cent of these regular customers answered that it is extremely important and 35 per cent that is important, so for them it was a bit more essential that companies promote sustainability.

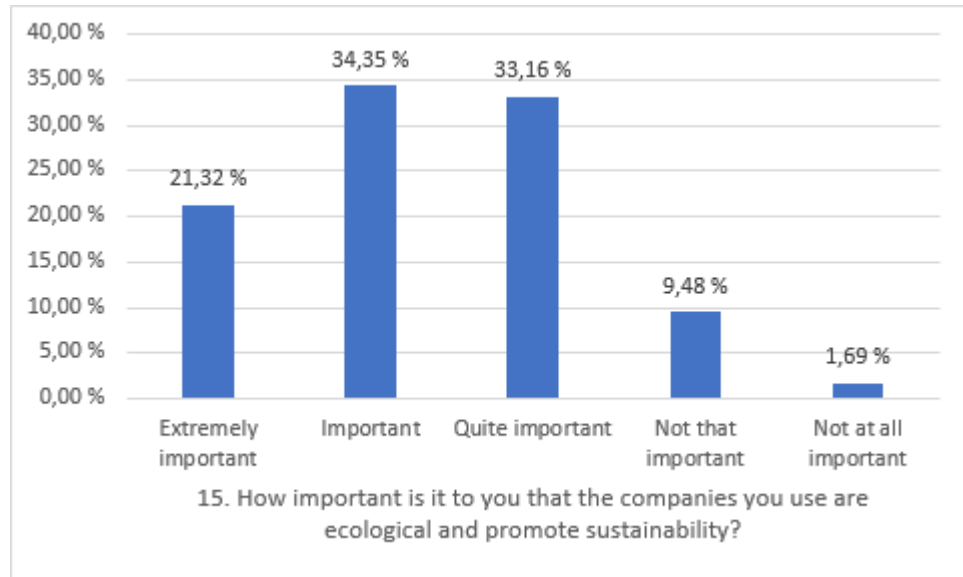


FIGURE 14. How important is it to you that the companies you use are ecological and promote sustainability?

The 16th and 17th question focused on the connection between possible decrease and increase in person's financial situation and the motivation to purchase ecological products in these cases. The reasons for these two questions were discussed more thoroughly in chapter 3.1.1. Based on the results, the decision to buy ecological products is somewhat related to person's financial situation, especially in cases where financial situation would increase significantly: a little over 70 per cent of the respondents would buy ecological products more if their financial situation would be better. When it comes to possible decrease in financial situation, almost half of the respondents did not know if it would change their behaviour and a little over 36 per cent told they would buy such products less.

For example, 40 per cent of people earning less than 27 000 euros answered they would buy less such products in case their financial situation would decrease. 77 per cent of the same people would buy more such products if financial situation would increase. An article by Bloomberg (*Average Americans Can't Afford to Buy Green*, 7.3.2019) claims that environmentally friendly products are too expensive for the vast majority and also the research results show that the decision to buy ecological products is somewhat based on spendable money, even though it cannot be said that they would be too expensive for the respondents.

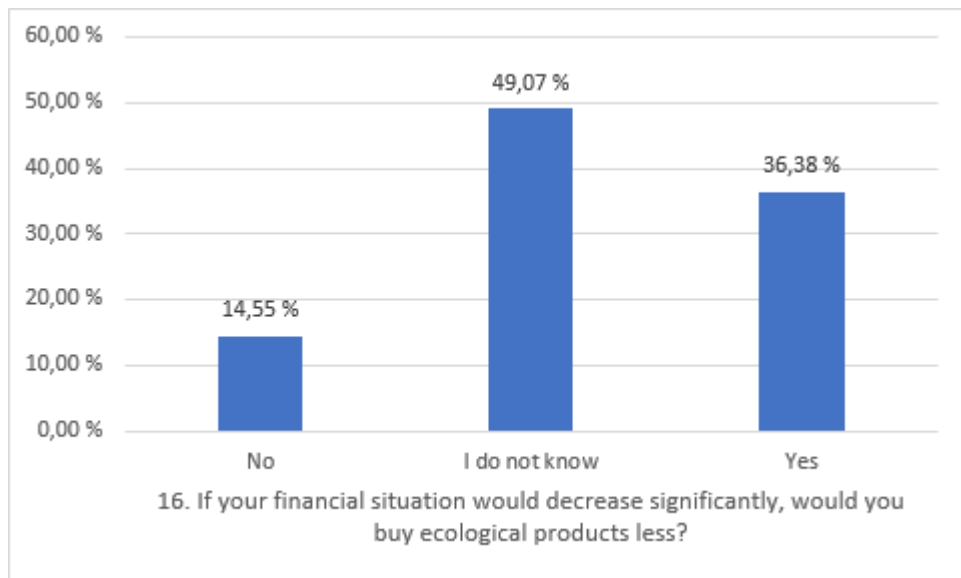


FIGURE 15. If your financial situation would decrease significantly, would you buy ecological products less?

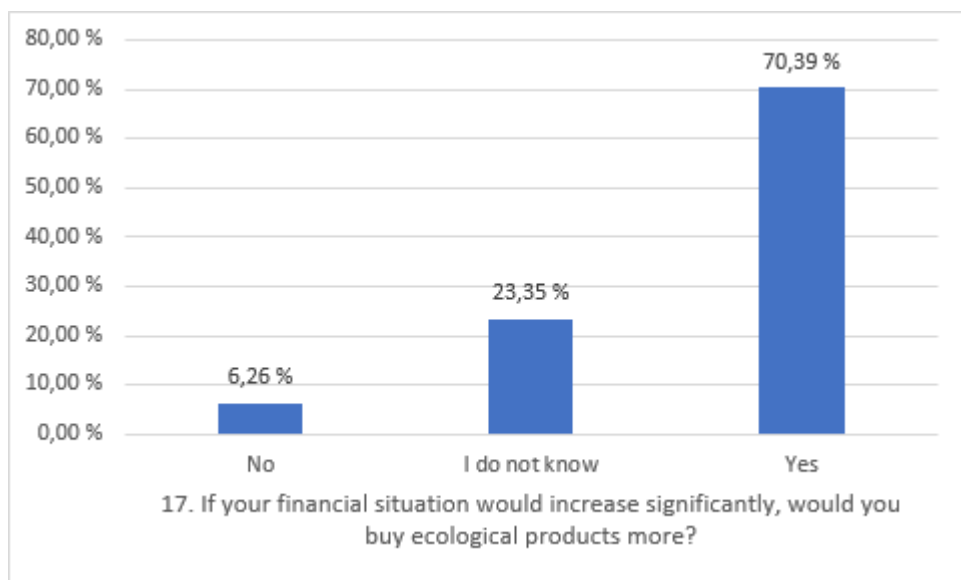


FIGURE 16. If your financial situation would increase significantly, would you buy ecological products more?

3.4 Research results to questions concerning Clas Ohlson

The last questions in the questionnaire concerned Clas Ohlson and were asked in order to be able to answer to the second research question of this thesis: What is the image Finnish customers have on Clas Ohlson regarding environmental sustainability? Questions were designed in a way that they would create as thorough answer as possible to the aforementioned research question.

The 18th question asked how often the respondents visit either Clas Ohlson's stores or online shop. Most of the respondents, almost 38 per cent, visit Clas Ohlson once every three months. Every fourth respondent visits Clas Ohlson on a monthly basis and every fifth once every six months. Only three out of hundred visit Clas Ohlson weekly or more often. There were no relevant differences between women and men, even though women were a little more active visitors than men. Also, the differences between different age groups were really small. For example, nearly 30 per cent of all age groups visit Clas Ohlson at least once a month.

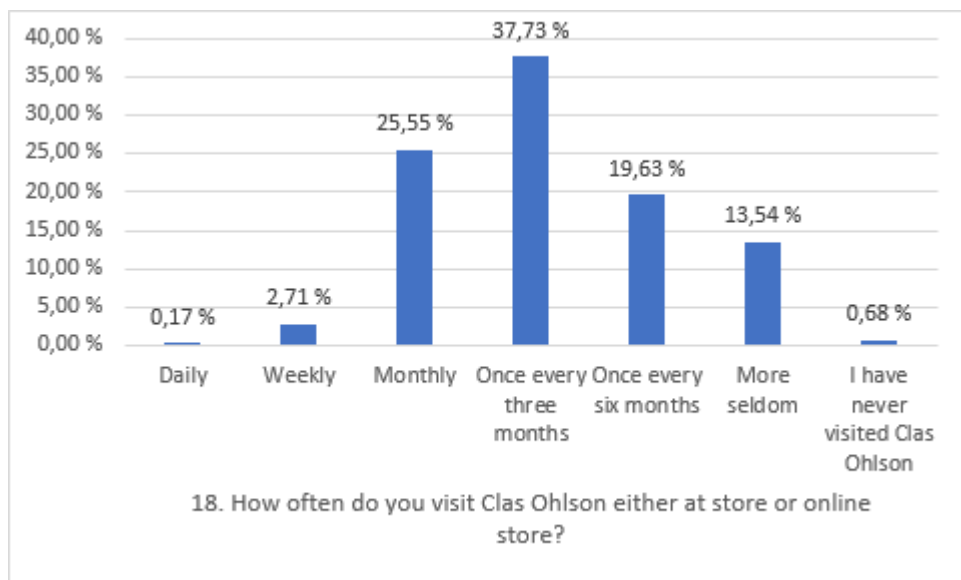


FIGURE 17. How often do you visit Clas Ohlson either at store or online store?

The 19th question asked whether the respondent belongs to Club Clas loyalty program. Nearly 57 per cent of the respondents did not belong and nearly 34 per cent did belong to Club Clas. Differences between age groups and gender were not relevant.

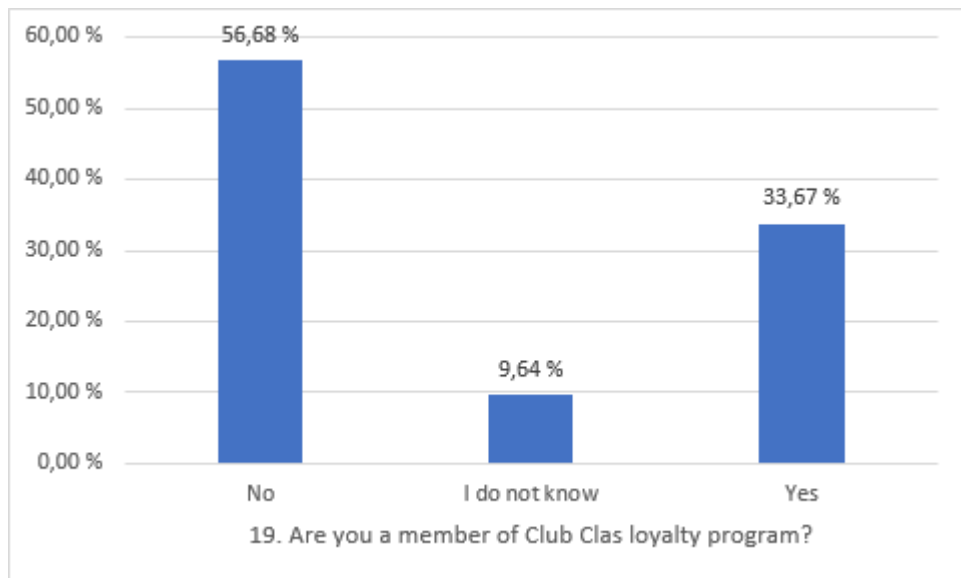


FIGURE 18. Are you a member of Club Clas loyalty program?

The 20th question focused on the knowledge of the respondents on Clas Ohlson's sustainable and ecological products and asked how many such products person knows. This was done in order to find out how well Clas Ohlson has managed to inform the customers of environmentally friendly products. Based on the results, most of the customers do not know which products are ecological: almost half of the respondents answered they do not know even one and nearly 30 per cent knew 1–4 products. As mentioned earlier, during the fiscal year 2019–20 out of all products sold 20,7 per cent were sustainable products. This shows clearly that customers do not have a clear idea about ecological products sold at Clas Ohlson even though they most likely have bought them. Young women had somewhat more knowledge than other groups but not significantly and Club Clas members had more knowledge than other respondents. Only 37 per cent answered they do not know any ecological products and for example 18 per cent knew 3–4 and nearly 11 per cent 5–6. The amount of people who knew 10–19 products was significantly larger than other respondents: a little over 8 per cent.

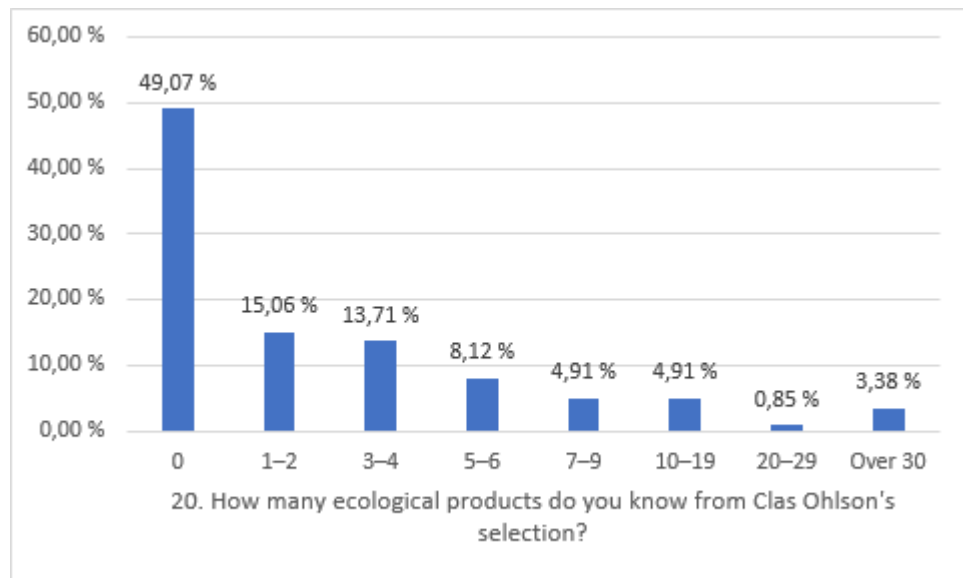


FIGURE 19. How many ecological products do you know from Clas Ohlson's selection?

The 21st question asked how many concrete ecological actions or actions promoting sustainability made by Clas Ohlson the respondents know. Examples of such actions were presented in chapter 2.2.1. According to the results nearly 66 per cent of the respondents had no awareness and every fourth knew one or two actions. There was a clear connection between questions 20 and 21: 98 per cent of the people who answered they know zero ecological products also knew zero actions made by Clas Ohlson. Women had some more knowledge than men and this time older people knew a little more than younger people. Club Clas members had again somewhat more knowledge: 53 per cent did not know any, 36 per cent knew 1–2, 7 per cent knew 3–4 and 4 per cent knew over 5.

As mentioned earlier, Clas Ohlson has so far removed 800 000 unnecessary plastic packages. According to Eurobarometer Survey 2020 (Report: Attitudes of European citizens towards the Environment, 71) 72 per cent of Finnish people answered that it is very important that retail companies try to reduce the amount of plastic packaging. Even though Clas Ohlson has managed to remove plastic packages and even though it is important to customers, Clas Ohlson has not been able to take the advantage out of it when thinking the sustainability image.

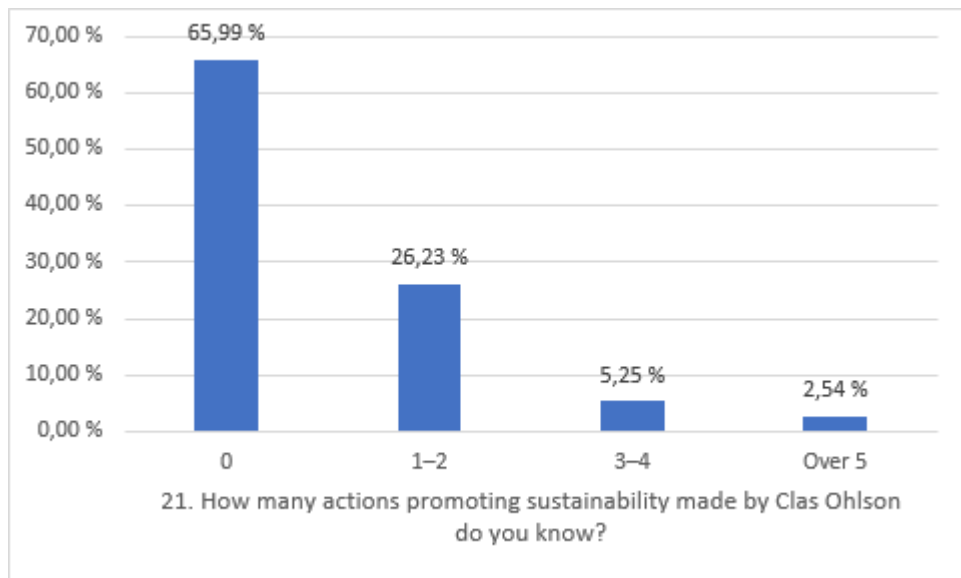


FIGURE 20. How many actions promoting sustainability made by Clas Ohlson do you know?

The 22nd question tried to determine how well Clas Ohlson has managed to advertise either sustainability, products that support sustainable way of living or sustainable products and asked in which of the following platforms the respondents have seen or heard some kind of an advertisement or a post from Clas Ohlson where sustainability was the topic. The respondents were able to choose as many platforms as they wanted. During the time of the research Clas Ohlson had a theme named “Give love to what you have”, which promoted products that can be used at home to fix or repair old products in order to avoid purchasing new ones. This theme was visible all over Clas Ohlson’s social media and it was advertised also on television, streaming services, at the shopping centers and on Clas Ohlson’s own leaflet. Clas Ohlson had also material which was used in stores together with suitable products.

According to the results, nearly 46 per cent of the respondents had not seen or heard Clas Ohlson’s advertisements even though the whole theme was built around it. Facebook appeared to be the best way to reach customers, because every third respondent had noticed such advertisements. Every fifth had noticed the leaflet and 16 per cent had paid attention to the material used in stores. Nearly 12 per cent had seen a television advertisement.

47 per cent of age group 18–29 and 60 per cent of age group 30–39 had not seen advertisements in any of the channels. Advertising leaflet was the best way to reach older people, because 30 per cent of age groups 50–59 and 60–69 and 48

per cent of 70 years or older remembered to have read such leaflet, when for example only 10 per cent of people between 30–39 years old answered the same. Facebook was quite efficient in all age groups with at least every third answering it. Instagram worked the best for 18–29 years old, even though their response 13,5 per cent was not that remarkable. All other age groups were below 10 per cent in Instagram, even 2 per cent (60–69 years old).

When thinking the results of questions 20 and 21 and comparing them to results of other questions it is inevitably clear that the lack of knowledge is not a result of lack of interest. It is more likely that the results of question 22 explain why people have such little knowledge of Clas Ohlson's environmental products and actions.

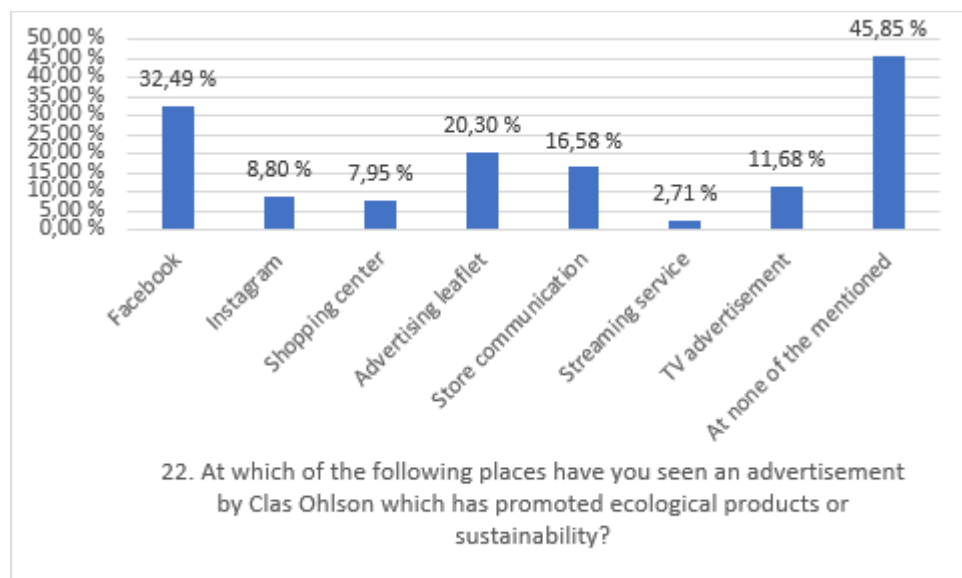


FIGURE 21. At which of the following places have you seen an advertisement by Clas Ohlson which has promoted ecological products or sustainability?

The 23rd question asked if the person has ever chosen Clas Ohlson because of a certain ecological product. A vast majority answered they have not, which is in line with the aforementioned overall knowledge of Clas Ohlson's sustainable products and sustainability actions. Even though people over 70 years old have not in previous questions been the most ecological group, in this question every fourth answered to have specifically chosen to go to Clas Ohlson because of a certain ecological product. Even though the difference was not big, women were a bit more active with 16 per cent than men with 11 per cent. As seen in previous questions, Club Clas members were again more active but not significantly. 78

per cent had not chosen and 22 per cent had chosen Clas Ohlson because of certain ecological products.

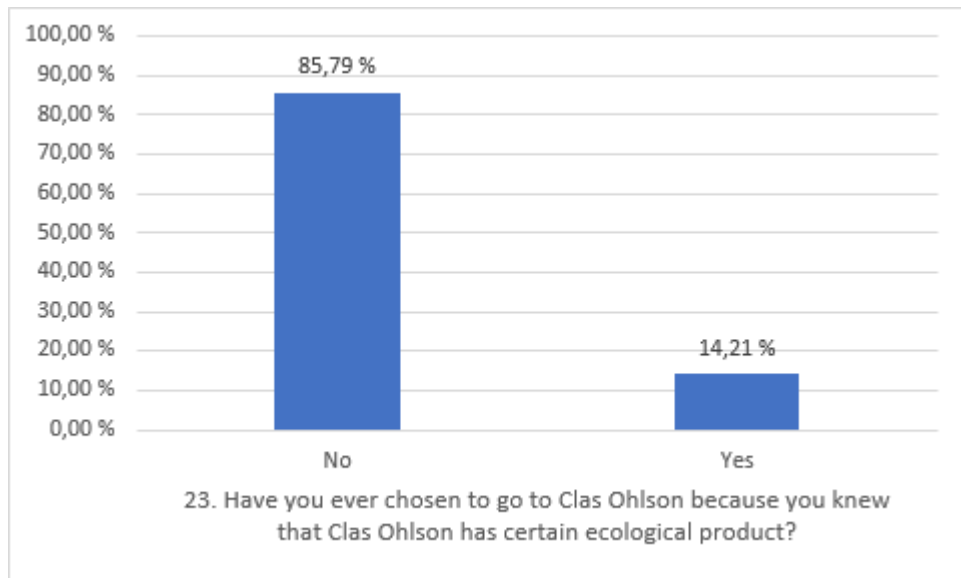


FIGURE 22. Have you ever chosen to go to Clas Ohlson because you knew that Clas Ohlson has certain ecological product?

The 24th question asked if the person has ever bought ecological products from Clas Ohlson. Based on the results, a little more than every fourth person has bought, a little less than every fourth have not bought and almost half do not know if they have bought. The percentage of “I do not know” is the same compared to the respondents who had no knowledge of Clas Ohlson’s ecological products. Age groups 18–29 (32 per cent) and 50–59 (29 per cent) were the only groups above average who had purchased ecological products. Women were again more ecological than men: 31 per cent of women and 20 per cent of men had bought ecological products.

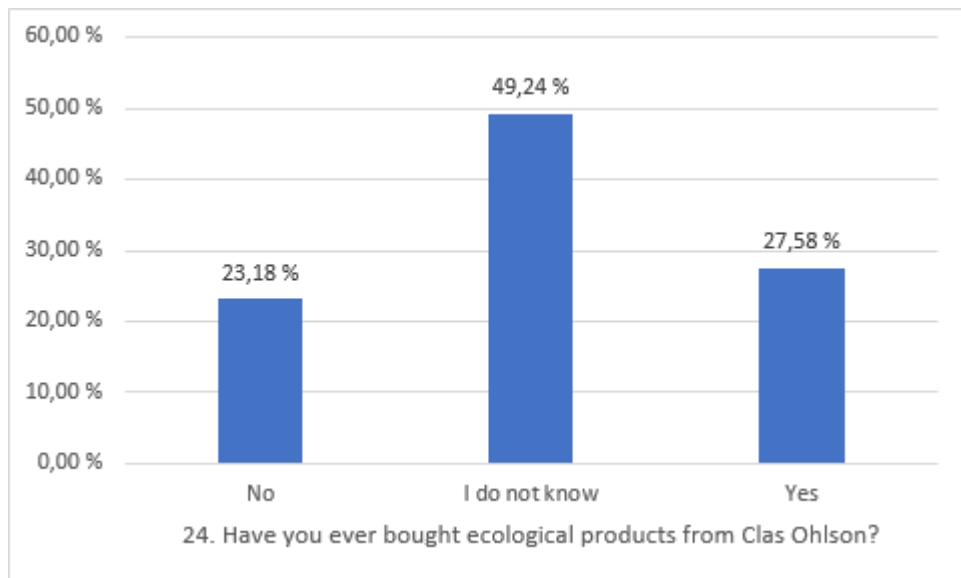


FIGURE 23. Have you ever bought ecological products from Clas Ohlson?

The 25th question asked which of the following statement fits Clas Ohlson the best:

- A. Clas Ohlson focuses extremely much on being ecological and on promoting sustainability
- B. Clas Ohlson focuses much on being ecological and on promoting sustainability
- C. Clas Ohlson focuses somewhat on being ecological and on promoting sustainability
- D. Clas Ohlson focuses little on being ecological and on promoting sustainability
- E. Clas Ohlson focuses extremely little on being ecological and on promoting sustainability
- F. Clas Ohlson does not focus at all on being ecological and on promoting sustainability
- G. I do not know

According to the results, 30 per cent of the respondents thought that Clas Ohlson focuses much or extremely much on sustainability. Every fourth person thought that Clas Ohlson's actions are somewhat sufficient. The amount of people who believed that Clas Ohlson does not focus at all or only little was only around 8 per

cent. Still the biggest group were people who did not know how to describe Clas Ohlson's actions.

The older the person was, the stronger opinion the person had that Clas Ohlson focuses on sustainability. For example, 19 per cent of people over 70 years old thought that Clas Ohlson focuses extremely much and 38 per cent believed that Clas Ohlson focuses much. In age group 18–29 only nearly 5 per cent thought that Clas Ohlson focuses much on sustainability. From people between 30–39 years old only 3 per cent answered extremely much, 20 per cent much and every tenth answered that Clas Ohlson focuses little or extremely little. Answers between genders did not vary a lot: almost every third man and woman thought that Clas Ohlson focuses extremely much or much.

8 per cent of Club Clas members answered that the level of focus is extremely much and 29 per cent that it is much. Only 25 per cent were not able to answer at all implying again that they have a stronger opinion than other respondents.

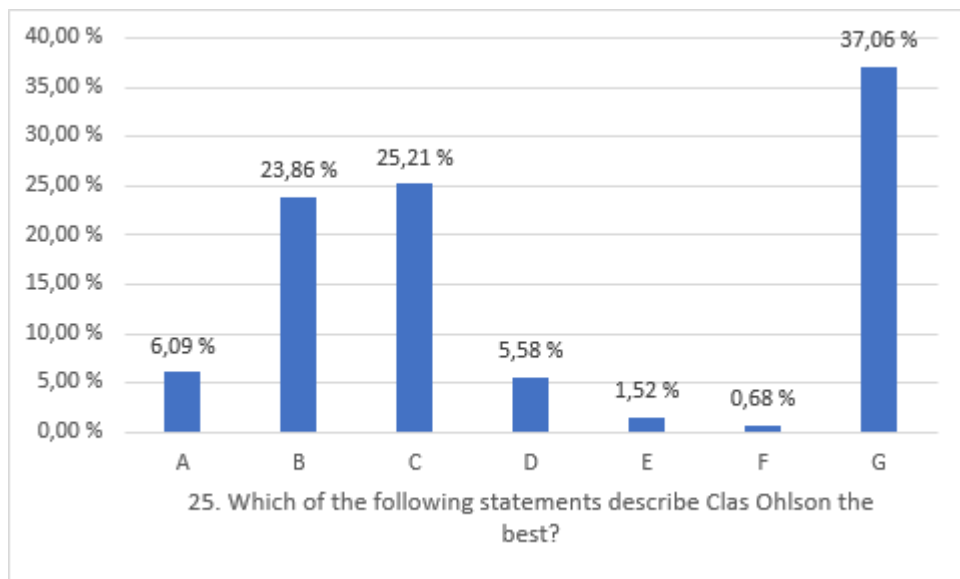


FIGURE 24. Which of the following statements describe Clas Ohlson the best?

The 26th question was an optional follow-up to the 25th question and asked the respondents to clarify what Clas Ohlson should do differently if they thought that Clas Ohlson does not focus enough on being ecological and on promoting sustainability. In total there were 76 answers and one of the biggest reasons was that people think that the quality of Clas Ohlson's products is not good. It was also seen as a negative aspect that most of the products are produced in Asia. It

was also mentioned that Clas Ohlson sells a lot of products that are not necessary, thus increasing consumption in general and that way being anti-sustainable. One person said quite clear that has never considered Clas Ohlson to be a sustainable company, because the products are cheap and quality is not comparable to other companies' products.

There were also suggestions that Clas Ohlson should increase the marketing regarding ecological products and sustainability. Some people thought that it might be possible that Clas Ohlson does pay attention a lot to these things but no one knows about it because of lack of communication. One person used the old saying "if a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound". People also suggested that Clas Ohlson should give the possibility to customers to bring broken products to be recycled. This is possible at Clas Ohlson already, but most likely due to the lack of communication mentioned earlier, not all people know about this option.

The 27th question tried to determine how well Clas Ohlson's motto for sustainability is known. The response options were as follows:

- A. From here to sustainability (correct answer)
- B. We make Finland a better place to live (S-Group)
- C. A better tomorrow (Lidl)
- D. Together we can create a more sustainable future (Ikea)
- E. None of the aforementioned is Clas Ohlson's motto
- F. I do not know

According to the results, it is clear that people do not recognise Clas Ohlson's motto. Options A, C and D got exactly the same amount of answers: every tenth person recognised the motto and thought that it is Clas Ohlson's. Almost seven out of ten had no idea what Clas Ohlson's motto is. This shows clearly that even though there are "From here to sustainability" banners and logos located in stores, customers do not remember them. Differences between age and gender were somewhat non-existent. One exception were people over 70 years old: nearly 30 per cent knew the correct motto, when in other age groups it was around

10 per cent and in 18–29 even as low as 4,5 per cent. 10 per cent of Club Clas members knew the right answer so there was no difference compared to others.

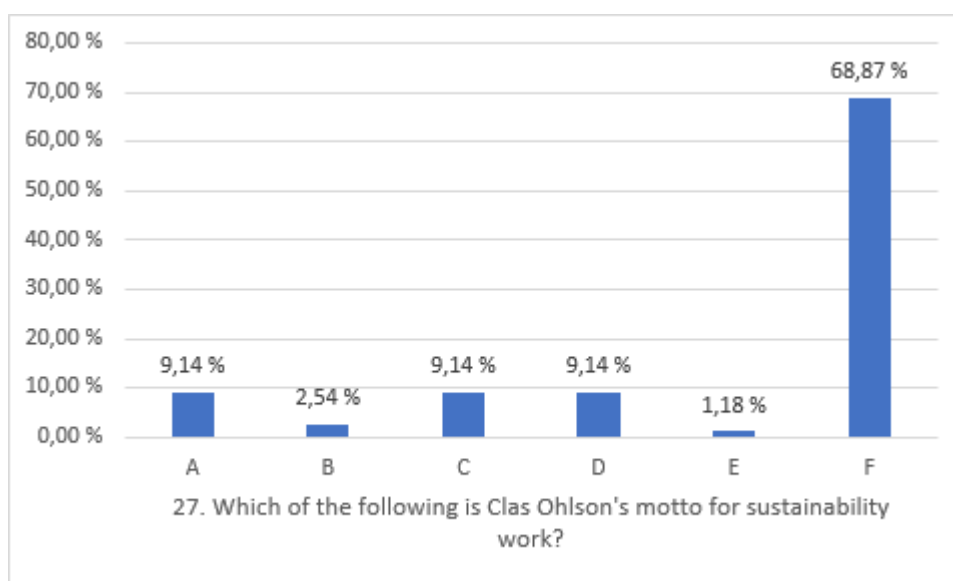


FIGURE 25. Which of the following is Clas Ohlson's motto for sustainability work?

The 28th question asked the respondents to compare Clas Ohlson to other companies working in the same sector and determine how much Clas Ohlson is doing for sustainability compared to other companies. Almost half of the respondents were not able to compare Clas Ohlson's actions to actions made by other companies. Older people believed that Clas Ohlson does more than other companies: 40 per cent of people older than 60 years old believed that Clas Ohlson does more or much more, when for example in age group 18–29 every fourth and in 30–39 only 14 per cent thought the same. In these age groups half were not able to compare when in older age groups only every third could not compare. Answers between genders followed almost exactly the results of overall percentages.

Nearly 4 per cent of Club Clas members answered that Clas Ohlson works much more and 28 per cent more. Again, only 36 per cent were not able to answer, which is much less than what people in general answered.

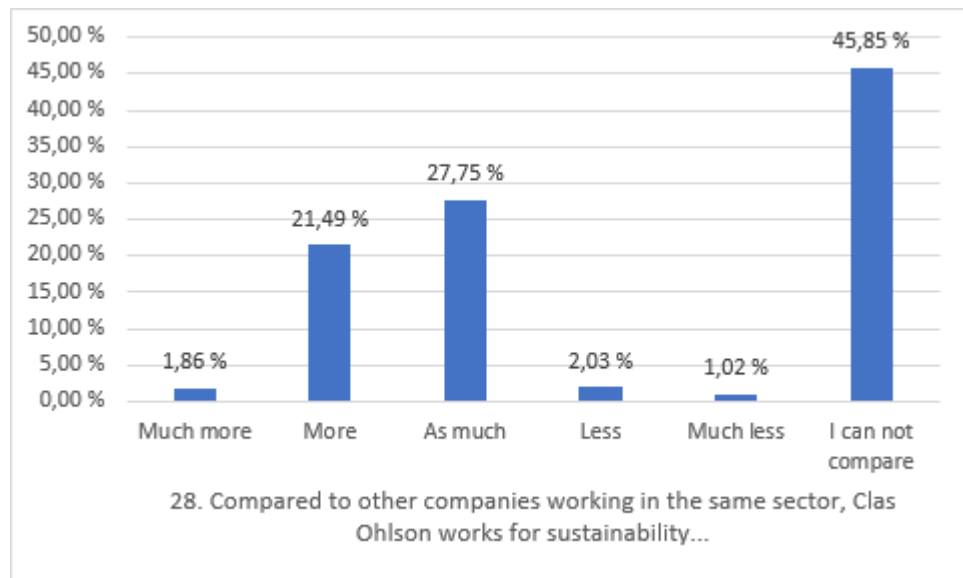


FIGURE 26. Compared to other companies working in the same sector, Clas Ohlson works for sustainability...

The 29th question was an optional follow-up to 28th question and asked the respondents to clarify what Clas Ohlson should do differently if they thought other companies do more. For example, such activities were mentioned:

- You should have more products from Europe instead of China.
- Have you heard of Kiroileva hiili? You should try to follow their actions.
- Increase the quality of the products and decrease the amount of plastic.
- Sustainability should be bigger theme in Clas Ohlson's advertisement.

The 30th question showed statements that are used also in the brand tracking study. The respondents could choose as many as they wanted but the statements needed to be something they connect to Clas Ohlson. Statements were as follows:

- A. For everyone
- B. Offers smart solutions
- C. Modern and up-to-date
- D. Cares about simplifying everyday things for the home
- E. Promotes sustainable development

- F. Convenient
- G. Reliable
- H. Affordable
- I. Offers good quality products
- J. Likely to have what I'm looking for
- K. Knowledgeable staff
- L. None of the aforementioned fits for Clas Ohlson

According to the results, the three most-voted options were “for everyone”, “affordable” and “offers smart solutions”, which all exist in Clas Ohlson’s mission, purpose and business concept. “Promotes sustainable development” got third least votes and as mentioned earlier, the topic does not exist in Clas Ohlson’s core message to customers. Sustainability theme can also be connected to the options that got less votes than “promotes sustainable development”: only a little less than 23 per cent connected “offers good quality products” and “reliable” to Clas Ohlson. If people do not think that Clas Ohlson sells good quality products, it is also difficult to connect sustainability to Clas Ohlson.

Age groups 50–59 (30 per cent) and over 70 years old (38 per cent) thought the most that “promotes sustainable development” is something that can be connected to Clas Ohlson. People between 30–39 years old were more sceptical, because only 14 per cent connected sustainability to Clas Ohlson. 25 per cent of women combined sustainability to Clas Ohlson, whereas 18 per cent of men thought the same.

Out of all Club Clas members 30 per cent answered that Clas Ohlson promotes sustainability and that Clas Ohlson is reliable. 25 per cent believed that Clas Ohlson’s products are good quality. Once again, the image regular customers had on Clas Ohlson was a bit more positive than the respondents in general, even though not significantly.

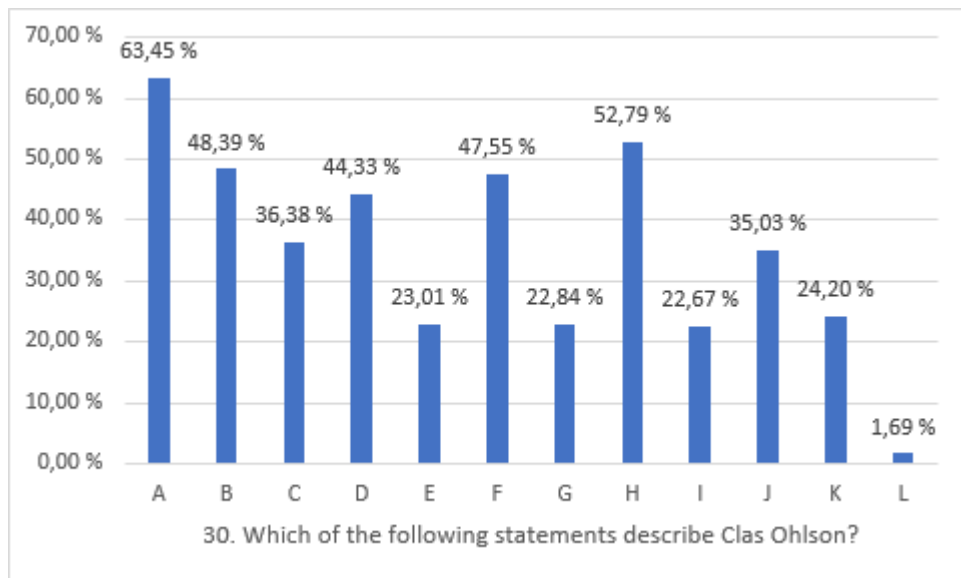


FIGURE 27. Which of the following statements describe Clas Ohlson?

When comparing the results to Clas Ohlson's latest brand tracking study, there are some similarities but also a lot of differences. In brand tracking study only 9 per cent connected "promotes sustainable development" to Clas Ohlson, which is significantly less than 23 percent in the thesis research. It is possible that the topic of this thesis had people think that Clas Ohlson focuses on sustainability even though they would not otherwise have an opinion. For example, one person answered to an open question the following: "I do not know what Clas Ohlson has done for sustainability but I think they are doing well because they are studying it with this questionnaire."

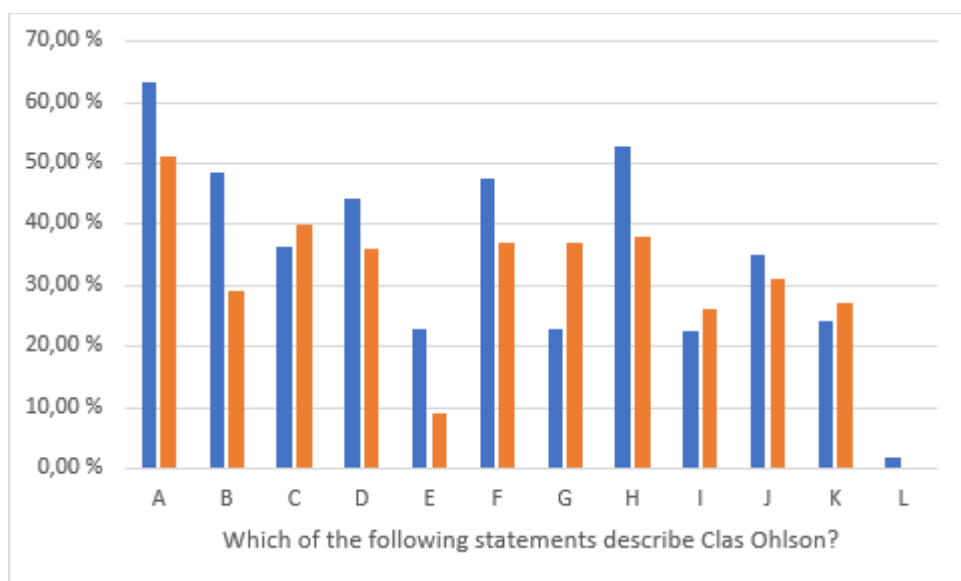


FIGURE 28. Which of the following statements describe Clas Ohlson?
Comparison to brand tracking study Q3.

The 31st question was an optional open question where it was possible to write if the respondent had something to say regarding sustainability or Clas Ohlson. In total there were 50 answers and most of them were irrelevant regarding the topic, such as feedback to the staff. Comments that concerned sustainability were as follows:

- It's good that I can bring old or broken products to Clas Ohlson for recycling.
- I believe Clas Ohlson sells too much unnecessary, bad quality products. Clas Ohlson should decrease the number of products and focus on quality.
- I think Clas Ohlson sells too much products that have no real use.
- Clas Ohlson promotes sustainable development and this can be seen for example when visiting the stores.

3.5 Research results to questions for Clas Ohlson's employees

In order to be able to find out how much the employees of Clas Ohlson might have affected the customers' opinions through customer service, another research was conducted also in May 2020 to Clas Ohlson's employees. The second research consisted of six questions, which focused on the knowledge and the opinions of the employees. In total 95 employees answered to the questionnaire. As mentioned earlier, the education and the knowledge of the employees is important so that they are able to inform the customers of sustainable solutions. With the questionnaire the current level of knowledge was tried to be determined.

The first question (Appendix 2) focused on the level of knowledge the employees have on Clas Ohlson's ecological products. A little over half of the respondents answered they know somewhat well and a little more than every fourth that they know well the ecological products. Based on these results, the employees should be able to tell about sustainable solutions to customers.

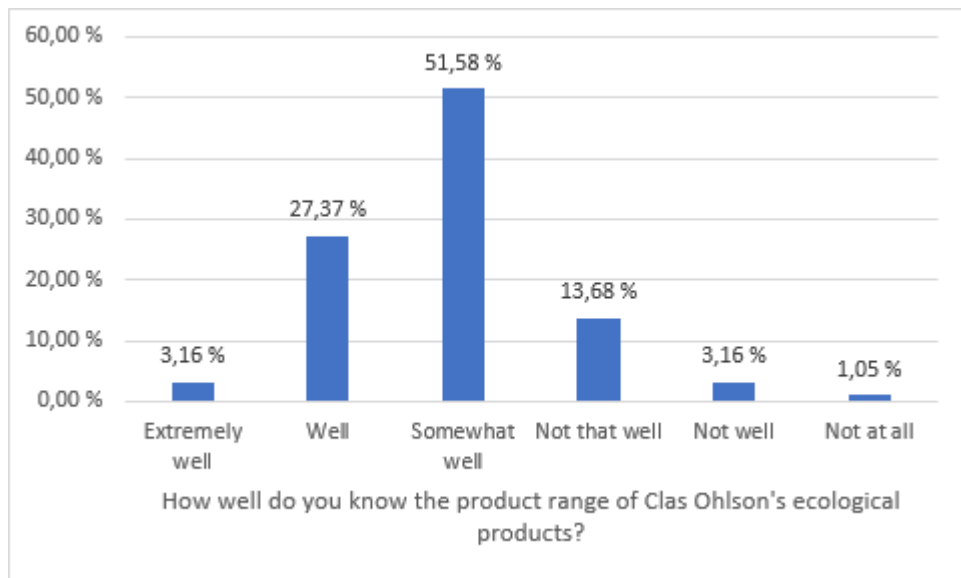


FIGURE 29. How well do you know the product range of Clas Ohlson's ecological products?

The second question asked how often the employees use sustainability as a selling point or tell about ecological options when they are in customer service situations. Nearly 75 per cent of the respondents answered they mention these factors sometimes, rarely or never. Only 23 per cent answered "often" and 1 per cent "always". These results show that the vast majority of the employees do not talk about sustainability with customers, which is one explanation to the low level of knowledge the customers have. When looking at the level of knowledge employees have on Clas Ohlson's ecological products, it is clear that it does not explain why employees do not talk about sustainability to customers. 82 per cent of the employees answered they know somewhat well, well or extremely well the product range of ecological products, so according to this result employees should be able to discuss about sustainability with the customers.

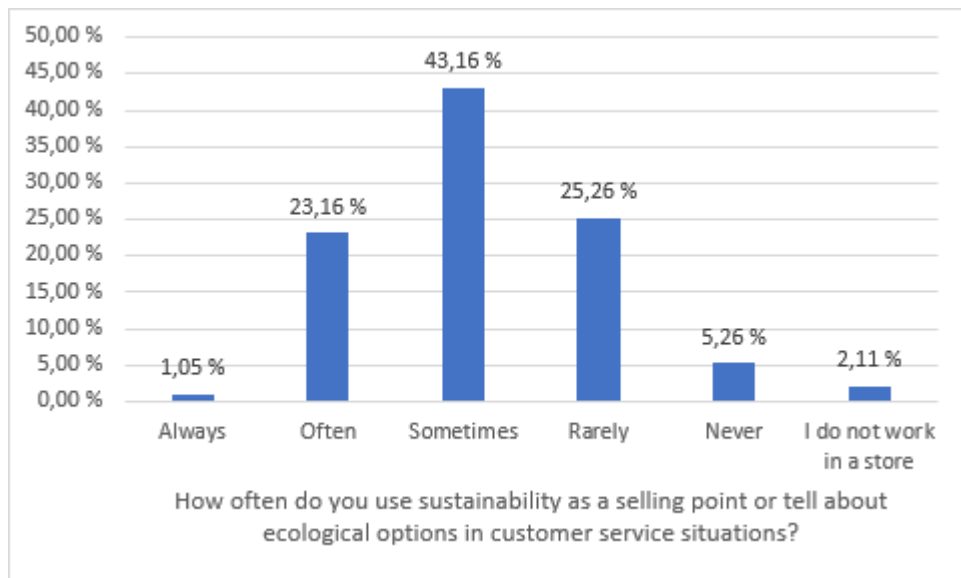


FIGURE 30. How often do you use sustainability as a selling point or tell about ecological options in customer service situations?

Third question asked how much sustainability is present in Clas Ohlson's internal communication and nearly half of the respondents answered that it is present somewhat little. 30 per cent were satisfied with the amount of discussion and replied "much" or "extremely much". 21 per cent answered little or not at all. It is possible that because the employees do not see sustainability in internal communication that much, they believe it is not important and do not talk about it to customers either.

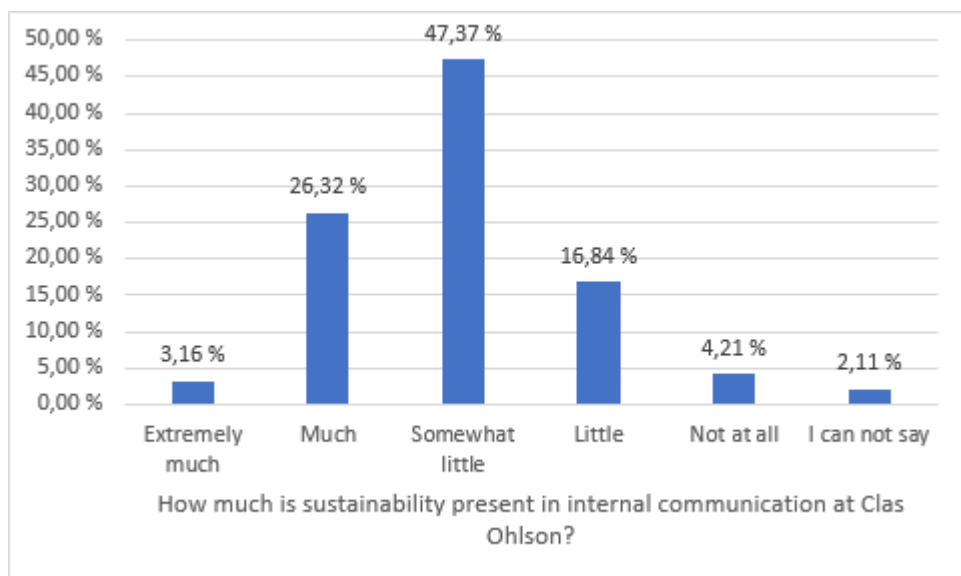


FIGURE 31. How much is sustainability present in internal communication at Clas Ohlson?

Fourth question asked how much sustainability is present in Clas Ohlson's external communication according to the employees. Nearly the same amount of people thought that it is present much and somewhat little, but because almost 10 per cent of the employees believed it is present little and 2 per cent that it is not present at all, it can be assumed that over half of the employees were not satisfied with the amount of external communication on sustainability.

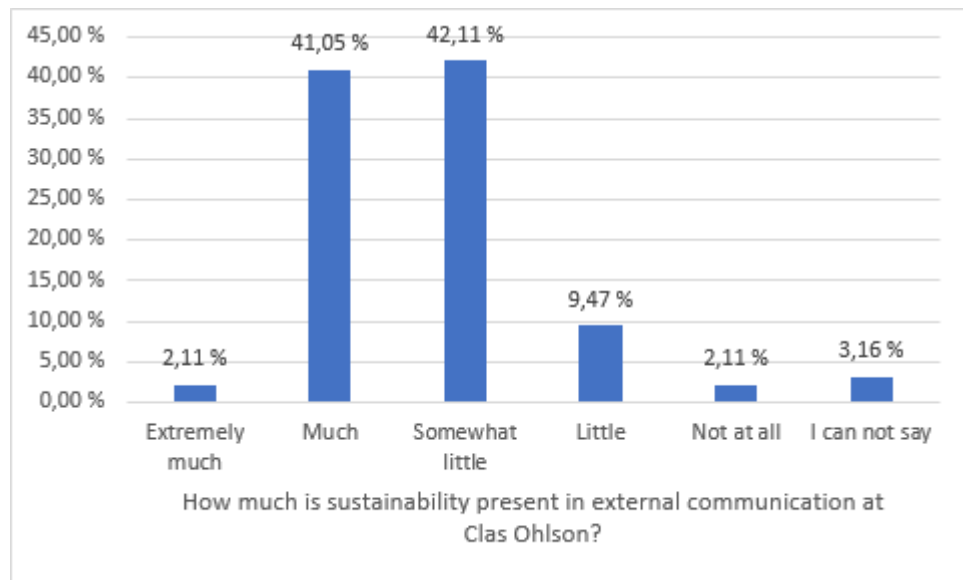


FIGURE 32. How much is sustainability present in external communication at Clas Ohlson?

Fifth question asked how much Clas Ohlson focuses on sustainability. Nearly 56 per cent of the respondents replied that they believe Clas Ohlson's actions are somewhat adequate and every third believed that Clas Ohlson focuses either extremely much or much. 5 per cent of the respondents believed that Clas Ohlson does little and also 5 per cent replied that Clas Ohlson does extremely little on sustainability. Only 1 per cent answered that Clas Ohlson does not focus at all on sustainability. Based on the answers, the employees of Clas Ohlson seem to believe that there is room for improvement when it comes to actions done by Clas Ohlson.

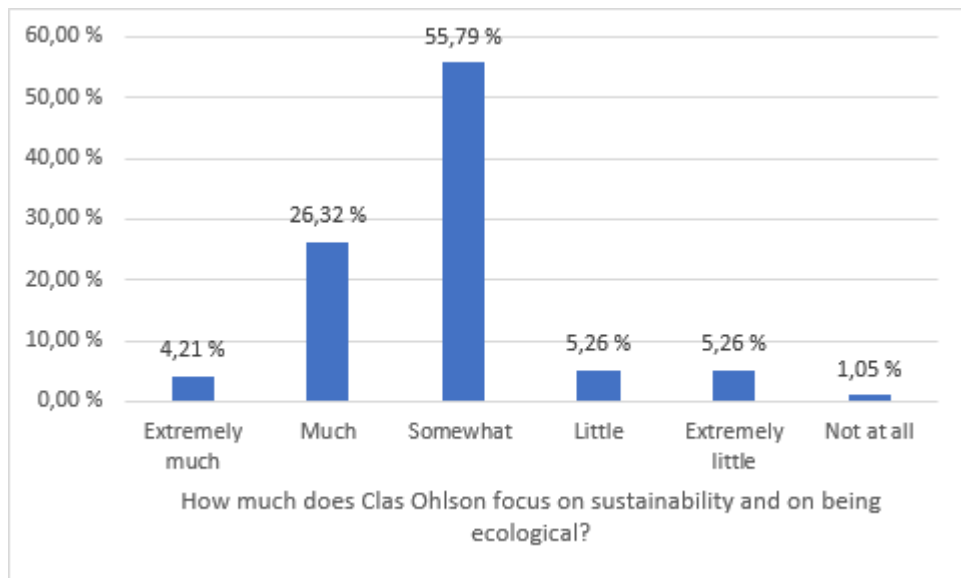


FIGURE 33. How much does Clas Ohlson focus on sustainability and on being ecological?

Sixth question was an optional open question, where employees were given the chance to discuss more about their opinions about Clas Ohlson's actions regarding sustainability. In total 28 employees answered and ten people mentioned that Clas Ohlson should be more active in communication, because at the moment they believe that customers do not know what kind of actions have been done and what products Clas Ohlson has. Six people were concerned about the amount of packaging material used in Clas Ohlson's products and one person was concerned about the quality of the products. One person suggested that staff should be educated more about Clas Ohlson's sustainability agenda and ecological products in order to be able to discuss about the topic with customers. There was also one respondent who reminded that there is already plenty of information at Clas Ohlson's website. Other answers were more or less irrelevant regarding the research topic: for example, there were comments which focused on the actions done by the staff which are not visible to the customers, meaning that they can not affect customers opinions. These answers on the other hand do give some explanation on the overall opinion the employees had, because they were focused for example on the level of recycling in staff areas, which some employees found inadequate.

4. DISCUSSION

There were two research questions for this thesis:

1. Do the Finnish customers of Clas Ohlson take environmental sustainability into account when making purchasing decisions?
2. What is the image Finnish customers have on Clas Ohlson regarding environmental sustainability?

When we compare the results of this study to the results of Sustainable Brand Index, it seems that the customers of Clas Ohlson are more interested in sustainability than Finnish people in general. For example, according to Sustainable Brand Index 26 per cent of Finnish people belong to category Smart, whereas the results of this study show that 44 per cent of Clas Ohlson's customers categorise them in somewhat same kind of group. Smart people according to Sustainable Brand Index want to make a difference with their everyday decisions and are willing to learn new things of sustainable lifestyle. According to Sustainable Brand Index, people who belong to category Ego do not care about sustainability that much and 24 per cent of Finnish people belong to this category. Based on the results of the thesis, only 5 per cent of Clas Ohlson's customers categorise themselves close to Ego.

Also based on the study, nearly 45 per cent buy ecological products at least on a weekly basis. Every third tries to find out always or often if a certain product is ecological and every fourth quite often. To emphasize the opinion, 56 per cent answered that it is extremely important or important and 33 per cent that it is quite important that companies they use promote sustainability, meaning that nearly 90 per cent consider it to be at least quite important. All in all there were differences between opinions of for example different age or gender, but still the study shows that Finnish customers of Clas Ohlson believe that environmental sustainability is important and it truly affects their purchasing decisions.

When thinking the second research question, the answer is also easy to give: customers have no clear image. To name few indicators, half of the respondents can not name any ecological products from Clas Ohlson's selection, 66 per cent

can not name any actions promoting sustainability made by Clas Ohlson, 46 per cent have not seen any advertisements promoting sustainability and only 23 per cent answered that "sustainable" is a suitable word to describe Clas Ohlson. Clas Ohlson's sustainability motto, "From here to sustainability", was recognised by only 9 per cent of the respondents.

When looking at the results of the study made for Clas Ohlson's employees, there seems to be a connection between the answers of the employees and the level of knowledge of the customers. Even though roughly 80 per cent of the employees answered that they know at least somewhat well Clas Ohlson's range of ecological products, only every fourth answered that they use sustainability as a selling point often or always. Almost every third use rarely or never. The employees have firsthand information of the actions Clas Ohlson has made in order to promote sustainability, but still 56 per cent believed that Clas Ohlson focuses somewhat much on sustainability and almost 12 per cent believe the level of actions is little, extremely little or non-existent. The remaining every third thought the amount of focus is much or extremely much. When thinking of Clas Ohlson's communication, over half of the respondents believe that sustainability is present in internal and external communication somewhat little or even less. It is safe to say that these results correlate with the opinions of the customers.

4.1 Suggestions for further development

As seen from the results, "for everyone", "affordable" and "offers smart solutions" are all mentioned in Clas Ohlson's mission, purpose and business concept. They were the three most-voted options when asked which descriptions fit Clas Ohlson, so there is a clear connection between what Clas Ohlson aims to be and how customers see the company. As also mentioned earlier, sustainability does not exist in these and the theme itself got third least votes, which indicates that even with set sustainability goals the image customers have on Clas Ohlson regarding sustainability is vague.

If Clas Ohlson wants to increase company's image on sustainability, the first step would be to consider implementing sustainability in mission, purpose and business concept. Although the results give insight only on the situation in Finland, it does not mean that changing for example mission would be

unnecessary. Because Clas Ohlson anyway aims to be sustainable, it would send a clear message to all stakeholders if for example Clas Ohlson's mission would be "To help and inspire people to improve their everyday life by offering smart, simple, practical, sustainable solutions at attractive prices." It would also be in line with the goal that 25 per cent of the sold products would be more sustainable by the fiscal year of 2020–21.

Even though Clas Ohlson does have cross functional sustainability goals they are somewhat distant when thinking everyday work at stores, at least based on the opinions of the employees. Clas Ohlson has for example concepts Ready for Live Broadcast and Sales Coach Programme which aim for the best possible customer experience and these concepts are present on a daily basis in stores and there are clear guidelines for them. If, as suggested above, sustainability would be implemented to mission, purpose and business concept and if there would be an own concept for employees' sustainability work, it would clearly show the importance of it to the employees and through them it would be visible to customers as well.

The second step would be to ensure that all employees know why sustainability and being ecological are important and what are Clas Ohlson's sustainability goals. It is crucial that Clas Ohlson's store employees can share the knowledge to customers, because store workers in Finland meet thousands of people every day. As seen from the results, customers have not received that much information from different media channels, but if an employee would suggest a product because of its sustainability features, most likely the customer would remember it. In order to succeed in this, more than current every fourth should use sustainability as a selling point regularly. As mentioned earlier, education of Clas Ohlson's employees is important. As seen from multiple different studies mentioned in this thesis as well as the results of this thesis, it is clear that customers are interested in sustainable products, thus it would be crucial that employees could answer for this demand.

Because half of the respondents did not know any sustainable products from Clas Ohlson's assortment, the third step would be to highlight sustainable products and actions even more both in stores and in online shop. For example, online shop Zalando allows its customers to filter products based on if they are sustainably produced or not. As mentioned earlier, almost half of the respondents buy

ecological products at least weekly, implying there is a strong interest towards such products. At the moment there is only a small link leading to sustainable products at the bottom of Clas Ohlson's webpage. The easiest way to highlight sustainable products in stores is to use "From here to sustainability" or "Sustainable solution" material. It would also be good if "From here to sustainability" or "Sustainable solution" would be automatically printed to price labels of sustainable products. This way store workers would not need to use extra material that much and it would still be clearly marked for customers. With the highlighting of sustainable products Clas Ohlson would also contribute largely to its target of 25 per cent out of all products sold to be more sustainable by the end of fiscal year 2020–21. One other solution would be to highlight different actions in social media. As earlier described, 72 per cent of Finnish people think that retail companies should reduce the number of plastic packages and Clas Ohlson has so far removed 800 000 unnecessary plastic packages from its products. This fact could be for example shared in Clas Ohlson's social media channels, because it clearly is something customers find interesting and important.

These fairly easy three steps would be a good start for improving the sustainability brand of Clas Ohlson. They would be in line with Clas Ohlson's overall targets and would aim to tackle some of the most critical aspects that the study shows. With the help of these steps it would also be possible to increase sales, because the results showed clearly the interest customers have towards sustainability and the willingness to pay more in order to get a sustainable product. As Our Common Future states "sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change" and every change begins with a small step.

4.2 Conclusions

This quantitative study examined how important environmental sustainability is to Finnish customers of Clas Ohlson and how the customers perceive Clas Ohlson's actions regarding environmental sustainability. The results of the study showed clearly that environmental sustainability is important to customers and that they expect companies like Clas Ohlson to do concrete actions. The results of this thesis were in line with other studies presented throughout the thesis, which all showed that people think it is important to act sustainably and that they expect also companies to do so.

However, vast majority of the respondents did not have a clear image of Clas Ohlson's actions and only little less than every fourth connected sustainability to Clas Ohlson. This thesis also aimed to give some suggestions on how to improve the sustainability image of Clas Ohlson. Together with the current ways of working it is possible to get the message through to customers easier and improve the overall image customers have on Clas Ohlson. As seen from the results and from other studies, customers are willing to pay more in order to get ecological products and that they expect to purchase such items even more in the future. This means that by focusing strongly on sustainability Clas Ohlson can do good for the environment and at the same time attract more customers to stores, which with the help of employees could be turned into financial growth.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ekologisuuden ja kestävän kehityksen merkitys Clas Ohlsonin asiakkaille

Arvoisa vastaaja,

olen Tuomas Nurminen ja suoritan YAMK-opintojani International Business Management -linjalla Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulussa. Tämä kysely liittyy opinnäytetyöhöni, jossa tutkin ekologisuuden ja kestävän kehityksen merkitystä Clas Ohlsonin asiakkaille. Kiitos, kun olet kiinnostunut vastaamaan kyselyyni.

Suomen Ympäristöministeriön määritelmä kestävästä kehityksestä:

“Kestävä kehitys on maailmanlaajuisesti, alueellisesti ja paikallisesti tapahtuvaa jatkuvaa ja ohjattua yhteiskunnallista muutosta, jonka päämääränä on turvata nykyisille ja tuleville sukupolville hyvät elämisen mahdollisuudet. Tämä tarkoittaa myös, että ympäristö, ihminen ja talous otetaan tasavertaisesti huomioon päätöksenteossa ja toiminnassa.

Kestävän kehityksen perusehtona on biologisen monimuotoisuuden ja ekosysteemien toimivuuden säilyttäminen sekä ihmisen taloudellisen ja aineellisen toiminnan sopeuttaminen pitkällä aikavälillä luonnon kestävytyyn. Kansallisten toimien lisäksi kansainvälinen yhteistyö on hyvin keskeisessä asemassa pyrittäessä ekologiseen kestävyteen.”

Yhdistyneet kansakunnat: Our Common Future, 1987:

“Kestävä kehitys on kehitystä, joka täyttää nykyhetken tarpeet viemättä tulevilta sukupolvilta mahdollisuutta täyttää omat tarpeensa.”

Vad är hållbar utveckling?

Finlands Miljöministeriet:

"Hållbar utveckling är en internationellt, regionalt och lokalt fortgående och styrd samhällig förändring som har som mål att trygga goda levnadsförhållanden för nuvarande och kommande generationer. Detta betyder att miljön, människan och

ekonomin jämlikt ska beaktas i beslutsfattande och all verksamhet. Det grundläggande kravet för hållbar utveckling är att bevara den biologiska mångfaldens och ekosystemens funktionalitet, samt i längden anpassa människans ekonomiska och materiella verksamhet till miljöns bärförmåga. Utöver nationella åtgärder är även internationellt samarbete avgörande i strävan för miljövänlig hållbarhet."

Förenta Nationerna: Our Common Future, 1987:

"En hållbar utveckling är en utveckling som tillfredsställer dagens behov utan att äventyra kommande generationers möjligheter att tillfredsställa sina behov."

1. Ikä

- a) Alle 18-vuotias / Under 18 år
- b) 18–29
- c) 30–39
- d) 40–49
- e) 50–59
- f) 60–69
- g) Yli 70-vuotias / Över 70 år

2. Sukupuoli / Kön

- a) Mies / Man
- b) Nainen / Kvinna
- c) Muu / Annat

3. Asuinpaikka

- a) Etelä-Suomi / Södra Finland
- b) Itä-Suomi / Östra Finland
- c) Keski-Suomi / Mellersta Finland
- d) Länsi-Suomi / Västra Finland
- e) Pohjois-Suomi / Norra Finland

4. Työtilanne (päätoiminen) / Arbetssituation (heltid)

- a) Eläkeläinen / Pensiönär
- b) Opiskelija / Studerande
- c) Palkkatyössä / Arbetstagare
- d) Työtön / Arbetslös
- e) Yrittäjä / Företagare

5. Arvio vuosittaisesta nettotulostasi (nettotulo=palkka, josta on vähennetty verot)

/ Uppskattad årlig inkomst (netto=lön efter avdragen skatt)

- a) Alle / under 18 999€
- b) 19 000–26 999€
- c) 27 000–36 999€
- d) 37 000–49 999€
- e) Yli / över 50 000€
- f) En halua vastata
- a)

7. Tiesitkö ilman kyselyn johdantoa, mitä kestävä kehitys tarkoittaa? / Visste du innan inledningen av detta frågeformulär, vad hållbar utveckling betyder?

- a) En / Nej
- b) Kyllä / Ja

8. Tiedätkö, miten yritykset voivat edistää ekologisuutta ja kestäväää kehitystä? / Vet du hur företagen kan främja miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling?

- a) En / Nej
- b) Kyllä / Ja

9. Mikä seuraavista kuvauksista on lähimpänä sinua? / Vilka av följande påståenden beskriver dig bäst?

- a) Ekologisuus ja kestävä kehitys eivät juurikaan kiinnosta minua. Teen ostopäätökset sen perusteella, mitä tarvitsen. Arvostan ostopäätöstä tehdessä käytännöllisyyttä ja ostopahtuman nopeutta. / Jag är inte speciellt intresserad av hållbar utveckling. Jag gör köpsbesluten enligt mina egna behov. Jag uppskattar funktionalitet och snabbhet i köpsituationen.
- b) Olen jonkin verran kiinnostunut ekologisuudesta ja kestävästä kehityksestä, mutta en aktiivisesti tee päätöksiä edistääkseni niitä. Tuotteen hinnalla on suuri merkitys ostopäätöstä tehdessäni, mutta arvostan myös laatua ja pitkää käyttöikää. / Jag är intresserad av hållbar utveckling i någon mån, men jag gör inte aktiva beslut för att främja den. Priset på produkten har stor betydelse för mitt köpsbeslut, men jag uppskattar även kvalitet och lång uthållighet.
- c) Keskustelen mielelläni muiden kanssa ekologisuudesta ja kestävästä kehityksestä ja haluan oppia niistä enemmän, sillä aihe on mielestäni mielenkiintoinen. Ostopäätöstä tehdessä ekologisuus ei kuitenkaan ole välttämättä ratkaisevin tekijä, vaan mietin usein esimerkiksi sitä, jos jokin

tuote on minulle itselleni parempi, esimerkiksi terveellisempi. / Jag diskuterar gärna miljövänlighet med andra och vill lära mig mera om det, för jag anser ämnet vara intressant. I mina köpsbeslut är miljövänlighet inte nödvändigtvis den avgörande faktorn, utan jag överväger ofta tillexempel om någon produkt skulle vara hälsosammare för mig.

- d) Ekologisuus ja kestävä kehitys ovat ainoat perusteet, kun teen ostopäätöstä. Tutustun siihen, millaisia toimenpiteitä yritykset tekevät edistääkseen kestävää kehitystä ja suosin niitä yrityksiä, jotka ovat aktiivisia. Keskustelen myös muiden samanmielisten ihmisten kanssa esimerkiksi ekologisuudesta. / Miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling är de enda kriterierna för mina inköpsval. Jag bekantar mig med hurdana åtgärder företagen vidtar för att främja hållbar utveckling och föredrar aktiva företag. Jag diskuterar med likasinnade personer om tillexempel miljövänlighet.

10. Kuinka usein ostat ekologisia tai ekologisuutta tukevia tuotteita (kysymys koskee kaikkia ostoksiasi, ei pelkästään Clas Ohlsonin tuotteita)? / Hur ofta köpt du produkter som är miljövänliga eller främjar miljövänlighet?

- a) Päivittäin / Dagligen
- b) Viikoittain / Varje vecka
- c) Kuukausittain / Varje månad
- d) Kerran kolmessa kuukaudessa / Ca en gång i tre månaden
- e) Kerran puolessa vuodessa / Ca en gång under ett halvt år
- f) Harvemmin / Mer sällan
- g) En osta kyseisiä tuotteita / Jag köper inte ifrågavarande produkter

11. Kuinka usein tuotetta ostaessasi selvität, onko tuote ekologinen tai ekologisuutta tukeva (esim. lukemalla tuoteselosteen tai selvittämällä alkuperän)? / Hur ofta tar du reda på i köpsituationen, om produkten är miljövänlig eller stöder miljövänlighet, genom att tillexempel läsa varudeklarationen eller utreda ursprunget?

- a) Aina / Alltid
- b) Usein / Ofta
- c) Melko usein / Ganska ofta
- d) Toisinaan / Ibland
- e) Harvoin / Sällan
- f) En koskaan / Aldrig

12. Kuinka paljon enemmän olisit valmis maksamaan, että saisit ekologisemman tuotteen ei-ekologisen sijaan? / Hur mycket mera är du villig att betala för att få en mera ekologisk produkt?

- a) Noin 100% alkuperäisestä hinnasta (esim. 10€:n tuote maksaisi 20€) / Ca 100% från originalpriset (t.ex. en 10€ produkt skulle kosta 20€)
- b) Noin 50% alkuperäisestä hinnasta (esim. 10€:n tuote maksaisi 15€) / Ca 50% från originalpriset (t.ex. en 10€ produkt skulle kosta 15€)
- c) Noin 25% alkuperäisestä hinnasta (esim. 10€:n tuote maksaisi 12,5€) / Ca 25% från originalpriset (t.ex. en 10€ produkt skulle kosta 12,5€)
- d) Noin 10% alkuperäisestä hinnasta (esim. 10€:n tuote maksaisi 11€) / Ca 10% om originalpriset (t.ex. en 10€ produkt skulle kosta 11€)
- e) Noin 5% alkuperäisestä hinnasta (esim. 10€:n tuote maksaisi 10,5€) / Ca 5% om originalpriset (t.ex. en 10€ produkt skulle kosta 10,5€)
- f) En yhtään / Inget

13. Koska viimeksi olet tehnyt tietoisin muutoksen omassa arjessasi, jolla olet pyrkinyt lisäämään ekologisuuutta (esim. kierrätyksen aloittaminen)? / När var sista gången du har medvetet gjort ändringar i din vardag, som ökar miljövänlighet (t.ex. börja källsortera)?

- a) Viikon sisällä / Inom den senaste veckan
- b) Kuukauden sisällä / Inom den senaste månaden
- c) Kolmen kuukauden sisällä / Inom den tre senaste månaden
- d) Puolen vuoden sisällä / Inom det senaste halvåret
- e) Vuoden sisällä / Inom det senaste året
- f) En ole tehnyt muutosta / Jag har inte gjort ändringar

14. Vapaaehtoinen kysymys: Mikä oli viimeisin muutoksesi? / Frivillig fråga: Vad var den senaste ändringen du gjorde?

15. Kuinka tärkeää sinulle on, että käyttämäsi yritykset panostavat ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen? / Hur viktigt är det för dig att företag du utrettar ärenden med, satsar på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling?

- a) Erittäin tärkeää / Väldigt viktigt
- b) Tärkeää / Viktigt
- c) Melko tärkeää / Ganska viktigt
- d) Ei kovinkaan tärkeää / Inte speciellt viktigt
- e) Ei lainkaan tärkeää / Inte alls viktigt

16. Jos taloudellinen tilanteesi heikkenisi merkittävästi, vähentäisitkö ekologisten tuotteiden ostamista? / Ifall din ekonomiska situation skulle märkbart försämrats, skulle det ha en negativ påverkan på ditt köpbeteende med tanke på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling?

- a) En / Nej
- b) En osaa sanoa / Jag vet inte
- c) Kyllä / Ja

17. Jos taloudellinen tilanteesi paranisi merkittävästi, lisääisitkö ekologisten tuotteiden ostamista? / Ifall din ekonomiska situation skulle märkvärdigt förbättras, skulle det ha en positiv påverkan på ditt köpbeteende med tanke på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling?

- a) En / Nej
- b) En osaa sanoa / Jag vet inte
- c) Kyllä / Ja

18. Kuinka usein asioit Clas Ohlsonilla (joko myymälässä tai verkkokaupassa)? / Hur ofta besöker du Clas Ohlson (butiken eller nätförsäljningen?)

- a) Päivittäin / Dagligen
- b) Viikoittain / Varje vecka
- c) Kuukausittain / Varje månad
- d) Kerran kolmessa kuukaudessa / Ca en gång i tre månaden
- e) Kerran puolessa vuodessa / Ca en gång under ett halvt år
- f) Harvemmin / Mer sällan
- g) En ole koskaan asioinut Clas Ohlsonilla / Jag har aldrig besökt Clas Ohlson

19. Kuulutko Club Clas -kanta-asiakasohjelmaan? / Är du stamkund hos Clas Ohlson?

- a) En / Nej
- b) En tiedä / Jag vet inte
- c) Kyllä / Ja

20. Kuinka monta ekologisemmin valmistettua tai ekologisuuutta tukevaa tuotetta tunnet Clas Ohlsonin valikoimasta? / Hur många produkter känner du från Clas Ohlsons urval som är miljövänligt producerade eller stöder miljövänlighet?

- a) 0
- b) 1–2
- c) 3–4

- d) 5–6
- e) 7–9
- f) 10–19
- g) 20–29
- h) Yli / över 30

21. Kuinka monta konkreettista Clas Ohlsonin tekemää ekologisuu­ta tukevaa tekoa tiedät? / Hur många konkreta miljövänliga åtgärder vet du att Clas Ohlson gjort?

- a) 0
- b) 1–2
- c) 3–4
- d) 5 tai enemmän / eller fler

22. Missä seuraavista kanavista olet nähnyt tai kuullut Clas Ohlsonin mainoksen tai julkaisun, jossa on tuotu esille ekologis­ia tuotteita, ekologisuu­ta tukevia tuotteita tai kestävä­ä kehitystä (voit valita niin monta kuin haluat)? / I vilka av följande kanaler har du sett eller hört en reklam eller en publikation av Clas Ohlson, som framhåvt miljövänliga produkter, produkter som stöder miljövänlighet eller produkter som stöder hållbar utveckling (du får välja så många alternativ du vill)?

- a) Facebook
- b) Instagram
- c) Kauppakeskusten äänentoisto tai infonäytöt / Köpcentrets ljudåtergivning eller infotavlor
- d) Mainoslehti / Reklamblad
- e) Myymäläviestintä (esim. myymälän katosta roikkuva kyltti) / En reklam i butiken (t. ex. en skylt som hänger i taket)
- f) Suoratoistopalvelun (esim. Ruutu) mainos / En reklam i streaming service (t. ex. Ruutu)
- g) Televisiomainos / TV-reklam
- h) En missään / I ingen av följande

23. Oletko joskus valinnut Clas Ohlsonin ostopaikaksi siksi, että tiesit saavasi sieltä jonkin ekologisesti valmistetun tai ekologisuu­ta tukevan tuotteen? / Har du någon gång valt att köpa från Clas Ohlson för att du vet att du kan få en produkt som är miljövänligt producerad eller stöder miljövänlighet?

- a) En / Nej

b) Kyllä / Ja

24. Oletko ostanut ekologisesti valmistettuja tai ekologisuuatta tukevia tuotteita Clas Ohlsonilta? / Har du köpt produkter som är miljövänligt producerade eller stöder miljövänlighet från Clas Ohlson?

a) En / Nej

b) En tiedä / Jag vet inte

c) Kyllä / Ja

25. Mikä seuraavista väitteistä kuvaa mielestäsi parhaiten Clas Ohlsonia? / Vilka av följande påståenden beskriver Clas Ohlson bäst?

a) Clas Ohlson panostaa erittäin paljon ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen / Clas Ohlson satsar väldigt mycket på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling

b) Clas Ohlson panostaa paljon ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen / Clas Ohlson satsar på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling

c) Clas Ohlson panostaa jonkin verran ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen / Clas Ohlson satsar ganska mycket på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling

d) Clas Ohlson panostaa vähän ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen / Clas Ohlson satsar lite på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling

e) Clas Ohlson panostaa erittäin vähän ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen / Clas Ohlson satsar väldigt lite på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling

f) Clas Ohlson ei panosta ollenkaan ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen / Clas Ohlson satsar inte alls på miljövänlighet och och hållbar utveckling

g) En osaa sanoa / Jag vet inte

26. Vapaavalintainen kysymys: Jos Clas Ohlson ei mielestäsi panosta ekologisuuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen riittävästi, mitä Clas Ohlsonin pitäisi tehdä toisella tavalla? / Frivillig fråga: Om du tänker att Clas Ohlson satsar inte tillräcklig på miljövänlighet och hållbar utveckling, vad skulle Clas Ohlson göra mer?

27. Mikä seuraavista on Clas Ohlsonin kestäväää kehitystä kuvaava motto? Huomioithan, että sinun on myös mahdollista vastata "en tiedä". / Vilket av följande är slogan för Clas Ohlsons hållbara utveckling? Observera, att du också kan svara "jag vet inte".

- a) Kohti kestäväää kehitystä / Härifrån till hållbarheten
- b) Teemme Suomesta parempaa paikkaa elää / Vi ska göra Finland till en bättre plats att bo på
- c) Vastuullisuus on arkipäivää / Hållbarhet är en naturlig del av dagen
- d) Yhdessä voimme luoda kestävämmän tulevaisuuden / Tillsammans kan vi skapa en mer hållbar framtid
- e) Mikään edellä mainituista ei ole Clas Ohlsonin motto / Inget av ovanstående är Clas Ohlsons motto
- f) En tiedä / Jag vet inte

28. Jos vertaat muihin saman alan yrityksiin, Clas Ohlson tekee ekologisuuden ja kestävään kehityksen eteen töitä / Om du jämför med andra företag inom samma branch, jobbar Clas Ohlson för ekologi och hållbar utveckling

- a) Selvästi enemmän / Betydligt mera
- b) Enemmän / Mera
- c) Saman verran / Lika mycket
- d) Vähemmän / Mindre
- e) Selvästi vähemmän / Betydligt mindre
- f) En osaa verrata / Jag kan inte jämföra

29. Vapaavalintainen kysymys: Jos Clas Ohlson tekee mielestäsi vähemmän töitä ekologisuuden ja kestävään kehityksen eteen verrattuna muihin saman alan yrityksiin, mitä Clas Ohlsonin pitäisi tehdä toisella tavalla? / Frivillig fråga: Om du tänker att Clas Ohlson jobbar mindre för ekologi och hållbar utveckling än andra företagen, vad skulle Clas Ohlson göra mer?

30. Minkä tai mitkä seuraavista määritelmistä yhdistät Clas Ohlsoniin (voit valita niin monta kuin haluat)? / Vilka av följande påståenden passar Clas Ohlson (du får välja så många alternativ du vill)?

- a) Sopii kaikille / Passar alla
- b) Tarjoaa fiksuja ratkaisuja / Erbjuder smarta lösningar
- c) Moderni ja ajan tasalla / Modern
- d) Välittää kodin arjen sujuvoittamisesta / Bryr sig om att göra vardagen enklare
- e) Edistää kestäväää kehitystä / Uppmuntrar till hållbar utveckling
- f) Asiointi on sujuvaa / Flytande besök
- g) Luotettava / Pålitlig
- h) Edullinen hintataso / Förmånlig

- i) Tuotteet ovat laadukkaita / Erbjuder produkter med hög kvalitet
- j) Löydän todennäköisesti etsimäni / Jag hittar sannolikt det jag behöver
- k) Henkilökunta on asiantuntevaa / Kunnig personal
- l) Mikään mainituista ei sovi Clas Ohlsoniin / Ingen av följande påståenden passar Clas Ohlson

31. Vapaavalintainen kysymys: Haluatko tarkentaa yhtä tai useampaa vastaustasi tai kommentoida aihetta enemmän? / Frivillig fråga: Vill du säga något mer om ekologi, hållbar utveckling eller Clas Ohlson?

32. Jos haluat osallistua arvontaan, voit jättää sähköpostiosoitteesi alle. Yhteystietoja ei luovuteta eteenpäin, niitä ei yhdistetä vastauksiin eikä niitä käytetä muihin tarkoituksiin kuin mahdolliseen yhteydenottoon arvontaa koskien. / Om du vill delta i lotteriet, var så god och fylla din e-postaddress nedan. Kontaktinformation kommer inte att ges till tredje parter och de kommer inte att vara anslutna till svarar.

Appendix 2. Kysely Clas Ohlsonin henkilökunnalle

1. Kuinka hyvin tunnet Clas Ohlsonin ekologisten tai ekologisuuksia tukevien tuotteiden valikoiman?

- a) Tunnen erittäin hyvin
- b) Tunnen hyvin
- c) Tunnen melko hyvin
- d) Tunnen melko vähän
- e) Tunnen vähän
- f) En tunne ollenkaan

2. Kuinka usein käytät ekologisuuksia myyntivalttina asiakaspalvelutilanteissa, kun siihen on mahdollisuus? Esim. "tämä tuote on valmistettu ympäristöystävällisestä materiaalista" tai "tämän tuotteen avulla pystyt helposti sammuttamaan sähkölaitteet silloin, kun et tarvitse niitä".

- a) Aina
- b) Usein
- c) Toisinaan
- d) Harvoin
- e) En koskaan
- f) En työskentele myymälässä

3. Kuinka paljon ekologisuuksia ja kestävä kehitys mielestäsi näkyvät Clas Ohlsonin sisäisessä viestinnässä?

- a) Todella paljon
- b) Paljon
- c) Melko vähän
- d) Vähän
- e) Ei ollenkaan
- f) En osaa sanoa

4. Kuinka paljon ekologisuuksia ja kestävä kehitys mielestäsi näkyvät Clas Ohlsonin ulkoisessa viestinnässä?

- a) Todella paljon
- b) Paljon
- c) Melko vähän
- d) Vähän
- e) Ei ollenkaan

f) En osaa sanoa

5. Kuinka paljon Clas Ohlson mielestäsi panostaa ekologisuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen?

a) Erittäin paljon

b) Paljon

c) Jonkin verran

d) Vähän

e) Erittäin vähän

f) Ei ollenkaan

g) En osaa sanoa

6. Vapaavalintainen kysymys: Onko sinulla kommentteja liittyen Clas Ohlsoniin, ekologisuuteen ja kestävään kehitykseen?

