

# AUTHENTICITY

Coping With The Financial Crisis



RESEARCH REPORT (THESIS)

# **AUTHENTICITY: COPING WITH THE FINANCIAL CRISIS**

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# **Preface**

To conclude my four year course in *Communication Management* at the University of Applied Science Utrecht, I have written and designed this research report which will be a support to (beginning) designers in this time of recession.

Throughout my time at the University of Applied Science Utrecht and the Amsterdam Fashion Institutes I have acquired a lot of knowledge and skills in a broad variety of subjects. This graduation project is a reflection of all the skills and knowledge I have obtained and focusses particular on the areas that I consider useful and interesting. With my final project, I wish to inspire as well as support (beginning) designers throughout the recession. I hope with this product to provide the necessary information for them in the form of analysis and argumentation.

Conduction research on the topic of trend-watching as well as the fashion industry has been an interesting journey. Jumping into the unfamiliar has been certainly a challenging but even more a satisfying process. I believe that the knowledge I have obtained in this last couple of months has given me the opportunity to write a comprehensively and accurately thesis that will add value to the fashion industry.

Concluding, I would like to thank my mentor Ronald Voorn for guiding me throughout this process of writing my thesis. Tjitske Storm, Joanna Watson, Brigitte Schriks, Meta Stuycken, Fanny Faber, and Jeroen Winnubst for answering my questions regarding, trends, the recession and the fashion industry. Finally, I would like to my mum, dad, sister, boyfriend and my best friend Yemanja Gottges for being there when I needed them the most.



## **Executive Summary**

The history has shown that the economy has impeccable impact on the fashion industry and despite it is not visible to everyone, the current impact of the recession on the fashion industry is clearly present. Clothes with disposable prices are losing their appeal with uncertain incomes. The consumer embraces authentic products and neglects fake and artificial ones. They notice an inconsistency between the actual and the desired pleasure when it comes down to consuming a product. They consume in order to get fulfilled; however, this quest never seems to end. This results in a disappointment in the shallowness in the material culture and the deceitful commercial world makes consumers have a desire for authenticity which is so strong that 'authenticity' has become part of our selection criteria. The success of different companies that managed to incorporate authenticity in their branding, provide evidence that companies who translate authenticity into their brand concept, can be successful even in times of the recession.

Therefore, based on literature review, interviews with professionals and the questionnaire, this report shows how (beginning) fashion designers can translate authenticity into their concept. There are many ways to make a brand authentic, in order to meet these new consumers' demands. Firstly, it is important to integrate the several characteristics that are able to make a product to be perceived as being authentic. These characteristics are: the originality, quality commitment & credibility, heritage & style persistence, scarceness, sacredness, and purity. Secondly, despite the fact that the product will benefit from being authentic, in order to increase success, it is also important that it is clear where the product comes from. Therefore, for a fashion brand, it is important to be as transparent as possible. Finally, not only is it important to tell the story but it is equally important the way the story is told. The younger generations have become market savvy and is not easily convinced by the message spread by the sender. One way to make to increase the level of trustworthiness is by the use of non-idealized images. The overlap with reality as a result of using non-idealized models, will increase the trustworthiness of the brand, which will in turn increase the eventual purchase intention.





# **Table of Content**

<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Subject</b>	14
<b>Motive</b>	14
<b>Problem Definition</b>	15
<b>Sub Questions</b>	16
<b>Structure</b>	17
<b>Research Methodology</b>	17
<b>Stated Objective / Aim</b>	17
<b><u>The Professionals</u></b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Meta Struycken</b>	18
<b>Brigitte Schriks</b>	18
<b>Fenny Faber</b>	18
<b>Joanna Watson</b>	19
<b>Tjitske Storm</b>	19
<b>Jeroen Winnubst</b>	19
<b><u>Authenticity and the Fashion Industry: A Review</u></b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Levels in Fashion</b>	21
Haute Couture	21
<i>The Importance of Haute Couture</i>	22
Ready to wear	22
<i>Sizing system</i>	25
<b>Size Zero</b>	26
<b>Change in Demand</b>	31
What is an Authentic Product	39
<i>The Originality</i>	39
<i>Quality Commitment and Credibility</i>	40
<i>Heritage and Style Persistence</i>	40

<i>Scarceness</i>	40
<i>Sacredness</i>	43
<i>Purity</i>	43
Authenticities Influence	43
<i>Authenticity and Advertising</i>	43
<i>Authenticity in Design</i>	46
<b><u>Methodology</u></b>	<b>49</b>
Research Methodology, Sample and Data Collection	49
Instrumentation	50
<b><u>Results</u></b>	<b>52</b>
Hypothesis One: The impact of the consumption on the planet, has caused a stronger desire to consumer responsible Basic, Local and	52
Hypothesis Two: Consumers increasingly choose small local brands over big and global brands, and quality over quantity	53
Hypothesis Three: High statement pieces are losing grounds to more conservative, versatile, basic pieces that can be bled	53
Hypothesis Four: Consumer are more allured to purchase a product when there is a good story behind it	53
Hypothesis Five: People with a high level of self-esteem, will give preference to idealized images, whereas people with a low level of self-esteem, will prefer the non-idealized images.	53
Hypothesis Six: The consumer has an increased preference for simplified designs.	55
<b><u>Conclusions</u></b>	<b>58</b>
What is the fashion industry, and what role does authenticity plays within the industry?	58
How did societal developments have influenced the fashion industry in the past and how do they influence the todays fashion industry?	61

Is there actually a desire for authenticity? And if so, what is the origin of this need?	62
Did the influence of authenticity on the fashion industry has also influenced other (related) industries? And if so, what are their results?	64
What is the added value of authenticity branding for fashion brands in the current recession?	65
<b><u>Recommendations</u></b>	<b>66</b>
<b><u>Reference List</u></b>	<b>70</b>
<b><u>Appendix A An Interview with T. Storm</u></b>	<b>80</b>
<b><u>Appendix B An interview zith B. Schriks</u></b>	<b>84</b>
<b><u>Appendix C An Interview with M. Struycken</u></b>	<b>86</b>
<b><u>Appendix D An Interview with J. Winnubst</u></b>	<b>90</b>
<b><u>Appendix E An Interview with J. Watson</u></b>	<b>92</b>
<b><u>Appendix F An Interview with F. Faber</u></b>	<b>96</b>
<b><u>Appendix G Questionnaire</u></b>	<b>102</b>
<b><u>Appendix H Tables and Graphs</u></b>	<b>112</b>
<b><u>Appendix I List of Figures</u></b>	<b>119</b>





Figure 1 *Beauty*

# Introduction

## **Subject**

The great recession of 2009 forced world economies and societies to change. The house market collapsed and until today unemployment rates are still rising (Tissen, 2014). The great recession has changed the individuals' attitudes on the role of financial certainty in society; the economy was not that stable and reliable after all. Therefore, the overall concept of financial certainty changed. In this paper the main focus relies on the way the change of attitude towards the financial uncertainty has influenced the fashion industry and what factors contribute to this consequence. For example; one of the first consequences that the recession had on the fashion industry (FI) was that consumers spent less on clothing (Vosser, 2013). This research paper examines how fashion brands (FB) can still be desired in times of recession and what factors contribute to their success. One factor that has been identified as contributory to a successful surviving of a fashion brand is authenticity. Therefore, this research paper examines the role of authenticity in a fashion brands' desire to be successful in times of recession.

## **Motive**

Starting your own business in times of recession comes along with greater risks than in times of economic prosperity. Financial resources are scarce and the pressure to succeed is high. Therefore it is desirable to fulfil in the consumers' needs as much as possible to increase the chance of success. Since the beginning of the recession, consumers have become more critical towards certain brands (Passikoff, 2013). Consumers have higher expectations; they expect the brands to be more open, honest and reliable. According to Edelman (2013) the majority of the consumers want the marketers to be more effective in exposing their brands. Nine out of ten consumers want complete openness about the product performance, this includes: how the product is made and the factors that make the product stand out in comparison to its opponents. Yet, only 10 percent of the brands have fulfilled these consumers' needs by sharing this kind of information. Furthermore, the fact is that a broad variety of information is easy accessible for the large majority of people because of technological developments, such as the Internet. This contributes to the pressure for brands to be as open about their product as possible. The product itself has to be the center of attention and its origin should be as

transparent as possible (Kolster, 2013). Consumers' demands of purity and transparency have evolved into a desire for authenticity.

This research paper will investigate the implications for the fashion industry of these 'new consumers' demands. As mentioned before, the recession has had implications for the fashion industry as well. Consumers do not spend as much money as they used to and they also tend to spend less. This makes it very difficult for fashion designers to sell their brands, especially because they have to compete with multinational fashion houses like H&M and ZARA who are able to sell their product for a much lower price due to mass production. Fashion designers are not able to (do not desire to) compete in the mass production. Therefore, in order to be successful it is important for FD to make sure that their product contains elements, that can distinguish them from the multinational fashion houses which makes consumers' demand increase. Authenticity can be the factor that can distinguish the product and therefore this paper will examine the benefits of authenticity for fashion designers, in order for them to be successful during the recession. Authenticity can be present in a variety of aspects of the fashion brand. For example, starting with the models that are being used in the campaigns. Fashion designers could distinguish themselves by not following current trends; using models that are at least 1,75 m. with a weight of 23% less than the average woman (Cooker Ross, 2012). Fashion designers can introduce women with different proportions and by doing so, they will also present something new to the consumer.

### **Problem Definition**

The great recession of 2009 forced the fashion industry to change. The recession changed the consumers' needs and therefore, it required the fashion industry to adapt to new circumstances. Due to the feelings of uncertainty consumers became more demanding, in order to attain a sense of control to reduce those feelings of uncertainty. Openness, honesty and reliability are aspects of these new demands. Authenticity is identified as a factor that can meet those demands and contribute to their success. Therefore, this paper will research the following question:

What is the added value of **authenticity**  
branding for fashion brands in the current **recession**?

## Sub Questions

In order to answer the research question: *what the added value of authenticity is for fashion brands in order to succeed in times of recession?* This research paper will be divided into several sub questions.

To identify the value of authenticity: firstly, it is important to get an understanding of the fashion industry itself and the role of authenticity in the fashion industry. Therefore the first section examines (1) *'What is the fashion industry, and what role does authenticity plays within the industry?'* to illustrate how change in the fashion industry occurs, historical social developmental influences will be examined, as well as current social development factors that influence today's fashion industry. The second question that will be examined is (2) *'How did societal developments have influenced the fashion industry in the past, and how do they influence the today's fashion industry?'*. After obtaining a better understanding of the role of authenticity in the fashion industry, it is important to examine whether there is actually a desire for authenticity among the current consumers. Therefore, the next section will examine (3) *'Is there actually a desire for authenticity?'*. And if so, (4) *'What is the origin of this need for authenticity?'* In the last section the research findings will be placed into a broader perspective to examine whether these implications for the fashion industry will also affect other (related) industries. Therefore, the next question that will be examined is (5) *'Did the influence of authenticity on the fashion industry, has also influenced other (related) industries?'*. To conclude this research review, practical examples will be further researched to examine the practical consequences of this change. Finally, the last research question will examine (6) *'Which companies are already incorporating authenticity in their concept, and what are their results?'*.

(1) *'What is the fashion industry, and what role does authenticity plays within the industry?'*

(2) *'How did societal developments have influenced the fashion industry in the past, and how do they influence the today's fashion industry?'*

(3) *'Is there actually a desire for authenticity?'* And if so,

(4) *'What is the origin of this need for authenticity?'*

(5) *'Did the influence of authenticity on the fashion industry, has also influenced other (related) industries?'*

(6) *'Which companies are already incorporating authenticity in their concept, and what are their results?'*



## **Structure**

After the introduction that has just been presented, this research paper continues with a short description of the experts that have been interviewed to contribute their knowledge on the topic. The next section will present the review based on the literature as well as on knowledge gained from the interviews with experts. This section will examine the sub questions as stated above. At the end of this section, based on the gained knowledge, several hypotheses will be formulated. In the following section, these hypotheses will be tested and the results will be presented. Finally, the results will be discussed and the research findings will be formulated in to the final recommendation.

## **Research Methodology**

To research the main question of this paper, knowledge from several resources has been obtained. At first, research literature was collected to gain as much as possible knowledge with regards to the topic based on empirical research. However, since this research topic is quite recent, especially with regards to the *current* impact of the recession on the FI, it has been a challenge to find all the information necessary in order to answer the research question. Therefore, it has been decided to supplement the research literature with interviews to expand the available knowledge. Present among the professionals who were interviewed were (fashion) trend watchers, fashion marketers and (fashion) designers. In the interviews the professionals' opinion towards different matters with regards to (a part of) the research question that had to be supplemented or confirmed was questioned. The complete interviews can be found in the appendices at the end of this thesis. Based on the research literature as well as on the knowledge gained from the interviews several hypotheses were formulated and tested. The hypotheses were tested with a questionnaire among 140 random selected participants. The methodology, data collection and method of analysing of this questionnaire are specified in chapter eight.

## **The Stated Objective / Aim**

The aim of this research paper is to provide insights in the factors that contribute to the success of a FB during economic recession. It is meant to help FD develop a communication strategy that will help them to make their brand successful. Hopefully, this research paper will give small and starting FB the courage not to hold back on their dreams.

## The Professionals

As described in the previous section, in order to complete the literature review, the decision was made to supplement the literature research with the different opinions of professionals. To show the relevance of these different professionals, in the next section a short description of all of them individually will be presented. The complete interviews are available in the appendices.

### **Meta Struycken**

Meta Struycken is creative director and founder of Style Indicator. Style Indicator is a web magazine, which is not focussed on the commercial path, fashionistas, celebrities cultures and superficial blogger but focusses on information about craftsmanship, vision, trends and creativity. With her experience as fashion designer, trend watcher and publisher, Struycken manages to make a good translation for the fashion industry with her magazine.

### **Brigitte Schriks**

Brigitte Schriks started as a visual merchandiser for different brands. These brands include Nike and Kamp Design. Later on she became a retail manager for O'Neil Europe. Nowadays she applies the experience she gained in those years as teacher for fashion students. She teaches mostly about retail concepts and branding, but also visual merchandising.

### **Fenny Faber**

Fenny Faber graduated in 2007 from the Utrecht's School of the Arts in Fashion Design. During the recession she rolled into the fashion industry and started her own label named after herself Fenny Faber. Her collection is characterised by minimalism, simplicity and the use of geometrical shapes which seamlessly fit with the desire for authenticity.

### **Joanna Watson**

Joanna Watson graduated in Marketing Fashion (London). Right after her studies she became assistant buyer for Grand Eagle. This company was specialised in all sorts of luxury products. Later on she became brand manager of Levi's. After Levi's she started to work for Nike as merchandiser and eventually moved to Amsterdam to work for a trend watching company. Now a days Joanna works as teacher at the Amsterdam Fashion Institute where she gives courses in branding.

### **Tjitske Storm**

Tjiske Storm, graduated as Fashion Designer in 2007, started to work as trend watcher at a trend forecasting magazine called WeAr. This was when she discovered her love for trend forecasting. Nowadays, she works a freelancer where she combines the two (designing and forecasting). The essence of her work includes trend research, product design, fashion branding, fashion journalism, concept developments and street photography.

### **Jeroen Winnubst**

Jeroen Winnubst worked as a stylist from 1980 to 2002. Thereafter he became stylist for mens fashion, where the focussed was kept on trend research, colour cards and making forecast readings for international customers and journals such as Textilia. At this moment he teaches at the Amsterdam Fashion Institute (AMFI) where he gives courses in building collections, trend research and developing concepts.



Figure 2 *Chanel Haute Couture*

# Authenticity and The Fashion Industry: A Review

## **Levels in Fashion**

This section will offer information about what the fashion industry consists of, to illustrate what the FI is and what it involves. The different levels within the fashion industry, are in fact the different levels of how the product is manufactured (Waddell, 2004). There are three different types of manufacture (Waddell, 2004). Firstly, haute couture is the highest level of manufacture, meaning that it is the type of manufacture that costs the most time and effort. Skilled labour is required and because the manufacture costs a lot of time, effort and money, the number of same items that is being produced is 20 at the most (Waddell, 2004). Secondly, ready-to-wear also known as prêt-à-porter, consists of high-end garments. The production process of high-end garments is more simplified and therefore the numbers of items being manufactured can go up to hundreds or even thousands (Waddell, 2004). Finally, the lowest level of manufacture is mass-production. Mass-production items are produced against the lowest possible price and therefore this kind of manufacture is the most industrialised one. The numbers of items being manufactured can go up to millions (Waddell, 2004). Due to the mass-production and industrialisation, the mass-production items can be sold for a much lower price. Because of the limited difference between the ready-to-wear and mass-production, this thesis will only discuss the haute couture and ready-to-wear. In the next section both will be further outlined.

## **Haute Couture**

The literal definition of Haute Couture is 'high sewing', which in its terms stands for high fashion. The word 'couture' signifies dressmaking, sewing, or needlework and 'Haute' refers to high or elegant. However, haute couture is much more than high sewing (Waddell, 2004). All the garments are made-to-measure by hand for the model, which makes all the pieces unique, carefully interlined, stay taped and fitted to perfection (Core, 2013; Thomas, n.d.). This also means that the buying process is very different from the other levels of fashion. For example, it is not possible to go to the store and try an item on to see how the size, color and shape fit. The client will not actually know what the piece will look like until it is finished (Waddell, 2004).

Haute couture has the longest history of all three levels of fashion and it derived in

the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Waddell, 2004). For the high-class Parisians it was a necessity to wear these kinds of garments because it was the ultimate form of power dressing. It was what set them apart from the rest. Furthermore, they would have been sure that no other lady would turn up in the same dress(Core, 2013).

Anything that is made by hand is more expensive than ready-to-wear pieces, but for haute couture it is a whole other level (Core, 2013). Since the pieces of haute Couture are hand-made and unique, the amount that has to be paid for these dresses is rather high. The prices can range from 12.000 euro for a simple blouse to 50.000 euros and often beyond that figure. The high prices are due to all the service, workmanship, and originality of a unique design and superb materials of the finest quality (Thomas, n.d.). One dress has an average of 700 hours of labour put into it with no less than twenty people working on that piece of clothing (Core, 2013). However, despite the high prices, haute couture is not very profitable. Most of the times the fashion houses even loose money due to haute couture. This is mainly because of the colossal expenses and the small-scale clientele (which is estimated around 2.000 worldwide) (Core, 2013). This could explain the large decrease of haute couture fashion houses in the past sixty years. Only eleven Parisian couture houses are registered to the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture*, an association which decides whether a brand can carry the name haute couture (Langley, 2010).

**The Importance of Haute Couture.** Despite the high costs and low profitability, haute couture is seen as a long-term investment, augmenting brand image and raising the profile of prêt-a-porter (Core, 2013; Tungate, 2004). Furthermore, as in many other businesses, in order to survive it is important to innovate. Without new ideas, industries like fashion will soon shrink and die. Therefore, haute couture is necessary for creating new and original ideas in their experimental nature (Tungate, 2004; Waddell, 2004).

## **Ready-to-Wear**

Ready-to-wear (RTW), also known as ready-made, prêt-a-porter or off-the-rack, is clothing that is mass-produced. Ready-to-wear is relatively new, since most of its growth was in the nineteenth an twentieth century. Before this century ready-to-wear was seen as sloppy and was only worn by the lower class, such as soldiers, sailors and slaves. After the 1850s the general public started to accept ready-to-wear clothing due to social and economic change. The main reason for this change was that the middle class grew





Figure 3 Chanel RTW FW1415



Figure 4 *The Catwalk*





enormously due to the industrialisation. Because of the expansion of the middle class, the demand for ready-to-wear garments increased. The middle class wanted to show their middle class status, but they could not afford couture items. Secondly, because of the increased demand for ready-to-wear items, tailors started to create off-the-rack clothing in their spare time to meet the raising demands. Also, the Civil War created a demand for ready-to-wear uniforms. Because of the large amount of items that had to be produced soldiers were measured and this resulted in a sizing system which made it possible to manufacture mass-production. Finally, as a consequence of the sizing system, tailoring methods were simplified to enable a lower price for the garments. The newly evolved sizing system as well as the newly evolved simplified production methods made it possible to make ready-to-wear clothing for the general public (Brown & Rice, 2001).

**Sizing System in RTW.** The biggest difference between haute couture and RTW is that the RTW garments are produced in standard sizes to fit people whose exact body measures are not known. The aim with standard sizes is to produce clothing that fits as many people as possible. Each RTW style is produced in a range of sizes, also known as the sizing system. The number of sizes available can differ from 'one size fits all' to the maximal sizing system of 'made-to-measure' (Borregaard, 2010).

The size and fit system created by the ready-to-wear industry made it possible to create clothing that could be worn by a large majority of individuals. Furthermore, intended or not, the size and fit system made another statement: how the body is supposed to look like. The sizing system as a whole is closely related to the cultural understanding of the (ideal) body. For females in particular the ideal body is related to body size: the more petit the better. At least that is the image the fashion industry presents by using mostly extreme petit models for their fashion shows and campaigns. A consequence of this image of the ideal body presented by the fashion industry is that woman with small sizes are more likely to feel positive about themselves, whereas woman with a larger size are less likely to feel positive about themselves because their larger size is less socially acceptable. Thus, the sizes and fits created by ready-to-wear clothing companies construct what acceptable and desirable body dimensions are (Borregaard, 2010). This results in clothing available for plus-size women, usually defined as size 44 and up, representing only 9% of the 190\$ million spend on clothing. The problem is not that the plus-size women are not interested in wearing fashionable clothing, it seems that there is no interest coming from the fashion

industry. Most people believe that these large sized women rather stay in the background and have no need to stand out (Associated Press, 2013). This was the case decades ago, when avoiding scrutiny was more important than following the latest fashion trends. However, the definition of beauty has changed due to role models, such as public figures actors and actresses, in various shapes and sizes (Kaplan, 2013).

Some companies, such as H&M and ASOS, recognise that money can be made in developing plus-size clothing and are offering a plus-size category (Berwin, 2010; March, 2011). Nonetheless, there are many companies that continue to offer exclusively small sizes. Take for example the brand Abercrombie and Fitch for example, refuses to offer plus-size garments because they claim that it can influence their cool, young and sexy image. According to Abercrombie and Fitch, their target group is the attractive American kid with a great attitude and lots of friends (Lutz, 2013). Most people do not belong in this category, so neither in their clothes. However, the question is if this will work in the future, since 67% of the consumers are plus-size shoppers. Besides Abercrombie and Fitch most other high-end brands are purposely keeping their sizes low and their prices high to exclude the substantial part of the consumer (Javis, 2013).

### **Size Zero**

Twice a year, the whole fashion industry comes together for Fashion Week. Brands and designers show their new collections on the catwalk in a tight choreography of parading models, loud music, and give small gifts to the most important people present (Tungate, 2008). The size of the models that are used in the fashion shows and in magazines is continuously discussed within as well as outside the fashion industry. Different opinions on this topic exist. Critics claim that the models are far too young and skinny. However, year after year designers choose these tin and tall models because that is the way that they want to see their clothes being worn. According to advocates of the petit models, the female body is seen as a distraction and extreme thinness neutralises the distraction making the viewer's more focused on the clothing (Clements, 2013). Furthermore, there is also a financial reason to choose for skinny models. According to T. Storm (personal communication, April 21, 2014), most designers choose these kind of models because less fabric needs to be used. Using fuller models would mean that different samples have to be made which would make it a lot more expensive for the designer.



Figure 5 *Size Zero*



FASHION IS  
NOT  
SOMETHING  
THAT EXISTS  
IN DRESSES  
ONLY.  
FASHION IS  
IN THE SKY,  
IN THE  
STREET,  
FASHION  
HAS TO DO  
WITH IDEAS,  
THE WAY WE  
LIVE,  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENING.

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Gabrielle Cocco Chanel

Figure 6 Sustainability



Another consequence that leads to the presence of more petit models is that the fashion show collection is available for the press after the show to use for their photo shoots. However, these items are not adjusted in size, it is the same garment that is used on the catwalk. Therefore, the stylist is forced to use models who fit these pieces (Clements, 2013).

Finally, no matter how flawless a model is, even the best photographers enhance the picture after it has been taken (Tungate, 2004). Some brands take it even further. In 2011, H&M admitted using computer-generated bodies with real model heads, claiming the aim is 'to buy our clothes, not the model'. However, H&M was criticised for this by the Scandinavian advertising watchdogs who blamed them for creating unrealistic psychical ideals. According to Helle Vaagland, spokesperson of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, it clearly illustrates the high aesthetic demands placed on the female body. The demands are so high that it is even impossible to find someone with a body and face to sell their product. No matter how ideal the models eventually look, the point is that the image of the perfect body shape as a whole is unrealistic and it is creating insecurities in society (Tungate, 2004).

### **Change in Demand**

Changes in cultural values, consumer lifestyle, trends in arts, and pop culture are a powerful influence on the demand from the fashion industry. For example, the sustainability became more incorporated in our lives due to the recent focus on protecting the environment (Fiore & Kimle, 1997). Consumers have noticed that the sky has reached the limit and sustainability has become an important part in our decision making process (M. Stuyck, personal communication, May 1, 2014). Nowadays' society is trapped in a never-ending guilt spiral on how consumption is impacting the planet, society and themselves. According to Raphael Bemporad, co-founder and chief strategy officer at brand innovation consultancy BBMG there is powerful shift from obligation to desire in sustainability, this implies that individual do not longer see it as the right thing to do but they cool thing to do. In his research conducted under 21,492 participants, more than one-third of the global population (36.4%) is an aspirational consumer. An aspirational consumer is defined by their love for shopping (78%), and their desire for responsible consumption (92%) (BBMG, 2013). The consciousness of their own impact on the planet's

well being makes consumers choose quality over quantity when it comes to selecting garments (M. Struycken, personal communication, May 1, 2014). Furthermore, consumers are more attracted to 'clean slate brands', where values as ethics, sustainability, social-responsibility and transparency are central in their business model (Bakhuys Roozenboom, 2014). Based on this information, the first hypothesis is:

*H1: The impact of the consumption on the planet has caused a stronger desire to consume responsible.*

The state of the economy is also changing the demand for fashion despite the fact that it is not very visible for everyone. The biggest part of society relates the financial crisis with the housing market, employment rates and government deficits. However, fashion is a reflection of society; it has to deliver upon the needs that are present in society and it has to reflect norms, values and ideas present in society. This means that if there are any economic problems, this will automatically be visible in what individuals wear and buy (Janssen, 2013). In 1929, for example, when the New York stock market collapsed, people were not willing to pay for expensive haut couture. This was why increasingly designers decided to create the less expensive clothing-line 'ready to wear', a clothing-line that almost every fashion house manufactures nowadays (Kim et al., 2011; Mendes, de la Haye & Schoeser, 1999). In the current recession fashion houses have tried to adapt to societal needs and they have tried to find ways to still be able to sell their clothes during times of recession. The fashion houses noticed a growing interest towards basic clothing pieces that can be worn every season. According to Kim et al. (2012) High-statement fashion pieces are indeed losing ground to more conservative, versatile, basic pieces that can be blend. For that reason, you can see that progressive fashion houses adopt timeless classics with a high quality standard in their collections in order to ensure a stable turnover (Janssen, 2013). According to Karl Lagerfeld, head-designer of the brand Chanel, the economic crisis is not necessarily a bad thing. It can be seen as a spring-cleaning: all the cheap and bad poorly made bling will vanish and only quality will remain (Swartenbroux, 2013). This is why consumers are not seduced anymore by low-cost versions that had graced the catwalk in Paris or Milan. The consumer rather wants garments that are made to last, or even better 'made in England'. Increasingly, consumers are choosing small local brands over big commercial brands, 'it does not matter that it is a little bit more expensive because the





Figure 7 Alexa Chung for Lucky Magazine

Figure 8 *Honest By Campaign*



product has more value and it is unique' (T. Storm, personal communication, April 21, 2014). Consumers embrace authentic products and neglect fake and artificial ones (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). This phenomenon is a radical change in the consumption behaviour of the consumer. For decades the consumer has enjoyed the freedom of having products everywhere around him and they did not care whether the products were part of a standardised production process. However, since the last decennium consumers are more reflective on who they are – based on what they consume – and why they exist (Zavestoski, 2002). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H2: Consumers increasingly choose small local brands over big global brands and they choose quality over quantity.*

&

*H3: High statement pieces are losing ground to more conservative, versatile, basic pieces that can be bled.*

In the current post-modern society, consumption is associated with the meaning of products and fulfilment. This pleasure can be found in products such as the possession of money and materials. Marketers have discovered this need for fulfilment and promote products that contribute to this quest (Solomon, 1999).

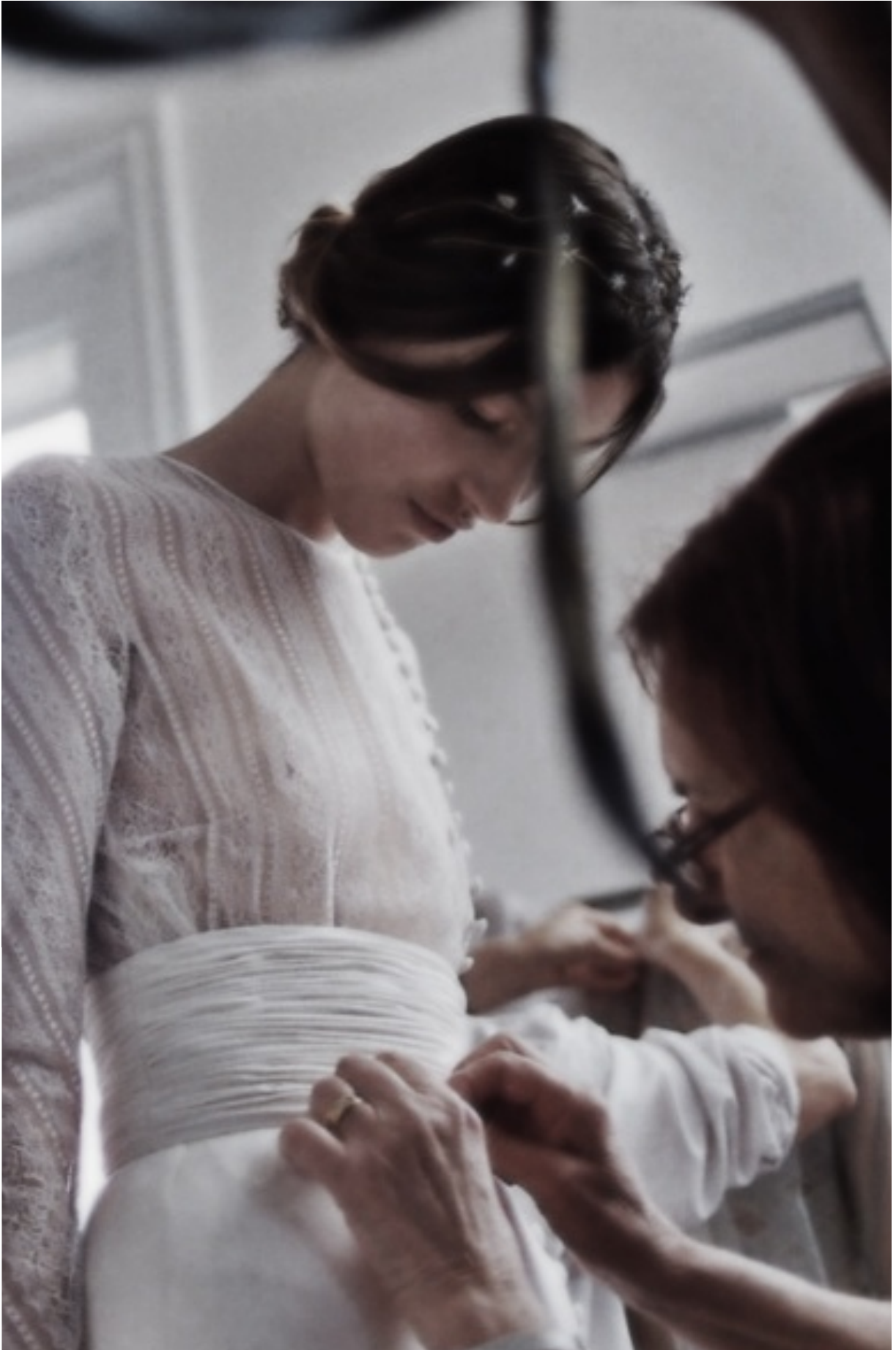
However, consumers notice an inconsistency between the actual and the desired pleasure when it comes to consuming a product. They skip from one product to another in order to get fulfilled. However, this quest never seems to end (Campbell, 1987). This endless and restless search for fulfilment is resulting in consumers becoming unhappy, discontented, and dissatisfied in the material world. This disappointment in the shallowness in the material culture and the deceitful commercial world makes consumers have increased needs for authenticity (Brown, 2003; Zavestoski, 2002). Knowing the story i.e. where the product comes from, which materials are used and knowing who designed the products make the consumer feel instantly connected to the brand and it will give the consumer an authentic feel (T. Storm, personal communication, April 21, 2014). Showing the production process of a product and the materials that are used, makes the consumer more willing to pay a higher price. One of these examples is Bottega Venneta. It is a brand that sells bags that are handily made by two men. They spend two entire days on making one bag and that makes the bag very expensive but nevertheless, people are willing to



# AUTHENTICITY

the **truth, reality** and the **qualities of genuineness** (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Rose & Wood, 2005). The synonyms hold **ethical, honest, unspun, rooted, natural, simple, beautiful, and human** (Boyle, 2003). It signifies a **real situation** rather than an artificial context (Wasserman, 2002).

Figure 9 The Hand-made Process





spent the amount (J. Watson, personal communication, May 7, 2014). Another example is Honest By. Honest By, it is the first company that is 100% transparent in their communication about the supply chain of its product and pricing. Honest By is the first company that shows the full breakdown of the cost of a product. Every part in their production is communicated to the consumer, from yarn and button origin to fabric and manufacturing details. Even the store mark up's calculations are visible. Despite the fact that many companies think that publishing all the information and the names and addresses of all the factories and suppliers could ruin the company, it has been working for this brand so far. They are selling even more now that the recession is getting worse. According to Pieters, the founder of the brand, 'Hard times makes the consumer have an instinctive desire for authenticity which can be found in the heritage of our brand, or in our brand values'. The branding of products has become very important, especially for beginning designers because good branding has the power to persuade the consumer to actually buy the product. Branding is not only a part of the marketing anymore, it rather should be incorporated into the strategy (B. Schriks, personal communication, April 24, 2014). Because of all of the above mentioned information the fourth hypothesis that will be proposed is:

*H4: Consumers are more allured to purchase a product when there is a strong story behind it.*

### **What is an Authentic Product?**

Authenticity has become a selection criteria in our decision making process. Consumers will seek products that satisfy their needs for authenticity and decide if that product is authentic enough for their consumption (McNamara, 1997). Authenticity is determined by several different aspects: the originality, quality commitment and credibility, heritage and style persistence, scarceness, sacredness, and purity (Liao & Ma, 2009). In the following section these characteristics will be further discussed.

**The Originality.** The main property of authenticity is originality. It signifies something that cannot be imitated, unorthodox, a brainchild, being innovative or a pioneer. According to Liao and Ma (2009) the consumer judges the originality based on the country of origin, the place of production, the use of handmade processes, the use of natural material and its status as a pioneer. In the end, the country of origin and the place where

the product is made are the main characteristics on which the decision is based whether or not a product is original. According to Meta Struycken (personal communication, May 1, 2014), the success of a new designer is being original. The current environment has made it very hard for designers not to copy someone else's successful design. In the earlier days it was harder to see what other people were doing, but since the rise of the internet a lot of inspiration and information is accessible to everyone and that makes it harder to do something different. The challenge is to be able to exit yourself from all the information streams and be able to trust and focus on your own creativity.

**Quality Commitment and Credibility.** Furthermore, research showed that the perceived quality and delivery is also an important factor in judging authenticity (Lioa & Ma, 2009). A great number of consumers believe that whether or not a product is truly authentic can only be decided after the purchase. After the product is bought and used, it can be discovered whether a product delivers on the perceived expectations or not.

**Heritage and Style Persistence.** In addition, a product or a brand that embodies heritage spirit or something that is consistent with the memory of what the consumer had in mind makes it authentic. It is beneficial if brands or products are able to hold their spirit based on the ability of the product over time to keep the product consistent with the original. According to J. Watson (personal communication, Mai 7, 2014) there is indeed a very strong relation between authenticity and heritage. Designers that have just started had no opportunity to build up any heritage and so for them it is a challenge to focus more on other authentic selection criteria.

**Scarceness.** The research also showed (Lioa & Ma, 2009) that authenticity implies scarceness. When there are fewer products available, this suggests that more people have been working on the product and that more money or more effort has been put into the item. This increases the authentic value since it makes the product more unique. Most authentic products are difficult or harder to obtain. Consumers with a preference for authentic products will be more tempted to buy limited products than other products (Liao & Ma, 2009; J. Winnubst, personal communication, April 22, 2014).





Figure 10 Pure Wool

Figure 11 *Shaun Ross, Albino Model*



**Sacredness.** There are consumers who see authentic products as being sacred because the product manages to relate to memories of the past or because it creates feelings of nostalgia. For some individuals authenticity is something that is interesting and something that shows high involvement, therefore, to them it is sacred.

**Purity.** The final property of authenticity is purity. Whether or not a product is authentic depends on if it only comes from one source, if it is focused on and proficient in one thing only, if it is not blend, and if it is not produced by mixing several materials. This property is important for the consumer because it shows the quality of the product. If something is made from 100% juice it means it does not exist of water, sugar, or other things are added. However, the consumer seems to distrust the purity claim of many producers.

### **Authenticities' influence**

The growing importance of authenticity has not only influenced the FI but has also influenced several other related industries as well. There are two industries that are very closely related to the fashion industry: the advertising industry and the design industry. Therefore, this next section will examine how these industries, so far, are adapting to the environmental changes.

**Advertising and Authenticity.** Marketers are also noticing this need for authenticity. However, according to a lot of marketing literature using attractive communicators and models in your advertising will have a more positive effect on opinion change, product evaluation and product perception and recall (Baker & Churchill, 1977; Joseph, 1982). Although using idealised images to ensure a more effective advertising seems quite appropriate to do, marketers have taken it to the extreme. The models that are used represent highly idealised images of psychical attractiveness (Antioco, Semeester & Le Boedec, 2012). It's hard to market authenticity if marketing is something that undermines such claims (Beverland & Luxton, 2005).

Not all marketers agree on using idealised images of psychical attractiveness in order to increase the effect of advertising. Back in 2003 Dove was not doing very well. Dove had not managed making any emotional connection with their target group and the brand

had started to lose its relevance to the consumer. Since the 1950s Dove's testimonials were all functional stories that had resulted in a relatively low engagement and low persuasion. Every other competitor was using idealised images but instead of following the majority, Dove decided to do something different. Not only did they break the rules of its category but also of the culture we live in: they made the world see things from a different perspective and they made people conscious about the fact that idealised images in advertising were affecting women's self-esteem. Instead of striving for an out of reach ideal they wanted to create a feeling of community and sisterhood. The idea of using 'unorthodox' models occurred from a report commissioned by Dove and was conducted by StrategyOne entitled 'The Real Truth About Beauty'. The research, conducted from 3,200 women from 10 different countries, showed that only 2% described themselves as beautiful and the main reason that was causing this was the media and advertising setting an unrealistic standard of beauty that most women would never be able to achieve (StrategyOne, 2004). StrategyOne was not the only one who discovered the negative effect of media on the consumer. Other studies have shown that the exposure of attractive faces in advertising has led to a negative evaluation of the self (Richins, 1991; Smeesters & Mandel, 2006). According to the theory, if women would feel more beautiful and were more encouraged to take better care of themselves, it would raise their self-esteem and in return help to rebuild the lost emotional connection with the brand (Ogilvy Advertising, 2009). The theory was confirmed; in 2004, Unilever was highly praised when they started a campaign with using 'real' women instead of models in Dove's firming cream advertisement (Jeffers, 2005). The campaign had caused so much awareness that other brands, such as Revlon and J.C. Penney, began to add fuller and older actresses into their cast as well.

Despite the positive outcome of Dove's campaign, some high-end marketers - notably, Charles Revson, the founder of Revlon, are of the opinion that too much realism can eventually jeopardise their brand. And for others, the positive reactions to Dove are only caused by its provocative nature (Antioco et al., 2012). However, a study by Antioco et al. (2012), shows that non-idealised images did not just result in a higher self-esteem compared to idealised images, it also showed that participants with a lower self-esteem reported a more negative attitude and lower purchase intention of the brand when exposed to idealised images. Conversely, consumers with a higher level of self-esteem gave the preference to idealised images compared to non-idealised images. Furthermore, the



Figure 12 Starbucks cup decorated by Johanna Belford, logo version 1992 ,

study also showed that brands using non-idealised images are to be seen as more trustworthy. Consequently, a higher level of trustworthiness resulted in a higher purchase intention. Based on this information, the following hypothesis is chosen:

*H5: People with a high level of self-esteem will give preference to idealised images whereas people with a low level of self-esteem will choose for the non-idealised images.*

“Perfect” models are loosing their grounds to models that are different, imperfect models (J. Winnubst, personal communication, April 22, 2014). One of the examples is the model that was used for the campaign of HEMA. In order to promote their push up bra they decided to use the androgynous model Andrej Pejic. It was controversial but had an impeccable impact, (Ambraham, 2011; B. Schriks, personal communication, April 24, 2014). Another example of the changing demand for models is the success of the model Shaun Ross (see figure 12). Shaun Ross is an African American born with albinism. Despite his skin disorder he was very successful: for example, he walked in the fashion show of Givency and did an editorial for VOGUE Italy. This shows that the narrow-minded vision of model-esque beauty is evolving and traditions are breaking (Hyman, 2013).

**Design and Authenticity.** IStock (2013) did research into the digital design trends for 2014, asking the opinions of several designers worldwide. Two of these design trends are simplification and flat design. The reason behind these trends is that the consumer gets such an huge quantity of massages and information, that is has become important to communicate clearly, with q visual clarity and succinctly. A higher level of sophistication will be the most powerful tool for expressing sophistication. Nowadays, using shiny logos with trumpery to grab the customers’ attention is not important. The only thing the customer wants is something bold and simple, and many brands seem to take it to heart. On of the examples in brand name is the state of the art concept Bilder & De Clercq. Bilder & De Clerq is a state of the art concept; the shop is designed as a three dimensional cookbook. The brand is named after the place their first shop was located, on the corner of the Bilderdijkstraat and the Clerqstraat. Another strong example is the logo development of Starbucks (Neugeboren, 2012). The logo of Starbucks is worldwide one of the most recognisable and known logo. Back in 1971 the first logo was introduced, based on a 15<sup>th</sup> century Norse woodcut. In the middle of the coffee brown round logo was the mythical two-tail mermaid figure. In 1987 the logo was extremely simplified and the bare breast that

where shown on the previous logo where covered up. Furthermore, the brown colour was changed into green to imply growth, uniqueness, freshness and prosperity. The logo underwent another change in 1992, when the image of the mermaid was given a close up, removing the navel from the design. The last version of the logo was unveiled in 2011, as part of their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In this logo the mermaid was given an even closer close-up, and the brand name was removed from the logo (Famous Logos, n.d.).

Not only has a majority of logos simplified, also in product design the consumer assumes that simple product are better. The reason for this is to make an actual product simple; the manufacturer has to go deeper to understand how the product is produced. It is important to understand the essence of the product in order to be able to get rid of the parts that are not essential (Isaacson, 2013). Based on this information the following, the following hypothesis is chosen:

*H6: The consumer has an increased preference for simplified designs.*

Figure 13 *Samples*





## Research Methodology

The main purpose of this research, was to determine whether there is actually a need for authenticity. The questionnaire was based on the hypotheses that were formulated in the previous literature review section. In the following section, these hypotheses will be tested in order to see if they indicate a confirmation of the research expectations. However, it has to be noted, that this questionnaire was used to indicate confirmation of the hypotheses. The hypotheses were not scientifically analysed, and therefore the results will function as a recommendation for future scientific research

### **Research Methodology, Sample and Data Collection**

For this study, a descriptive research method was used. It was decided to use a survey to operationalize the hypotheses. A survey is designed to collect data from a specific population, or a sample from that population, mostly performed in the form of a questionnaire or an interview (Jackson, 2012). To be sure to capture a wide range of perspectives for the study, it was decided to collect participants that were different from one another, for example in age (Lund Research, 2012). The aim was to identify opinions among different individuals, in different stages of their lives (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Therefore, in this study, it was decided to cover as many age groups as possible. One of the advantages of this method, is that using different participants will decrease the risk of having a bad representation (Elder, 2009).

The initial sample consisted out of 142 consumers, 51 were men and 88 were women. Three age categories were investigated: 18-25 (36%), 26-40 (34%) and 41-65 (27%). None of the participants, was younger than 18 years old. The highest level of education, was for the majority of respondents a bachelor's degree, followed by a master's degree.

The questionnaire was published online. This was decided because online surveying, bypasses many bottleneck such as data entry and administration (Watt, Simpson, McKillop & Nunn, 2002). On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the web-based questionnaire was published on the social media 'facebook'. So called 'friends' on the social media website were able to complete the survey. According to Perkins (2011), one of the ways to increase the response rate is to give further reminders, and to write a personal message. For this reason, a personal message

was sent to 54 candidates by phone, to personally invite them to participate in the survey. On top of that, 302 respondents were sent a personalised message by mail, asking them if they had any interest in completing the questionnaire. After one week, the results were analysed. Other intended participants, who did not participate yet, were approached to make sure that all of the different age groups between 18 and 65 were represented in the survey.

### **Instrumentation**

As mentioned in the previous section, all of the survey items, were based on the analysis of the literature research, and the discussions with experts on trend-watching. Based on the obtained information, the different items of the questionnaire were formulated. The questionnaire consisted of 26 items, and these items will be elaborated below. The actual questionnaire can be found in appendix six.

To test the first hypothesis *'Simple products are perceived as being from a higher quality, than complex products'*, question 9 was formulated. It was decided to use a five-point Likert Scale answer format (ranging from 1, 'strongly disagree', to 5, 'strongly agree'). The Likert Scale is an ordinal psychometric scale measurement of opinions, attitudes and beliefs. The Likert scale is a good method for measuring someone's opinion because it is not a simple yes or no question (Lamaca, 2011). For the next hypotheses, *'Consumers increasingly choose small local brands over big global brands and quality over quantity.'* (Question 16 & 21), and *'Consumers are more allured to purchase a product when there is a strong story behind it.'* (Question 27), the same method was chosen.

In order to discover if the level of self-esteem played a role in the consumers' preference for a skinny- or a normal model, the hypothesis was divided into two parts: The first part, was designed to measure the participant's level of self-esteem, and the second part, was designed to measure the participant's preference towards idealised versus non-idealised images. In order to discover the participant's level of self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used (Rosenberg, 1965). Question 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22, 24 and 26 covered this section. The scale is one of the most widely used self-esteem measures in the social science research, and it consists out of ten items that measure the self-worth by measuring both negative and positive feelings about the self (Rosenberg, 1965). Despite the original scale, a four-point scale format ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree

(1), it was decided to also add a fifth point, the 'neutral' point, to avoid forced opinions. In order to measure the participant's preference for idealised versus non-idealised models, the participants were presented an image of two women in the same outfit. One of those woman was identified as being 'less perfect', than the other, according to the beauty standards (question 11, 14 and 23). It was decided to test this multiple times, in order to ensure a higher level of reliability.

Furthermore, also the hypothesis *'The impact of the consumption on the planet, has caused a stronger desire to consume responsible.'* was divided into two sub-questions. Both questions, consisted out of a seven-point Likert Scale, ranging from disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Question 4 asked the participant how much he or she enjoyed to shop. Question 4 asked them, how big their desire was to consume responsible. The question was divided into two different questions, because participant's love for shopping does not has to correlate with their desire for responsible consumption. Furthermore, the definition of 'responsible consumption' was explained in the question, in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

In order to discover if *'Statement pieces are losing grounds, to basic items that can be worn during several seasons'*, the respondent could simply answer with either 'yes', or 'no' Question 5.

The last hypothesis that had to be tested, was *whether or not individuals preferred designs that where less complex*. In order to test the hypothesis, the respondents where shown three different designs of the same product. The design of the left was the most complex, and the design on the right was the most simplified (question 6 and 18). However, because the opinion of what is actually simple and what is not can be different per individual, the participants were asked additionally, to indicate which of the products was, according to them, the most simple in its design. Following, the participants were asked to indicate, on a seven-point Likert scale, how much the previous design appealed to them. This was repeated multiple times, for the several items, in order to ensure a higher reliability.

The aim of the questionnaire, was to make sure that all the hypotheses were tested, but it was also important that de survey was not boring, or felt repetitive in any way. Therefore, it was decided to mix the questions and question methods as much as possible.

## Results

In this section, the research findings of the questionnaire will be discussed. In the final part of this section, the hypotheses are presented in a table to clarify the results. Once more, the obtained data is not scientifically analysed, but it is used to indicate a (non)confirmation of the hypothesis.

### **Hypothesis One: *The impact of the consumption on the planet, has caused a stronger desire to consume responsible.***

The descriptives reveal, that that a small majority of the participants does indeed have a desire for responsible consumption. 54,3% of the participants had a desire for responsible consumption. When comparing the different age groups with the desire for responsible consumption, it turned out that the older age group had a stronger desire for responsible consumption (Appendix H, Table 1). The age group that had the biggest interest for responsible consumption (80%), was the oldest age group (65+), followed by 68% of the middle age group (41–65). From the respondents that had a desire to shop, 27,2% had also a love for shopping (Appendix F, Table 2). Seventeen percent of the participants claimed, that they had no love for shopping but that they did had a desire to shop responsible. Only 15 participants (13,6%), had a love for shopping but not a desire for responsible consumption. However, there is still a big percentage of participants left with a desire for responsible consumption. The majority of the remaining percentage (26,4%), are the participants who are neutral regarding to the desire for responsible shopping. This implies that 19,3% of the respondents, have no desire for responsible consumption. As in regard to the different levels of education: the participants with a doctoral degree (75%), a professional degree (80%), and for some, a college degree (68,8%), have the strongest desire for responsible consumption. The participants with the lowest desire for responsible consumption, were the participants with a high school degree (38,9%) (Appendix H, Table 9).

**Hypothesis Two: Consumers increasingly choose small local brands over big global brands, and quality over quantity.**

Furthermore, the results pointed out, that the participants were indeed more interested in smaller and local brands in comparison to big and commercial brands. When the participants were given the statement '*I prefer small and local brand over big and commercial brands*', only 12,1% disagreed. 35,7% of the participants were neutral, and a small majority (52,1%) agreed or strongly agreed (Appendix H, Graph 5).

Furthermore, when it comes to quality and quantity, the participants preferred the quality of the clothes (67,1%) over the amount of the clothing pieces (Appendix H, Graph 6). Only 10% of the respondents disagreed with the statement '*When it comes to clothing, I choose quality over quantity.*'

**Hypothesis Three: High statement pieces are losing ground to more conservative, versatile, basic pieces that can be bled.**

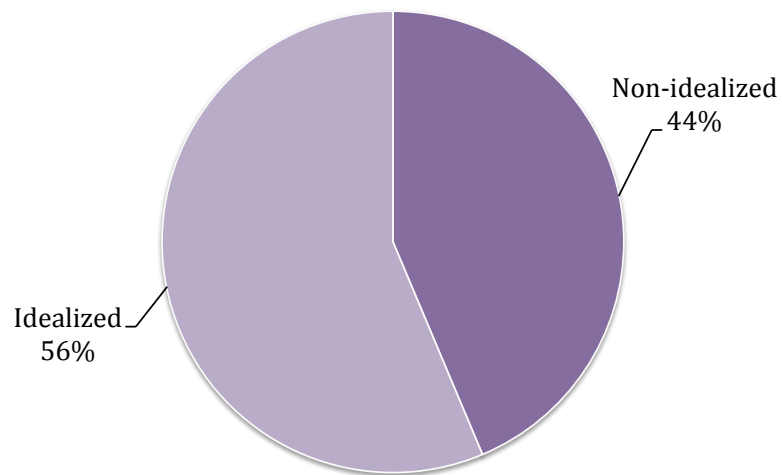
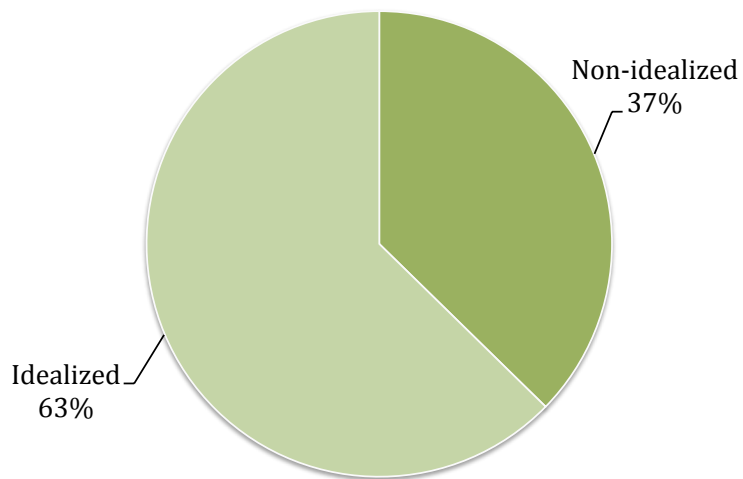
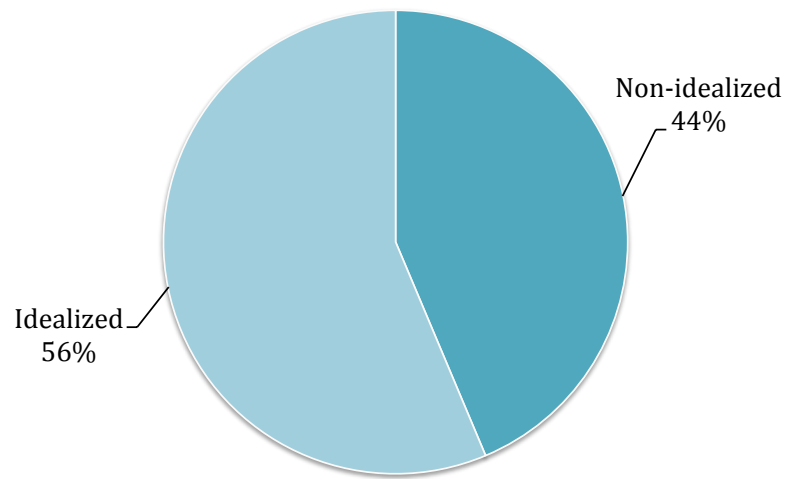
When it came to the decision for the type of garment, the participants had a clear opinion on what to choose. When they were asked which of the two pieces that were presented they would pick, 81,71% chose a garment that could be worn several seasons (Appendix H, Graph 3).

**Hypothesis Four: Consumers are more allured to purchase a product when there is a strong story behind it.**

The participants admitted, that they feel more tempted to buy a product when it has a 'good story'. 71,4% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were more tempted to buy a product with a 'good story'. Only 7,4% disagreed, and 21,4% had no opinion on this matter (Appendix H, Graph 7).

**Hypothesis Five: People with a high level of self-esteem, will give preference to idealised images, whereas people with a low level of self-esteem, will prefer the non-idealised images.**

In general, the participants had a high level of self-esteem. If the participants scored below 25 points on the level of self-esteem, their self-esteem was indicated as high. If the participants scored above 25, their self-esteem was indicated as being low. The average amount of points (mean), that the participants had was 21,24. The most occurring score



Graphs 2, 3 & 4 *Representing the preference of model, right is non-idealized and left is idealized*

(mode) was 22 points. In total, 111 (79,3%) of the participants had a high level of self-esteem. Consequently, a minority of the participants had a low level of self-esteem (20,7%). Furthermore, something surprisingly turned out: apart from the participants with a high school degree (33%) and the ones with a professional degree (0%), the number of participants with low self-esteem, rises if the level of education rises. This suggests, that self-esteem is might be correlated, to the educational level (Appendix H, Table 8).

The number of participants that had a preference for the natural model or the skinny model, was not found to be related to the level of self-esteem (Appendix H, Table 3, 4 & 5). 58,8% of the participants preferred the skinny model. In none of the cases, the preference was given to the natural women. From the participants with a low level of self-esteem, only one out of the three times, the participants choose the natural girl over the skinny girl (Appendix., Graph). The participants with low self-esteem, showed a stronger desire (65,5%) for the idealised image than the participants with a high level of self-esteem (58,6%).

#### **Hypothesis Six: *The consumer has an increased preference for simplified designs.***

To most participants, the variation on the right out of the three variations, the one that was the most simple in design (Appendix F, Graph 1 & 2), with the jar of Nutella (83,6%), and the bottles of Schweppes (81,4%), was the most appealing. This finding suggests, that what participants perceived as being the most simple design, was also identified as being the most appealing design.

However, the average indicated a lower result. For the jar Nutella, the average choice was 'neutral' (Mean = 4,4). For the bottle Schweppes, the average choice was 'slightly appealing' (Mean = 5.1). Despite the low means of both products, looking at the overall percentage of participants that chose 'slightly appealing' to 'very appealing', the results are rather high. The jar Nutella was perceived as being appealing by 50% of the respondents, and the bottles Schweppes were appealing for 70,7% of the respondents.

Furthermore, the participants did not only prefer products that were more simple in design, the majority of the participants stated that they believed, that simple products had a higher quality, than complex products. When the statement '*In general I believe that complex products have a higher quality than simple products*' was presented to the participants, 57,8% disagreed with this statement. Only 14,2% of the participants agreed (Appendix H, Graph 4). When also paying attention to the numbers of the level of education, the numbers of participants that had a preference for simple products could deviate, and be a lot higher,

indicating that the higher the educational level is related to the preference for simple design. For example, participants with a doctoral degree fully disagreed (100%) that they believe that complex products have a higher quality than simple products (Appendix H, Table 7). Furthermore, the number of participants with a professional degree, who disagreed with the question, was notably larger than the average (80%). The rest of the participants that disagreed with the statement ranged between 38,9% for high school level to 63,6% for an associate degree.



### An Overview of all the Hypotheses and Findings

In order to summarise the findings of this study, below table 1 presents an overview of all the hypotheses that were tested in this study, and whether or not they were supported.

Table 1. *An Overview of all the Hypothesis and Findings*

Hypothesis	Content	Result
H1	<i>The impact of the consumption on the planet, has caused a stronger desire to consume responsible.'</i>	Supported
H2	<i>'Consumers increasingly choose small local brands over big global brands and quality over quantity.'</i>	Supported
H3	<i>'High statement pieces are losing ground to more conservative, versatile, basic pieces that can be bled.'</i>	Supported
H4	<i>'Consumers are more allured to purchase a product when there is a strong story behind it.'</i>	Supported
H5	<i>Individuals with a high level of self-esteem will give preference to idealized images whereas people with a low level of self-esteem, will prefer the non-idealized images.'</i>	Not supported
H6	<i>'The consumer has an increased preference for simplified designs.'</i>	Supported

## **Chapter Nine Conclusions**

The aim of this research paper was to provide insights for fashion designers in the way the recession impacts the fashion industry. Firstly, literature research was studied in order to identify factors that influence the fashion industry, specifically during times of recession. Based on the research, authenticity was identified as an influential factor. Secondly, the aim of this paper was to discover how big the influence of authenticity is in this matter. In this chapter, the main question as well as the sub-questions will be answered. The main research question was:

*What is the added value of authenticity branding for fashion brands in the current recession?*

This question was divided into the following sub-questions:

- (1)'What is the fashion industry, and what role does authenticity plays within the industry?'*
- (2)'How did societal developments have influenced the fashion industry in the past, and how do they influence the todays fashion industry?'*
- (3)'Is there actually a desire for authenticity?' And if so,*
- (4)'What is the origin of this need for authenticity?'*
- (5)'Did the influence of authenticity on the fashion industry, has also influenced other (related) industries?'*
- (6)' Which companies are already incorporating authenticity in their concept, and what are their results?'*

### **What is the fashion industry, and what role does authenticity plays within the industry?**

According to Waddels (2014) the fashion industry is divided into different levels. These levels are categorized by the different levels of how the product is manufactured. The highest level of manufacture is the haute couture, followed by the ready-to-wear, and finally, the lowest level of manufacture, the mass production. However, this paper focused only on the haute couture and the ready-to-wear since the difference between the ready-to-wear and the mass-production is limited. According to Lioa and Ma (2009),



Figure 14 Protect the Planet

Figure 15 *Cottonfield*





fashion items are based on several properties: the originality, quality commitment & credibility, heritage & style persistence, scarceness, sacredness, and purity. The haute couture has a lot more in common with these properties than the ready-to-wear, since it is handmade and unique (Core, 2013; Thomas, N.D.), and scarce (Core, 2013). Furthermore, according to Borregaard (2010), the sizing-system that is used in the ready-to-wear industry, is used more as a tool to present the ideal body of a woman. This idealized body of a woman, is one that is (unrealistic) slim. The sizing system created by the ready-to-wear industry prescribe, in a way, what is viewed of as being acceptable and desirable and what is not. A consequence of this sizing system, is that only 9% of the clothes that are available are accessible for plus-size women (Associated Press, 2013). However, the question is whether or not this is actually effective for the industry as a whole, since 'the plus-size shopper' represents 67% of the consumers (Javis, 2013). Beside the sizing-system that suggests what acceptable proportions are, the models who are used for campaigns or for fashion shows, are often far too skinny and young as well (Clements, 2013). However, for this phenomenon exists an explanation. According to Clements (2013) as well as to Strom (Personal communication, April 21, 2014), it is important that the clothes fit on many different models and not just on the one model, that is used for the catwalk or campaign. From a financial perspective, there are two reasons that make it beneficial for a fashion brand to make the clothes in a small size that fit different models. First of all, if the item fits different models, only one item has to be made. Secondly, if the item is made for a skinny model, less fabric has to be used.

### **Influence of Social Developments**

#### **How did societal developments have influenced the fashion industry in the past and how do they influence the today's fashion industry?**

Societies experience constant change due to many different factors. Economical change is one of those factors. For example, the industrialization of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, has had its impact. Due to a growing middle class, suddenly, there was a larger part of the population that was able to afford more than that they were able to at first. Cultural values as well as the consumers' lifestyle changed. For instance, the growing importance of sustainability due to the growing industrialization, aroused expectations for the fashion industry to produce in a more sustainable way (Fiore & Kimle, 1997; M. Struyck, personal communication, May 1, 2014). According to

Struyck (personal communication, May 1, 2014), the noticeable impact on the environment, also caused a decrease in consumption. Increasingly, consumers started to choose quality over quantity. This difference in consumers' demand is also identified by the questionnaire that was created to provide the first steps towards scientifically based evidence. Bakhuys and Roozenboom (2014) added that the nowadays, consumers are more attracted to 'clean slate brands', meaning that values such as ethics, sustainability, social-responsibility and transparency are central in their business model.

The current economic situation, a situation in which societies are still trying hard to recover from the great recession of 2009, also has had its influence on the fashion industry. With unstable incomes, poor quality garments lose their appeal (M. Struyck, personal communication, May 1, 2014). The consumers' demand has changed: quality garments that are made to last and that are locally made are preferred (Mercer, 2014). Locally made products also make an item more unique, which is an important characteristic of authenticity. Furthermore, since the recession, it has become more important to add an extra value to the product, for example by showing the story behind the product (B. Schriks, personal communication, April 24, 2014). According to Watson (Personal communication, May 7, 2014), it is indeed the fact that people tend to be more tempted to purchase a product, when it has a unique story. There are several factors that can contribute to a product's story. These factors are for example, that the consumer is informed about where the product comes from, which materials are used, and who the product made. Concluding, since the recession consumers' demands have changed. These new demands show a lot of similarities with the characteristics of authenticity such as originality, and scarceness & quality commitment. This implies that there is a correlation between the impact of the economic recession and the desire for authenticity.

### **Is there actually a desire for authenticity? And if so, what is the origin of this need?**

According to Campbell (1987), there is indeed an increasing demand for authenticity. This increasing demand is caused by the inconsistency between the actual- and the desired pleasure when it comes to consuming a product. More factors seem to play a role, than just the beauty of the product itself. Disappointment in the shallowness of the material culture (meaning that only the end result is important, not the process of that result), and the deceitful commercial world (that presents unrealistic images), made consumers' demand for authenticity increase (Brown, 2003; Zavestoski, 2002).



Figure 16 Abby Lee Kershaw, Model with Gap Teeth

Consumers are more aware of their own responsibility as well as the responsibility of the brand that they are buying, regarding to the sustainability. The willingness to consume without impacting the planet on a negative way, has increased. (M. Struyck, personal communication, May 1, 2014). This has resulted in the fact that authenticity has become a part of the selection criteria, in the decision making process (McNamara, 1997). This 'new' desire for authenticity, was identified based on the literature review as well as on the questionnaire, that indicated an increasing demand for authenticity. Except for one, "people with a high level of self-esteem will give preference to idealized images whereas people with a low level of self-esteem will choose for the non-idealized images", all the other five hypotheses that were designed to test the desire for authenticity were supported.

**Did the influence of authenticity on the fashion industry has also influenced other (related) industries? And if so, what are their results?**

The desire for authenticity has also influenced other industries that are closely related to the fashion industry. One of these closely related industries, is the advertising industry. The advertising industry has always been of the opinion that idealized images ensure a more effective result of the advertisement (Beverland & Luxton, 2005). Other studies have shown, that using idealized images does not have a negative effect on the self-evaluation, however, it did lead to a negative attitude towards the brand and this resulted in a lower purchase intention (Antioco et al., 2012). Using non-idealized images, will increase the change that the brand will be viewed of as being more trustworthy. A higher level of trustworthiness, will result in a higher purchase intention. This has resulted in a redefinition of the standard of beauty, and therewith, 'perfect' has made room for 'different' (B. Schriks, personal communication, April 22, 2014).

Furthermore, also in the design industry, the desire for more authenticity is noticeable (IStock, 2013). The consumer is overloaded with a huge quantity of messages and information. Because of this overload of information, it has become more important to communicate clearly, succinctly and with a visual clarity. Shiny and trumpery logos, made place for something bold and simple. According to Isaacson (2013), simplified logos do not only lead to better results, simplified products are also perceived as if they have a higher quality, than complex products. The results of the questionnaire also pointed out, that consumers have an increased preference for a simplified design.



The case studies of the three different industries (for example Dove's campaign), have shown as well, that translating the desire for authenticity into the design and the marketing strategy of a product, can be a success. Despite the recession, these companies have managed to become very successful. The information as stated above, leads to the main research question:



Figure 17 McDonald's Campaign Paris 2014

### **What is the added value of authenticity branding for fashion brands in the current recession?**

As a result from the answers that came forward out of the sub-questions, it can be stated that branding authenticity can indeed provide an added value to a fashion brand in the current recession. In times of recession, consumers' demands show a lot of similarities with the trend of authenticity. Furthermore, several examples provide evidence, that companies who translate authenticity into their brand concept, can be successful even in times of the recession. Based on the results of the literature research as well as on the results of the questionnaire, it is expected, that when a fashion brands' focus relies on authenticity, it can be successful even in times of recession.

## **Chapter Nine Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions of the sub-questions, and the answer to the main research question, the recommendations for the fashion industry and primarily starting fashion designers are formulated below. The following advice is offered:

*It is recommended that in order to become a strong fashion company in times of recession, to make authenticity become a part of the concept of the brand. Not only is it important that authenticity becomes a part of the concept, it is also important that the authentic characteristics are clearly communicated to the public. Nowadays, consumers have a need for an added value to the product they consume, authenticity can be that added value.*

There are many ways to make a brand authentic, in order to meet these new consumers' demands. In this section, several guidelines will be presented. Firstly, it is important to integrate the several characteristics that are able to make a product to be perceived as being authentic. These characteristics are: the originality, quality commitment & credibility, heritage & style persistence, scarceness, sacredness, and purity. For a beginning fashion brand, it is important to ensure that the brand delivers on as many of these characteristics as possible. Some of these properties are harder to implement than others. For instance, for a starting fashion designer, it is impossible to implement the heritage characteristic. However, beginning fashion designers can compromise on this by creating a style that is persistent. This persistence, can on the long term, create heritage. For example, a beginning fashion designer can focus on one particular area, such as knitwear, and make sure that they become outstanding in this area. Furthermore, it is important to manufacture the products as close to home as possible, and it is important to produce in a small circulation, because this can provide a feeling of authenticity and uniqueness to the consumer. Ensuring that the garments are of outstanding quality and consist out of the best material, can also contribute to success. This way of manufacturing will lead to higher costs at the beginning, but eventually, the goal is to make the consumer more satisfied with its product over the long-term. More satisfaction with the product, will increase the willingness to pay the extra price in the future.

Despite the fact that the product will benefit from being authentic, in order to increase success, it is also important that it is clear where the product comes from. Therefore, for a fashion brand, it is important to be as transparent as possible. Transparency can be obtained by exposing the story of the product: what its origin is, who the product made, and how the product is made. For example, a fashion brand can provide information about what material are used. Consumers who receive such information, will be more tempted to purchase the product.

Besides the fact that it is important for a fashion brand to share the story behind the product, it also important to present clear information about the product to the consumer. The younger generation have become market savvy, meaning that they are critical towards the information that they receive. Therefore, for a fashion brand, it is important to undermine this tension for critique, and to make their brand more trustworthy. One way to make this happen is, for example is, the use of non-idealized images of models. The overlap with reality as a result of using non-idealized models, will increase the trustworthiness of the brand, which will in turn increase the eventual purchase intention.

However, it needs to be noted that this research, just as any other, has its limitations. One of these limitations is the lack of prior research studies on this topic. Since the influence of the current economic recession on the fashion industry, and the trend of 'authenticity' are both state-of-the-art topics, not much research so far has been done. Therefore, the research literature for this paper, had to be supplemented. The literature research was supplemented with information based on interviews with different professionals. Furthermore, the questionnaire that was set up for this research in order to test the hypotheses, was not scientifically analyzed. For this reason, it is not possible to conclude that the results of the questionnaire are significant. However, the results of the questionnaire do tend to suggest that the majority of the hypotheses will be confirmed in future research. Therefore, to ensure significant results and scientifically based evidence, it is important that in future research, these hypotheses will be scientifically analyzed.

Based on the limitations stated above, the following recommendations for future research are advised: First of all, it is important to analyze the data of the questionnaire to discover significant values. Secondly, it can be useful to investigate how long the trend of the desire for authenticity will last. It might be something that will grow over time or it might be something that will decline, after societies have recovered from the recession. If this would be the case, it is valuable to know, whether or not the desire for authenticity will reappear, when the recession would recur.

Furthermore, since the questionnaire has been conducted under a small sample, future scientific research has to be done with a larger sample, in order to make sure that the results will not be caused by chance or the risk of errors in the statistical hypothesis testing.

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APPEN

DICES

## **Appendix A An Interview with T. Storm**

Storm, T., (2014). *About authenticity and the fashion Industry*. Interview, April 21, 2014.

**You graduated in Fashion Design and now your focus seems to go more towards Fashion Concepts, Brand and Journalism. Why has your focussed changed in the last year?**

*Well, in fact it is not that I don't do design anymore. I combine design with the other things. After my graduation I started with an internship with WeAr magazine, and when I worked there and started writing, I discovered that I actually really liked doing that. So I stayed there a editor and got a lot of project also in the Netherlands. So, this is how I became freelancer. I always just look what I come across and go with that. This is very broad, it can be design but also creating concepts. I rather work for client, I have no ambition to start an own label,.*

**So, you started at the trend magazine WeAr when you where graduated in 2009. This means you started during the financial crisis. Do you notice it?**

*Yes, of course I notice it, because it is very hard to find new clients. However, until know I have been very lucky and manage to get enough assignment, but I don't have the opportunity to go on holiday three times a year. Anyways, as you said I started in the recession so I actually do not know better. I have a studio in Amsterdam where I work with other freelancers, whom also worked in the times of no recession, and they certainly notice the difference. So hopefully everything gets better.*

**Since you have been working as trends watcher and working with concepts for fashion brands. How do you feel that the economic crisis has influenced the fashion industry?**

*Well I really think that authenticity is going to play a big part. When I work on new concept I always try to create something with a story and not some concept that it is only about the product. I have helped a lot of brand with there start-up, and I is more about the quality of the product and the story behind it, the material used. So everything is going to be much more qualitative. What also plays a very big part is the customisation. More brands anticipate on that the customer can be part of the production process. The consumer won't*



*accept everything that the brand makes but really wants to be involved. You see this a lot with commercial brand that they find ways to involve the consumer; they can choose the colour, the print or even make their own design. Also with the upswing of 3D printing, you have the possibility to have shoes exactly fitted to you feet, by scanning you feed. All in all, everything get's a lot more personalized.*

**You say it is important to have a story behind your brand. Could you clarify this?**

*Well, there is a shift going on since the incident in Bangladesh a couple of year ago. People want to know the heritage of the clothing, the materials used and by who the garment was made. Many brand anticipate on this by incorporating the story behind the product in their branding. For example, you have a brand 'Kiss & Tell' they work together with women from India. The brand tells on every label, the person who made the product and where it is from. This gives a special meaning to the brand and consumers feel instantly connected. It adds a lot more value, to get a transparent insight into the production process of the brand. You also notice a need for more local small brands. They rather want something special, so they rather choose for a small brand than a H&M garments that everybody wears. It does not matter that it is a little bit more expensive because it has much more value and is seen as unique. So brands and designers can anticipate on this by showing who the designers are, what their inspirations is. For example, there is one brand called 'Grannies Finest' they let their products knit by grannies, so it is also a social aspect that can give value to the product. Now a day, there is much more behind a brand than only the product.*

**And people are willing to pay more for that?**

*Yes I think so, because it raises a feel of authenticity. It feels right to buy something like that. They are helping the world and they give them more satisfaction. Also sustainability is something that companies are incorporating more in their strategy, certainly denim brands. The production of denim used to be very bad for the environment, because of the bleaching and washings. However, more and more you see denim brands that try to be more sustainable and they also use this in their communication, it become part of their branding. Sadly enough you have a lot of brands that take advantage of this, claiming that their sustainable while in the meantime only a part is. It is impossible to have everything organic because it would become to expensive. No it is going in the direction that it is becoming logical that a brand is sustainable and socially responsible. However, where are not there yet there still is a lot to be*

*done before is actually becomes a part of the strategy in every company. Also the consumer is still buying product, especially in the food industry, that are not organic just because it is cheaper.*

***Do you think it will change?***

*Yes I think it will change. If more brands will produce sustainable product they will find a way to reduce the cost. So this will keep on growing, certainly if more brand will join forces in this. Take for example, Mint design on the Fashion Week, it are all fashion brands together promotion sustainability and social responsibility. Together they do the branding and communication. I believe that is a very strong signal that brand join forces in order to reduce costs.*

***It reminds me of crowdfunding. A lot of beginning designers use crowdfunding because due to the recession it is very hard to get financial aid from the bank...***

*Yes indeed, crowd funding has also a lot to do with the economic state. It becomes much more local, indirectly via friend and family. It becomes more important to help local designer, and this is also what the consumer like to buy. Things made in their neighbourhood, you know where it is from and that it is not produced all the way in china with child labour. The closer it is the more control you have on the produce and the more value it gives the product. I believe that crowdfunding will stay for a long time, because the investors feel that they can influence the brand. This is why a lot of people like to invest; they feel that they can give their opinion in the process whereby a brand is build together.*

***So, less individuality and more collectively?***

*Well, individuality in a group. You have al the individuals but they can join forces without losing their own identity.*

***You say that a brands abuse sustainability, probably because they notice the need and they know it will make money. It doesn't seems very authentic. When I think of authenticity, I think of reality and purity. However, the models used in the advertising do not seem very authentic. What is your opinion regarding this subject?***

*This is a dilemma where I believe a lot of fashion brand are coping. It is mostly the costs aspect that they choose to use these kinds of models. They have small sizes so it cost less to*

*produces them. Of course it would be nice if there would be more variety on the catwalk, but too fat I do not see happening. It is so ingrained in our culture that it is ugly, that it would never be accepted. The only way that designers or brand would do this is to make a statement. I believe it is good if something changes regarding this, but I think it will take a long time before it actually will change.*

## **Appendix B An Interview with B. Schriks**

Schriks, B., (2014). *About authenticity and the fashion Industry*. Interview, April 24, 2014.

### **How has the recessions, until now, influenced the fashion Industry?**

*The prize started to matter much more than it did before. Apart from there is too much available on the market, which makes it very hard for consumers to decide what product to choose. Eventually they will choose for the product that has intangible added value. Furthermore, you notice a big difference in brand loyalty. People are not loyal to brand anymore, if they can find the same product for a cheaper price they will choose for the brand that is cheaper.*

### **What do you think fashion brands have to do in order to survive in the recessions?**

*The markets are asking for two things. On the one hand they want brands like Primark, which offers clothes for prices you can't imagine. On the other hand you want brand that offers intangible added value. So they can choose one of the options. Furthermore, because intangible added value is becoming more and more important, branding has become more important within companies. Instead of being part of the marketing departments it is becoming a part of the strategy of the brand. Lastly, transparency is becoming more important than ever. People do not trust a brand easily anymore, due to the past that is why as brand you have to be transparent in what you do and how you do it.*

### **And for starting fashion designers? Designers of our future?**

*Well, it is impossible to start and then manage to have low prices equal to shop of Primark or H&M. So for them it means that they have no other choice than creating intangible added value. Furthermore, it is really important that they find out a way to create loyalty, which is as I said before getting harder and harder.*

**How do you feel regarding ideal images used in the fashion industry, such as very skinny models?**

*I believe the discussion is opened. More and more you see people talking about it and it really has its effects. They are more 'sexless' models used. Take for example the model that was used for the HEMA advertisement for the push-up bra. What's his name..*

***Oh yes I know him, do you mean Andrej Pejic?***

*Yes, indeed. Well if you look at their advisement, at the first glance you think it is a woman but if you take a second glance you discover it is actually a man. It was a big shock for the fashion world using a male model to promote lingerie. Not only did H&M was controversial by using an Androgynous model but it also had impeccable impact.*

***Impeccable impact?***

*Yes I noticed that everyone was talking about on work, on social media, really everywhere. Also you see a lot of red-haired model being used, the model that when there were a child always got picked on. They have been always seen as a mistake, but now it is changing because they are suddenly seen as a rarity that makes the fashion industry want even them more.*

***So what do you think of this change?***

*If find it a really good change and I believe that it must carry on.*

## **Appendix C An Interview with M. Struycken**

Struycken, M., (2014). About authenticity and the fashion Industry. Interview, Mai 1, 2014.

**Your website says: ‘True fashion is about beauty, expression, vision, tradition & innovation, craftsmanship, authenticity, history, emotion, seduction, energy, playing, magic, eclecticism, culture ...’ Could you describe authenticity for me?**

*Authenticity for me means that you have a very strong personality, that you have your own signature. Just like one of your brands, Steven Tai, at TOTEM. This is why I think he has a very big change to become successful. If you see his picture you think that is very original and can't be from someone else. Of course it can be copied but he did not copy it himself. Because now a days you have so much stuff that is being copied that every looks a like, if one brands succeeds in doing something different every other brand copies that instead of creating something different. A strong own identity is authenticity.*

**You think this is important for brands?**

*Very important! You always have those brands like H&M and Zara that will make profit whatsoever, and since they have a low price you do not even have to try to be like them. Or be somewhere in the middle. You need to be different.*

**Different how?**

*Well take for example Nana van Blaaderen. She knits and all her product are knitwear. It is very different and has strong themes in her collections. It different, but at the same time very wearable.*

**Do you think it is important to have product in you collection that stand out?**

*I think it is important to stand out, but it does not have to be some haute couture or avant-garde piece. Average is just not enough, it needs to be notable, distinct but wearable. Take for example Steven Tai, he is the perfect example for that. Although, I think his pieces a little bit oversized but also the craftsmanship that he uses is really good.*

**Back to where we came from?**

*Yes, but in a different way. Old craft techniques are being restored and put in a new jacket. You see also a lot of development of material but with a twist. This is actually already happening a while in interior design but now it is really upcoming in Fashion as well. The only downside is that it is also really expensive. So you need to decide am I producing clothes for the mass or on small scale? Beginning designers actually only have one choice because there is no way you can make the production that cheap or you need to find some financial supplier. Another more difficult problem that I notice is that other in other countries fashion is much more important. Design talent from England or France always get notice with big brand such as LVMH, and that is much more difficult for Dutch designers. It makes me wonder if big talent in the Netherlands even exists. Which designer is as high of a calibre as Steven Tai for example.*

**I notice that the quality of the products is very important, but what about the story behind the product?**

*Nowadays product and the story are inextricably attached to each other. It was very different year ago when the competition was not as intense as it is now. For example, when I did my internship at Puk & Hans, as store on the Rokin in Amsterdam, they also had their own clothing-line, which was very popular. However year after year it got more difficult to market their brand. They started the collection in the sixties and then it was very different that a shop had his own collection, but later on when other stores started to do this it became much harder to market their clothing, because what made them different was not making them different anymore. It is really important that you are able to stand out from the crowd and it has become so much harder. Certainly with the rise of the internet, people are able to know not only all the brand available in the stores but they have the chance to know all the brand that exist in the entire world. NOT JUST A LABEL is one of those websites that help to discover and support pioneers in contemporary fashion. It is an indispensable tool for the industry; helping designer to finance their progressions independently by their online shop and in that way to gain exposure. So the Internet also helps a lot of designer but internet has also a downside.*

**What is the downside?**

*Actually a couple of weeks ago I went to see the principal teacher that I had back in when I had studied on ArteZ. We talked about how different everything was when I graduated. Back*

*then; in order to see the collection of other designers you needed to buy a magazine called Collezioni, it was very expensive 1000 guilders so you bought it with the whole group. Anyway, it was not visible right after the show, of even during the shows; it always took a couple of week, sometimes even months. Before you saw those collections. People that now graduated get so much information for different collections that I believe it spoils the creativity. People sooner copy than make something creative themselves. In order to become really creative you have to cut yourself off from all the information around you.*

**What is your opinions regarding ideal image, think of extreme thin models, in the fashion industry?**

*This discussion is going on for ages, and to be honest I believe that clothes suit the best on thin models. You have some brand that use some fuller model, but at the end nothing looks so good as on a thin model.*

**But as you said authenticity is something that is important for a brand, however using model that stand far from the reflection of society..**

*Yes but I believe the people that are interested in fashion are not fat. Of course there a lot of people with overweight but I believe these are not the people brands are interested in. Furthermore, you can also argue that the skin colours represent on the runways and commercials is also not representative. The black models Iman and Naomi Campbell made a move towards this by publicly calling out the designers that not wanted to hire a diverse cast of models. I am not a professional on this subject but I believe that if the model can do the job she should be able to do the show no matter what skin colour she has.*

**Your magazine focuses a lot on trend watching, what are important inspiratory for the trends watching?**

*Everything actually, mainly expositions and Pinterest. Name a subject and I focused on everything that I believe has connection. I read a lot and make connection in my head. But I mainly try to focus on images. What do I see and what do I like. For example, now I notice what people more and more want a tactile garments, that something happens when you touch the fabric or that it has fringes. According to Lidewij Edelkoort this mainly is because we always look at flat screens and because of that we have a need for tactility. So we do not want the flat jersey any more and you see young designers incorporating on this.*



**Quality over quantity?**

*Yes certainly. I just read an article from the WNF and in this article they said that if we stay consuming the way we consumer know we need twice the raw material in order to handle the demand. We need to be honest with ourselves and know that the sky has been the limit. As result we believe it is better to but a couple of good quality pieces with value. This does not mean that the H&M and Zara will disappear but they have to be a lot more sustainable. However, the consumer has to realise that is will become more expensive. No more t-shirt for four euro.*

**Do you believe this will happen?**

*Yes but in the very long run. You already see it with eating habits; everybody is eating organic and vegetarian. But I just read an article that this is only 5% of the Dutch population. I really hope that it is going to develop because it also means that designer have more opportunities.*

## **Appendix D An Interview with J. Winnubst**

Winnubst, J., (2014). *About authenticity and the fashion Industry*. Interview, April 22, 2014.

### **How would you define authenticity?**

*How I define Authenticity? I see the word used a lot. I will explain my definition. Authenticity is a honest and bound to the truth characteristic of a brand/shop with clothing. Honesty and clarity over the production and earnings is also part of this. Furthermore, craftsmanship and small circulation are here a part of.*

### **How has the recession, until now, influenced the fashion industry?**

*It has had a big and hard influence, smaller prices than ever for clothing and smaller margins for all the manufacturers and sometimes also traders. Apart from that there is a big pressure from the consumer to be honest/fair-trade and at the same time low in price. Less spending on clothes via retail is a fact since 2008. Result: New initiatives have to be innovative in the way to find investors, big chains in the middle market need to reposition.*

### **Apart from repositioning and finding new ways to find investors, what do you think fashion brands have to do to survive this time of malaise?**

*Figure out what kind of client they want, which product fit with them and as I said before be innovative in every area possible. From concept to production, from logistics to retail or offer online. Not only focus on price or the rest of the market, because than everything will look like each other.*

### **How big of a part will authenticity plays its role in this?**

*I have no idea, if authenticity a own face in production and supply, than it will certainly play a big part.*

### **What are designer of the future?**

*To be specific in designers, I would say Alexander Wang and Mary Kantranzou for being innovative in basic. What kind of designers? Designers what do not work for money but from their hart.*

**Most of the big brands, such as Chanel, manage to book profit even in times of recession. What do you believe that is the reason behind this?**

*I believe it is because they did not expand too widely and rapidly. You can think of the number of collection, and product range, some luxury brand managed to keep this within limits and because of that they stayed wanted. Also because they stayed loyal to perfection and craftsmanship that made these brands desirable.*

**What is your opinions regarding ideal image, think of extreme thin models, in the fashion industry?**

*I have no idea why they are always that thin, I guess everything fits better on a thin women or man. Ideal image change per period, now you see more a focus towards quirky models with a different radiation and at the same time there is a demand for impersonal beautiful models.*

**Zeitgeist is seen as an important part for trend watching, what are other important instruments for the trends watching?**

*Zeitgeist? You means looking at the spirit of times analyse this and question yourself why? I use market knowledge, production knowledge and insight together to look at consumer behaviour, economy political developments, general knowledge of contemporary art and culture. On top of that always you always have to be open for new signals.*

## **Appendix E An Interview with J. Watson**

Watson, J., (2014). About authenticity and the fashion Industry. Interview, Mai 7, 2014.

### **Could you define Authenticity for me?**

*Authenticity resembles different thing, I notice that it is such a huge trend know for authenticity for fashion brands. One ways that fashion brands can be authentic is by showing their heritage, where they came from. Only the thing is that for starting fashion brands it impossible to use this as part of your branding. Also, your generation is so much confronted with all sorts of marketing that you have became marketing savvy. So what you want know is that when you buy a coffee, you not buy a coffee for the coffee but also the story behind it of how it is made has become really important. Furthermore, for small individual brands is it really important they show there passion for their product and you see consumer getting more attracted to brand who do this. Of course you have still the big player such as Lee, Levi's and Diesel, but they are their losing ground since they do not manage to get a connection with the consumer.*

### **So would you say the consumer is choosing small and local brands over big and global brands?**

*Yes, but it does not have to be especially local. I think it becomes more important that a brand specializes on one thing and make it the best of the best. Moleskins is one of these examples. In the fashion industry you can think of Red Wings for example. They produce agendas and books but ones of really good quality and everybody know it. I cannot say it enough how important it will be to become expert on one thing, because that is what the consumer want. Also, be open to the consumer. Not about everything but as much as possible. Show that you brand is transparent and speaks from its heart.*

### **And sustainability is that important?**

*Yes it is important but also very difficult for a lot of brands. You need at least to show that you care and try to be as sustainable as possible.*

### **What challenges does the economic recessions bring to the fashion industry?**

*I believe that branding has become more important than ever, because people do not buy a product for a product anymore, they buy a product because the authentic story behind it. But*

*there are also other challenges. For example, retail rather plays it safe during the recession wanting their turnover to stay stable. So they would never choose a small brand that is unfamiliar, they rather choose something that they are sure of will sell. Furthermore, there are so many brands that it has become very important to be able to stand out which has become harder and harder.*

**Some big luxury fashion brands still manage to make profits in this time of recession, what do you believe that is the reason behind this?**

*I think they are not hit as hard as the middle segment of the fashion industry. There are still enough people that are able to afford these pricey items. Maybe not anymore in Europe but markets like China and Russia are countries that are very wealthy. But also for them it is important to be authentic. For example, Louis Vuitton did so many collaborations that the brand was not perceived as luxurious anymore. They had to reinvent their way of becoming a luxurious brand, and not by producing another it-bag with their chessboard all over it. I believe a lot of luxury brands have lost their lustre but not all brands. Hermes for example always has always made limited product of good quality and has always talked about how their bags were produced.*

**Do you believe it is important that your production process is shown?**

*Yes, I believe that is very important. Because that is how you can show your consumer why they pay the price they pay. The focus has changed to how the product was designed. Talking about the fabrics that you have used adds value to the products. One of these examples is Bottega Veneta. The brand sells bags that are handily made by two men, and one bag takes two days of work. The bags are really expensive, but because you know that two men have spent two entire days to make your bag, you are willing to pay that high price. On top of that you see more brands talking about a product that is a product to keep*

**Are there any other things that are important for fashion brands now?**

*Craftsmanship. It has been a big trend the last years but it still is. All the glitter and glamour is removed and craftsmanship has become very important. All the bad and tacky pieces are making place for high quality pieces that are made to keep. Furthermore, for the middle segment it is very important that you make something that is very original and stands out from the rest. Make sure you are passionate and believe in what you are doing. Nothing is better than buying your product from someone that is doing this to make a living.*

**Last question, what do you think of the ideal images used by the fashion industry?**

*Well, I believe fashion always needs to be aspirational. It always has been. But I also know that you have become market savvy, you are confronted with over 3000 images a day so you became really critical. I think also for advertising it has become important to stand out, but that does not have to be necessarily in body size it can be in other ways.*



## **Appendix F An Interview with F. Faber**

Faber, F., (2014). About authenticity and the fashion Industry. Interview, Mai 8, 2014.

**You started your company during the economic crisis; do you notice any difference between when you started and now?**

*Well when I started I was a newbie to everything. I just finished art school and I was very young, I was 21 at that time and so I did not know how everything worked. But when I got more sales points one and a half year later, I think around 2010/2011, I noticed that at that moment you really knew what were the good months to sell and what were the worst months for sales. It was a fluent movement; it started in March with the new collection and then in May is was a really busy month because of all the weddings and people wanted to wear something new. Then I went slowly but steady on until September when the new collection came and of course in December the sales went up again. However, there was a moment when there was no structure in how much was sold in which month even stores made very different turnovers. When one store was doing really well the other store had nearly made any turnover. But the since a while I notice that is becoming more stable again.*

**You said you gain more selling points after a couple of years, was it hard for you to get your collection in a store as beginning designer?**

*No not at all actually. But I only work with consignment, this withholds that only if my product gets sold that I will receive money for it if it does not get sold then they will give it back. It is very hard to find stores that are willing to purchase your whole collection because they do not know you. So they do not take the risk. But I have known four shops that sell my collection. I had more shops but because they were not selling enough, mainly because of the crisis, I decided to narrow down the amount of shops of presence. I know I am represented in four shops of which two make really good turnover. And from those four selling points, three approached me to have my collection in their stores. So I mainly get approached it is almost never that I approach a shop.*

**And the shops where your collection is sold, are those shops where mostly young designer brands are being sold or also very known brands?**



*It are mostly new designers, represented by concept stores. Those stores are the most interested in new talent and are willing to put effort into finding someone. But I have also been sold in stores, where I was the only young designer and that is really nice of course. Also those stores approached me*

**How did they find you?**

*All kinds of different ways, mostly indirect or through the website. Or hat you are on an event and that they get to know you or I also had one time that a representative of a shoe brand when to a shop and she was wearing a dress of mine, and that was how the person ended up contact me. That was quite funny, sometimes they find me in the weirdest ways.*

**And how did the concept of your brand came together, did you had a clear vision when you where in school or it came together afterwards?**

*No, during the time of my study I was really looking for a strong concept, but this actually came the together in the last period of my studies. Then I found my style. I also was very young, I was twenty-one when I graduated, so I just came out of puberty. And Eventually it was according to plan that my studies I would start my own brand but when I graduated there was a store that so badly wanted to have my collection that I kind of rolled into it.*

**Okay, but how did your concept eventually came together?**

*Eventually it is the style that I developed in the last year of my study and that is also they style that I am still using. It is the style that stands for who I am. And of course you learn a lot in practice and you adjust to that. You always think you learn a lot on school but actually your learn way more in practice.*

**Why do you think that stores want you brand?**

*Because it is clean. I is speaks to a big target group, at least that I what I heard. Of course I chose a target group, because they always say that you have to choose one. But it is actually that the target group chose my brand. I do not know how it is in Paris but the Dutch women are more very practical, they want to be able to go with it on the bike for example. Furthermore, it is playful and minimalistic what makes it attractive. Also, comfort, a word that is not highly appreciated in the fashion industry but what is very important for the Dutch woman.*

**Do you notice that more and more people choose quality over quantity?**

*I have the idea that the people that go to the shops where i am present always have been going tot his kind of high segment stores. So they already bought the clothes and they have the money to afford it. What I do notice is that before the crisis started more people saved for something expensive and where willing to buy are dress for 180 euro which they would not do otherwise, with the idea i want a good quality product that is fairly manufactured. That was gone for a while, but I have the idea is coming back more.*

**Do you see your brand as an authentic brand?**

*Yes, yes I do. But for everybody authentic means something different. In the way I perceive it I believe my brand authentic. But I believe to survive as young designer, that it is really important to be authentic. Because their if so much available on the market and it is important to stand out from the rest, so I believe authenticity is the ways to be different.*

**How is your brand different from other brands?**

*My brand is different from other because the clothes are simplistic and have a Scandinavia feel and at the same time they are very famine. For other brands it is mostly one or the other but I combine the two. Also, that it is very comfortable and that the clothes are very scarce.*

**How much many items do you produce per item?**

*It differs per item, but the production items are between 12 and the 40/50. So in total for the whole collection I product 300 to 350 items.*

**Do you have a big difference between your collection of spring-summer and fall/winter?**

*The difference between the two different collections is becoming less; they become more intertwined with each other. I have a couple of best sellers that I produce every season. However, the materials and the colours that I use are different. For this season for example I have a dress in coral red and grey blue, and the fabrics that I used are cotton and linen, and for the coming winter collection this dress is coming back but than in a wool blend with dark colours.*

***Is the intertwinement of the two collection always has been like this since you started working or is it becoming more?***

*No it became more since I have been working as designer. I also notice it from my colleges, people are done with that there are new collection in the shops every two weeks. I always tried to distance me from all trends. When I design something, they need to be able to wear it for a long time. I really find it a pity that some fashions go by so fast. Me myself I am more a person that wears something until it has holes in the fabric, and even then I sometimes sew it together. But you keep the season difference; you need to wear warm things in the winter and light fabric in the summer. I actually also notice it with big fashion houses, like H&M for example. A lot of product stays longer than one season. Which I myself also do, I mean you know what they say 'never change a winning team'.*

***Do you always change it?***

*Yes sometimes it is just the colour but sometimes I can also change the design slightly. Make it a little bit wider or something, but I always change the colour and a different fabric. However, sometimes the dress of the summer collection is still not sold out in the shop but is selling really good than it will stay in the shop until it is sold. Also retail do it less.*

***Is there also less pressure from the retail to produce a new collection?***

*No, not at all, because the shops where I sell my products have a new collection every six months and for the consumer this is quite hard because they are used that after six weeks you can find something new in the store. So, my retail stores find it hard to deal with that they have only a new collection every six months instead of six weeks. What I found as a solution for that is to not give my whole collection at the beginning of the seasons but to spread it out equally over the six months.*

***You started a product a while ago 'one size fits all', what was your idea behind this?***

*I thought it needs to be possible to make one clothing piece, that speaks to everyone and everyone can interpret on his or her own way. This question stayed in my head for a while and I decided to do something with it. I started with different patterns and I like to show that fashion is for everybody you do not have to be thin to look fashionable. What I really liked*

*about it is that it is a very clean shirt, and I tried to find as many different people to look how their interpretation is of how this shirt should be worn.*

***In what sizes does your collection ranges?***

*My collection ranges until Large. Small, medium and large and I have shared sizes. So I also have Small/Medium and Medium Large. Where Small/medium is from size 34 – 38 and medium/large ranges from 38 – 42, but because my dresses are quite wide and because I need to sell my products to consignment I try to use mostly these kind of sizing and actually everybody likes it this way, I have no complains. So I stayed that ways.*

***How do you feel regarding ideals images used by the fashion industry?***

*I find it really boring actually and unrealistic. I always try to use professional models, but sometimes I also use normal people that I find appealing for the camera. My sample size is 36 so not as small, 32 or 34, as other brands have. However, this also has to do with my target group, they are above 35 so they do not often carry sizes 32 and 34. I believe it is better to see a real woman, with breast and a bottom, it look more realistic and the garments need to be worn and not showed. I actually got in a fight for using a too skinny model for a shoot. The photographer casted to model and he could not see that she was way to skinny. It not fit with the concept at all, because it was all about sustainability, in what ways you can be innovative but in a sustainable ways.*

***Do you incorporate the sustainability factor in you collection?***

*Not as much as I want to be, it is very difficult for starting designers but I am sustainable in the ways that I do not produce surpluses. Also, it quite local, at least it is produced in Romania and not in China. Apart from that I believe my collection is more sustainable because it is not trend-sensitive and can be worn over a longer period of time. However, I would really love to work with organic fabrics and materials but it is so expensive that it is almost impossible to be able to retail that. What I do do is buying remnants that are actually seen as trash, but I give them a second life.*



# Appendix G Questionnaire

## QUESTIONNAIRE AUTHENTICITY

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Thank you for taking the time to complete my survey, part of my graduation project for the course: International Commercial Communication at the University of Applied Science in Utrecht (2014).

The information gathered in this survey will help me determine how beginning (fashion) designers can cope with the recession. This survey aims to get a better understanding in the preference of people in times of recession.

This questionnaire should only take two minutes of your time.

MANY THANKS.

Veronique M. Klomp

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**1. What is your gender?**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**2. What is your age?**

- ☐ Younger than 18
- ☐ 18 – 25
- ☐ 26 – 40
- ☐ 41 – 65
- ☐ Older than 65

**3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ 2-year College Degree (Associates)
- ☐ 4-year College Degree (BA,BS)
- ☐ Masters Degree
- ☐ Doctoral Degree
- ☐ Professional Degree (MD,JD)

**4. An Aspirational Consumer is a consumer, who is defined by their love of shopping and their desire for responsible consumption.**

**Please indicate on the first scale below how much you like to shop (1= not at all, 7= very much). And on the second scale your desire for responsible consumption (1 = Not alt all, 7 = Very much). With responsible we mean through consumption helping society to be more sustainable (for example, organic products).**

**Scale 1.**

Strongly Agreee	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Strongly Disgreee
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**Scale 2.**

Strongly Agreee	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Strongly Disgreee
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5. If you could choose one of these garments, which one would you choose?

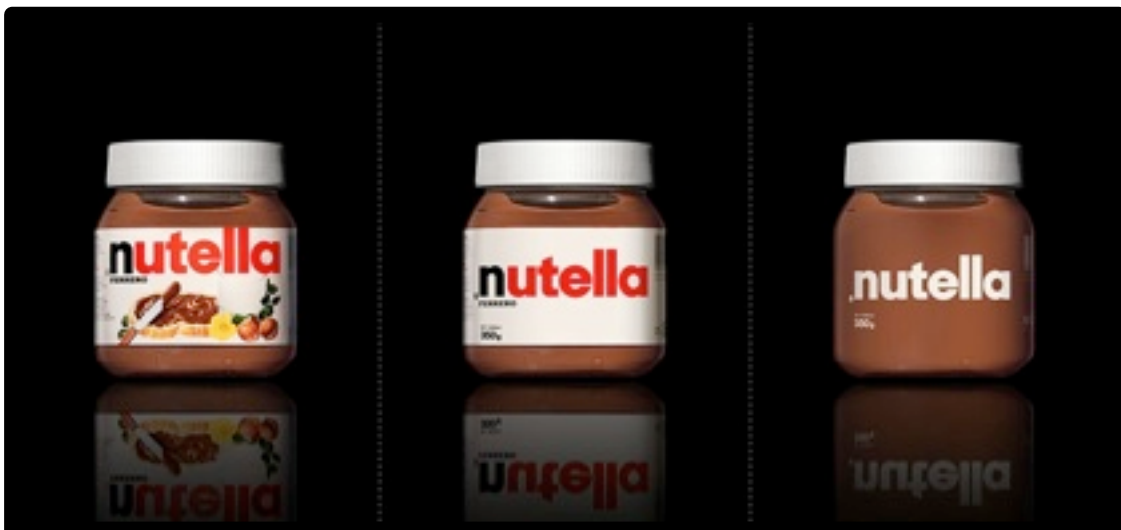


- ☐ A basic item that you can mix with different outfits and could wear several seasons. Like a leather jacket.



- ☐ A statement piece i.e. clothes that you wear in order to attract attention. Like this skirt.

6. Here you see three different variations of a jar Nutella. Which one of the three jars do you find most simple in design?



- ☐ Jar on the left
- ☐ Jar in the middle
- ☐ Jar on the right



7. Please scale how appealing you find the design of jar you have chosen in the previous question (1 = Not appealing at all, 7 = Very appealing)

Very appealing   ☐ 1        ☐ 2        ☐ 3        ☐ 4        ☐ 5        ☐ 6        ☐ 7        Not appealing at all

8. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: *'On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.'*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly is agree

9. And with the following statement: *'In general I believe that complex products are have a higher quality than simple products.'*

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

10. And the following statement: *'At times I think I am not good at all.'*

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

11. Could you please indicate which image has your preference?



☐ Image on the left

☐ Image on the right

12. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: *'I feel that I have a number of good qualities.'*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

13. And with the following statement: *'I am able to do things as well as other people'*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

14. Could you please indicate which image has your preference?



☐ Image on the left



☐ Image on the right

15. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: *'I feel I don not have much to be proud of.'*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

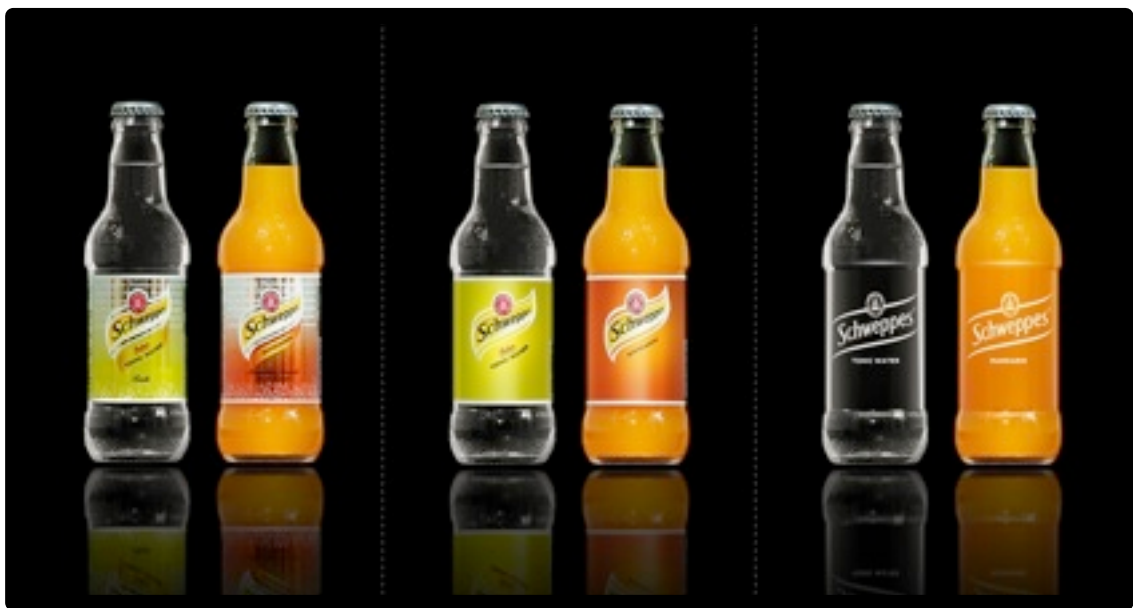
16. And with the following statement: *'When it comes down to clothing, I choose quality over quantity'.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

17. And with the following statement: *'I feel useless at times'*.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

18. Here you see three different variations of bottles Schweppes. Which one of the three bottles do you find most simple in design?



- ☐ Bottles on the left
- ☐ Bottles in the middle
- ☐ Bottles on the right

19. Please scale how appealing you find the design of jar you have chosen in the previous question (1 = Not appealing at all, 7 = Very appealing)

Very  
appealing   ☐ 1      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4      ☐ 5      ☐ 6      ☐ 7      Not  
appealing  
at all

**20. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: *'I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on a equal plane to others'.***

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

**21. And with the following statement: *'I prefer small and local brand over big and global brands'.***

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

**22. And with the following statement: *'I wish I could have more respect for myself'.***

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

23. Could you please indicate which image has your preference?



☐ Image on the left

☐ Image on the right

24. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'All-in all, I incline to feel that I am a failure'.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

25. And with the following statement: *'I wish I could have more respect for myself'.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

**26. And with the following statement: *'I take a positive attitude towards myself'.***

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

**27. And with the following statement: *'I feel more tempted in buying a product when there is a strong story behind the product'.***

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

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Thank you for you time. If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire or are curious for the results, please feel free to contact me at: [Veronique.klomp@gmail.com](mailto:Veronique.klomp@gmail.com).

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## Appendix H Tables and Graphs

**Table 1** Age \* Attitude Towards Responsible Shopping

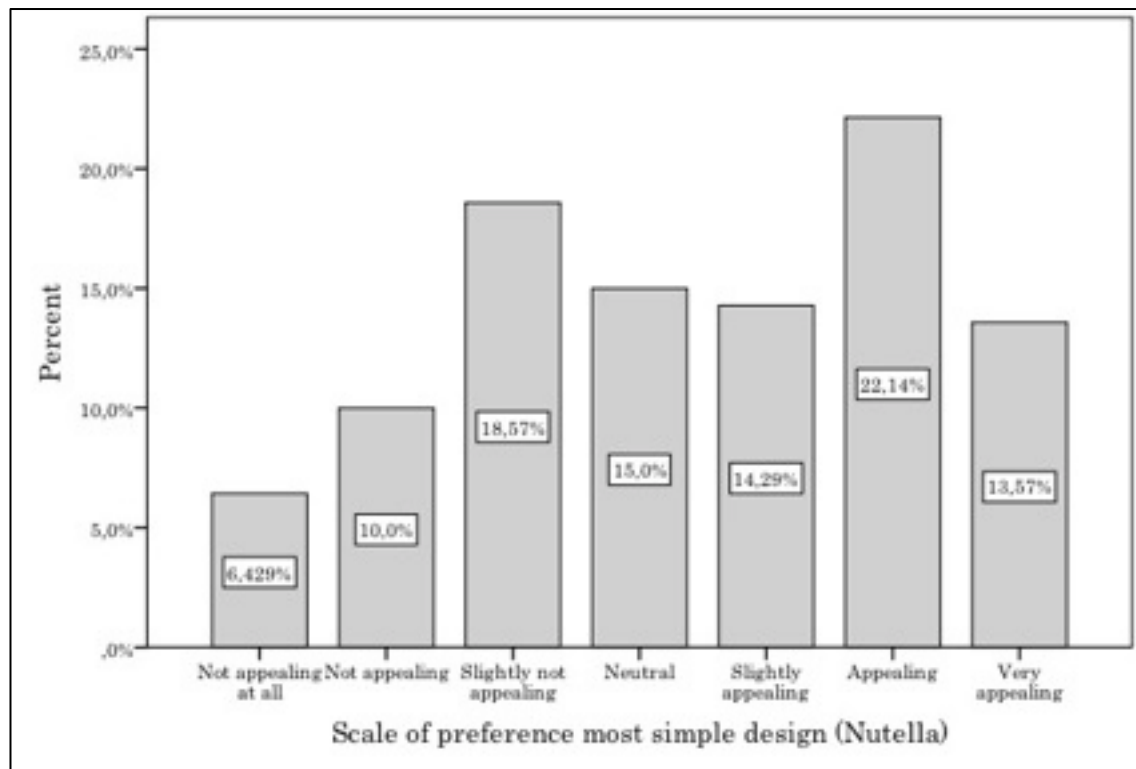
		Responsible shopping							Total
		Not at all	Not	Not really	Neutral	Not much	Much	Very much	
Age	18-25	1	6	5	15	10	9	5	51
		2,0%	11,8%	9,8%	29,4%	19,6%	17,6%	9,8%	100,0%
	26-40	2	5	2	15	10	9	3	46
		4,3%	10,9%	4,3%	32,6%	21,7%	19,6%	6,5%	100,0%
	41-65	1	2	2	7	4	11	11	38
		2,6%	5,3%	5,3%	18,4%	10,5%	28,9%	28,9%	100,0%
	Older than 65	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	5
		0,0%	20,0%	0,0%	0,0%	20,0%	40,0%	20,0%	100,0%
	Total	4	14	9	37	25	31	20	140
		2,9%	10,0%	6,4%	26,4%	17,9%	22,1%	14,3%	100,0%

**Table 2** Love for Shopping \* Responsible shopping

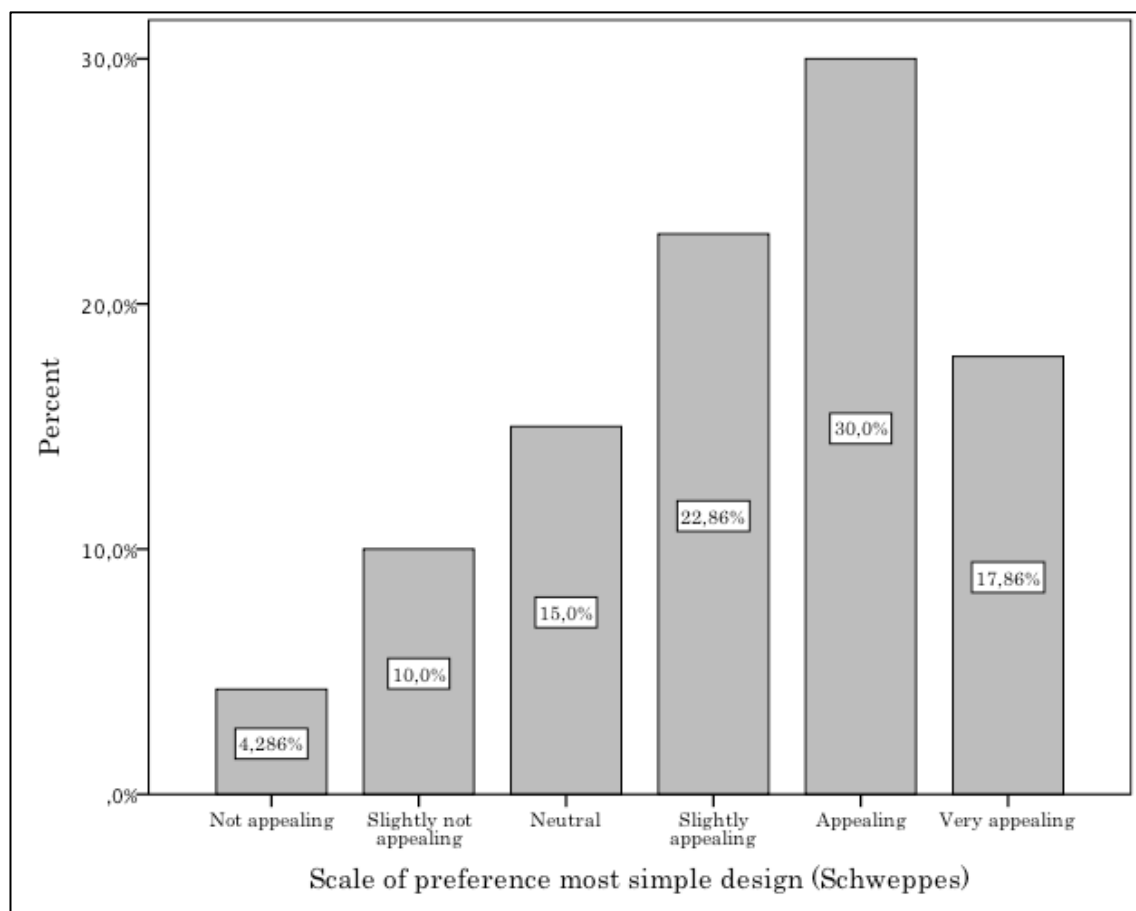
		Responsible shopping						
		Not at all	Not	Not really	Neutral	Not much	Much	Very much
Love for Shopping	Not at all	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
		0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,1%	0,0%	2,1%
	Not	0	4	0	0	0	7	1
		0,0%	2,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	5,0%	0,7%
	Not really	0	1	0	5	3	4	3
		0,0%	0,7%	0,0%	3,6%	2,1%	2,9%	2,1%
	Neutra l	3	0	4	8	2	9	3
		2,1%	0,0%	2,9%	5,7%	1,4%	6,4%	2,1%
	Not much	1	3	1	7	9	2	5
		0,7%	2,1%	0,7%	5,0%	6,4%	1,4%	3,6%
	Much	0	3	2	8	4	5	1
		0,0%	2,1%	1,4%	5,7%	2,9%	3,6%	0,7%
	Very much	0	3	2	9	4	4	4
		0,0%	2,1%	1,4%	6,4%	2,9%	2,9%	2,9%
Total		4	14	9	37	25	31	20
		2,9%	10,0%	6,4%	26,4%	17,9%	22,1%	14,3%



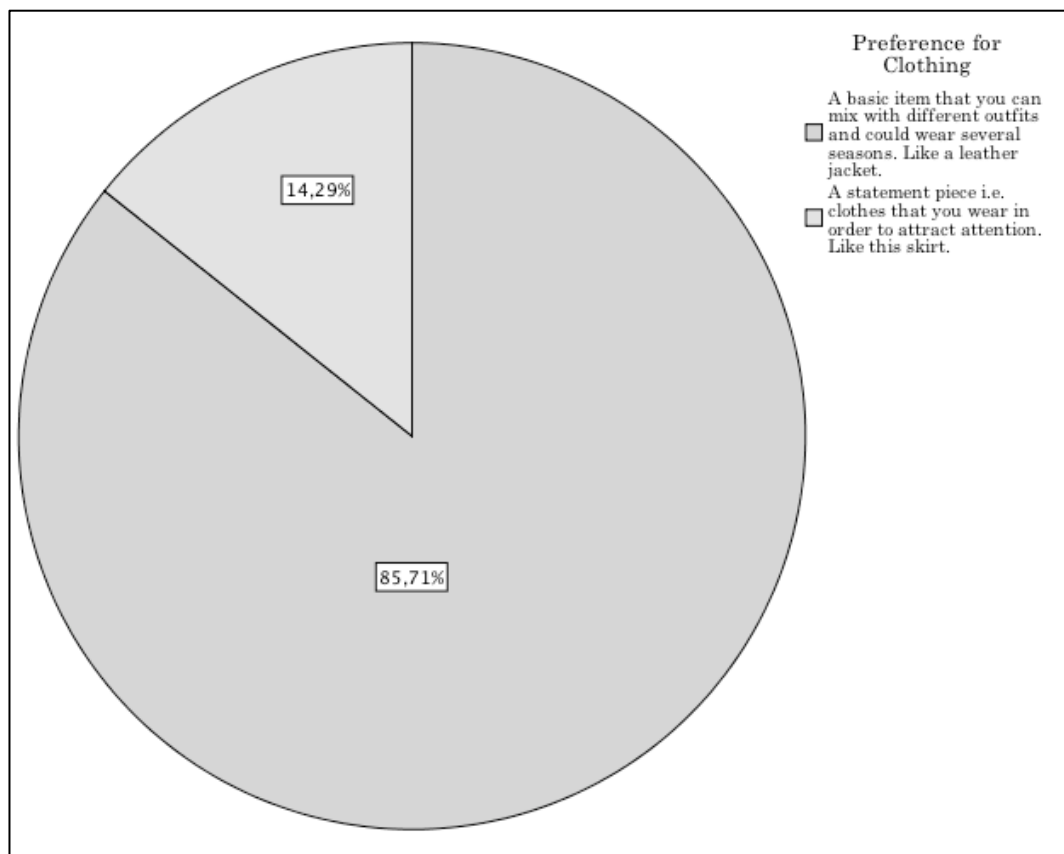
**Graph 1** Appeal of most simple design (Nutella)



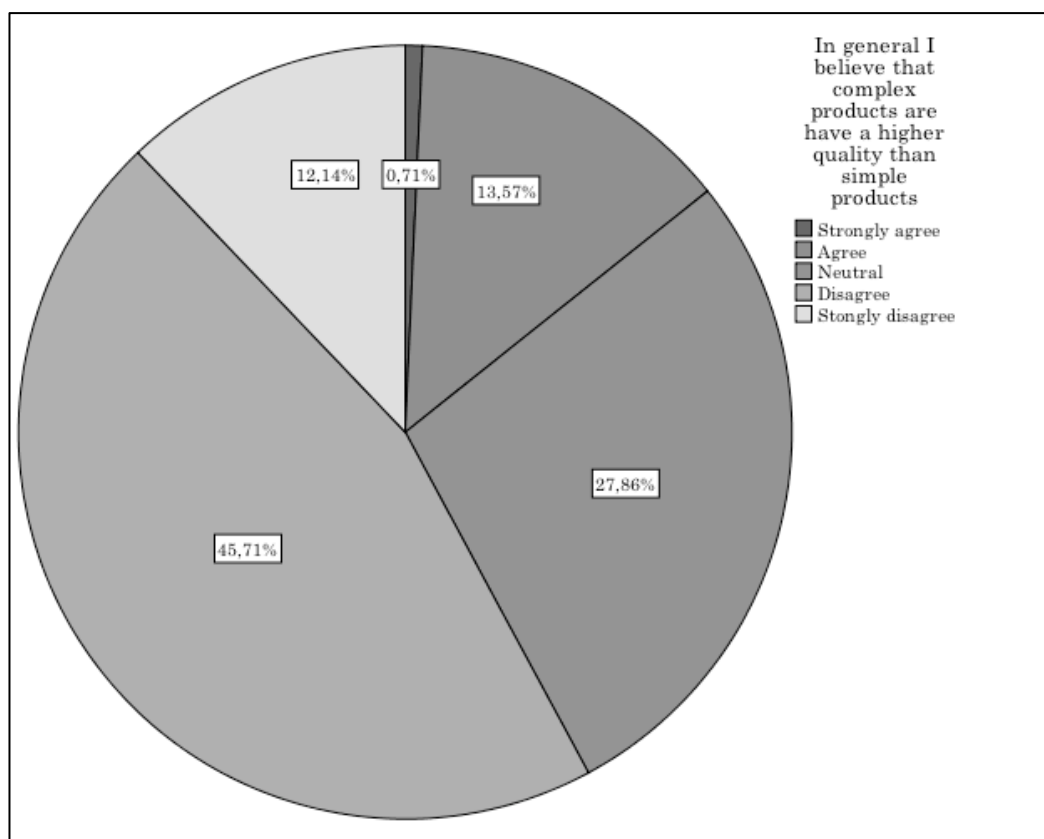
**Graph 2** Appeal of most simple design (Schweppes)



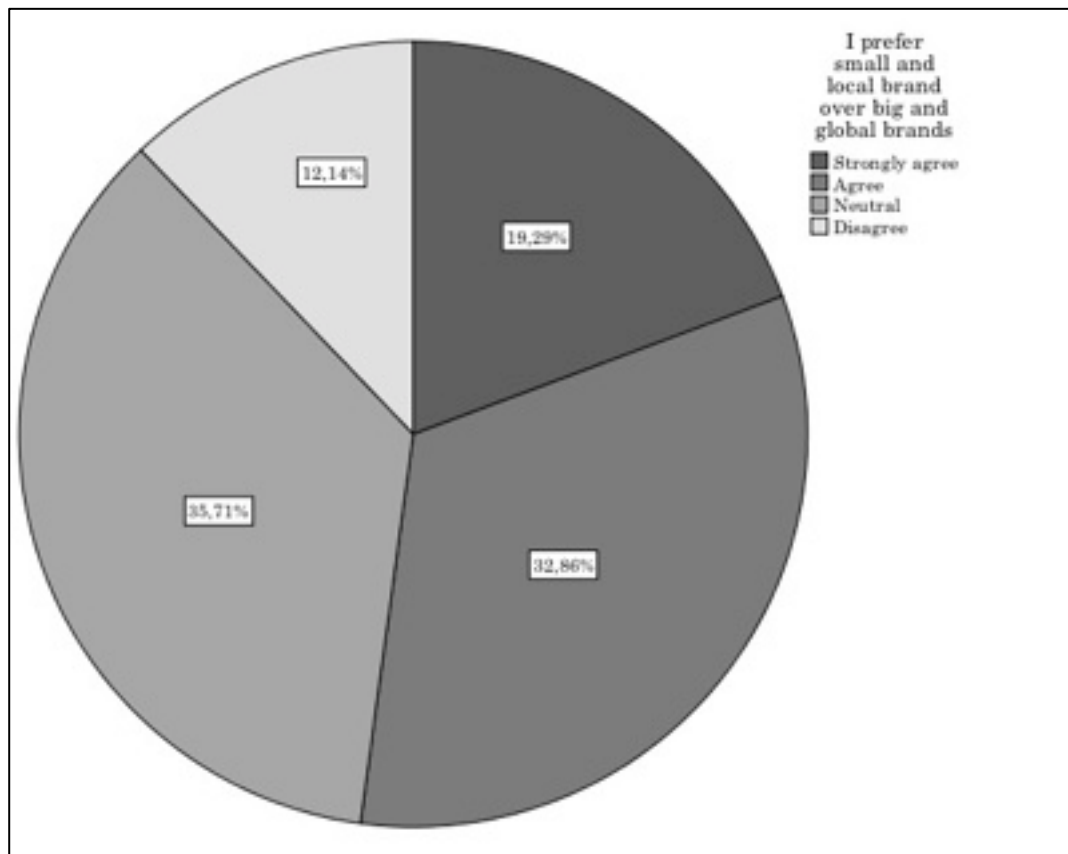
**Graph 3** Preference of Clothing



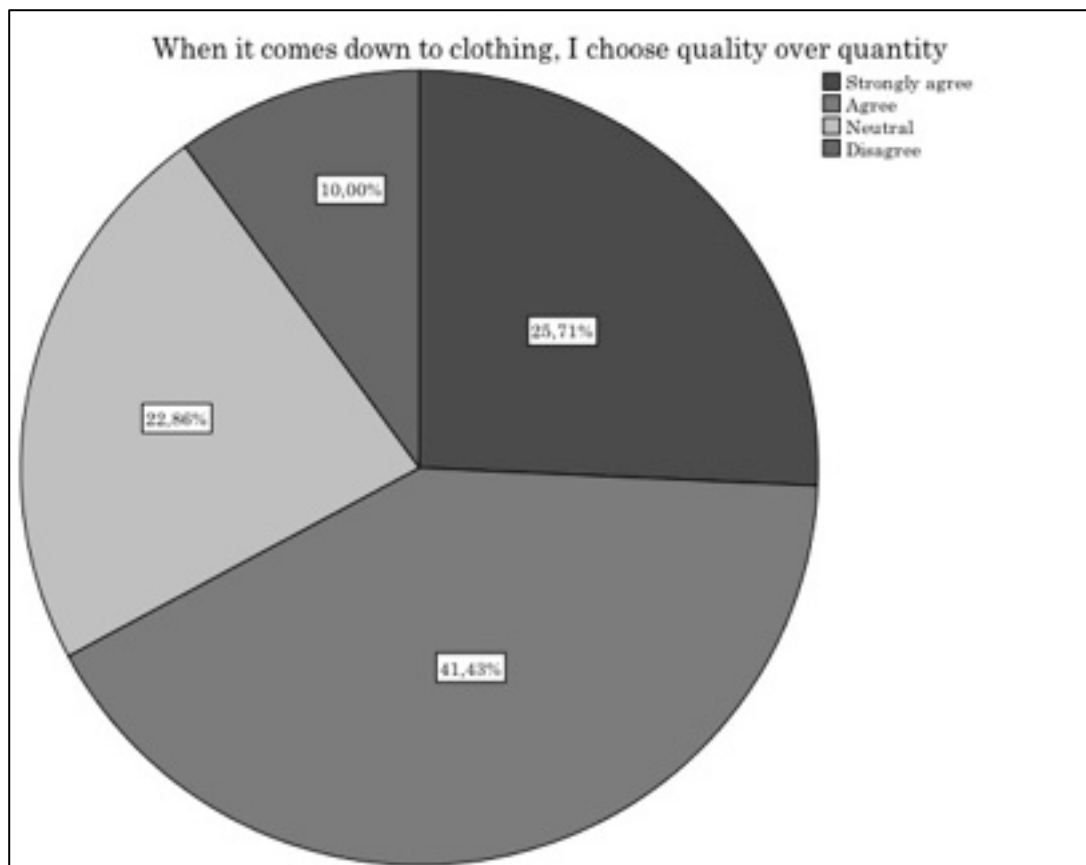
**Graph 4** Complex vs. Simple



**Graph 5** Small & Local vs. Big & Global



**Graph 6** Quality over Quantity



**Table 3** High and low self-esteem, models (1)

			Indication of preference models		Total
			Image on the left	Image on the right	
High and Low Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Count	19	10	29
		% of Total	13,6%	7,1%	20,7%
	High Self-Esteem	Count	69	42	111
		% of Total	49,3%	30,0%	79,3%
Total		Count	88	52	140
		% of Total	62,9%	37,1%	100,0%

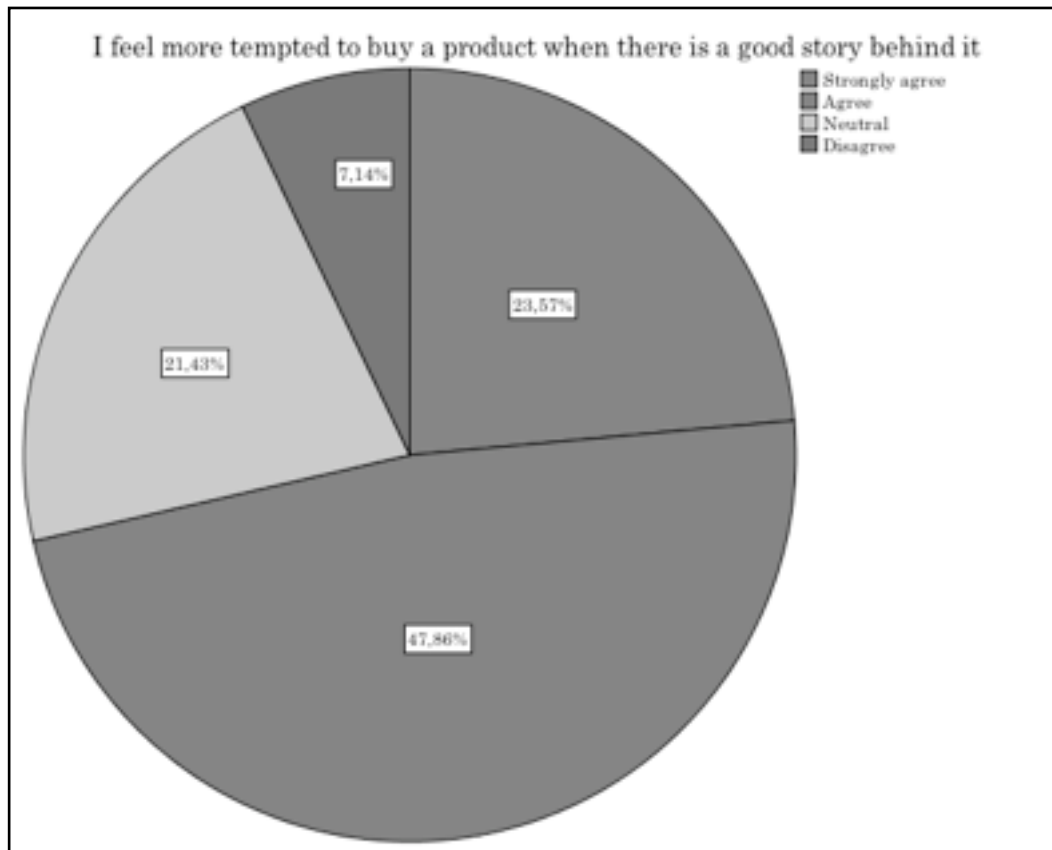
**Table 4** High and low self-esteem, models (2)

			Indication of preference models		Total
			Image on the right	Image on the left	
High and Low Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Count	13	16	29
		% of Total	9,3%	11,4%	20,7%
	High Self-Esteem	Count	66	45	111
		% of Total	47,1%	32,1%	79,3%
Total		Count	79	61	140
		% of Total	56,4%	43,6%	100,0%

**Table 5** High and low self-esteem, models (3)

			Indication of preference models		Total
			Image on the left	Image on the right	
High and Low Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Count	19	10	29
		% of Total	13,6%	7,1%	20,7%
	High Self-Esteem	Count	61	50	111
		% of Total	43,6%	35,7%	79,3%
Total		Count	80	60	140
		% of Total	57,1%	42,9%	100,0%

**Graph 7** Story behind the product



**Table 6** Level of Education \* Complex vs Simple

			In general I believe that complex products are have a higher quality than simple products					Total
			Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Level of Education	Highschool	Count	0	3	8	6	1	18
		% within Level of Education	0,0%	16,7%	44,4%	33,3%	5,6%	100,0%
	Some college	Count	0	3	3	4	6	16
		% within Level of Education	0,0%	18,8%	18,8%	25,0%	37,5%	100,0%
	2-year College Degree (Associates)	Count	0	3	1	6	1	11
		% within Level of Education	0,0%	27,3%	9,1%	54,5%	9,1%	100,0%
	4-year College Degree (BA,BS)	Count	1	5	16	26	4	52
		% within Level of Education	1,9%	9,6%	30,8%	50,0%	7,7%	100,0%
	Masters Degree	Count	0	5	10	16	3	34
		% within Level of Education	0,0%	14,7%	29,4%	47,1%	8,8%	100,0%
	Doctoral Degree	Count	0	0	0	2	2	4
		% within Level of Education	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	50,0%	50,0%	100,0%
	Professional Degree (MD, JD)	Count	0	0	1	4	0	5
		% within Level of Education	0,0%	0,0%	20,0%	80,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	1	19	39	64	17	140
		% within Level of Education	0,7%	13,6%	27,9%	45,7%	12,1%	100,0%

**Table 7** Level of Education \* Self-esteem

			High and Low Self-Esteem		Total
			Low Self-Esteem	High Self-Esteem	
Level of Education	Highschool	Count % within Level of Education	6 33,3%	12 66,7%	18 100,0%
	Some college	Count % within Level of Education	2 12,5%	14 87,5%	16 100,0%
	2-year College Degree (Associates)	Count % within Level of Education	2 18,2%	9 81,8%	11 100,0%
	4-year College Degree (BA,BS)	Count % within Level of Education	10 19,2%	42 80,8%	52 100,0%
	Masters Degree	Count % within Level of Education	8 23,5%	26 76,5%	34 100,0%
	Doctoral Degree	Count % within Level of Education	1 25,0%	3 75,0%	4 100,0%
	Professional Degree (MD, JD)	Count % within Level of Education	0 0,0%	5 100,0%	5 100,0%
Total		Count % within Level of Education	29 20,7%	111 79,3%	140 100,0%

**Table 8** Level of Education \* Desire for Responsible Shopping

			Responsible shopping							Total
			Not at all	Not	Not really	Neutral	Not much	Much	Very much	
Level of Education	Highschool	Count % within Level of Education	1 5,6%	5 27,8%	0 0,0%	5 27,8%	4 22,2%	2 11,1%	1 5,6%	18 100,0%
	Some college	Count % within Level of Education	0 0,0%	1 6,3%	0 0,0%	4 25,0%	6 37,5%	3 18,8%	2 12,5%	16 100,0%
	2-year College Degree (Associates)	Count % within Level of Education	0 0,0%	1 9,1%	0 0,0%	4 36,4%	2 18,2%	3 27,3%	1 9,1%	11 100,0%
	4-year College Degree (BA,BS)	Count % within Level of Education	3 5,8%	5 9,6%	5 9,6%	13 25,0%	9 17,3%	8 15,4%	9 17,3%	52 100,0%
	Masters Degree	Count % within Level of Education	0 0,0%	1 2,9%	4 11,8%	10 29,4%	4 11,8%	11 32,4%	4 11,8%	34 100,0%
	Doctoral Degree	Count % within Level of Education	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	1 25,0%	0 0,0%	3 75,0%	0 0,0%	4 100,0%
	Professional Degree (MD, JD)	Count % within Level of Education	0 0,0%	1 20,0%	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	1 20,0%	3 60,0%	5 100,0%
Total		Count % within Level of Education	4 2,9%	14 10,0%	9 6,4%	37 26,4%	25 17,9%	31 22,1%	20 14,3%	140 100,0%

## Appendix H List of Figures

- Figure 1 | Natural Beauty. Retrieved from <http://sudasuta.com/lesya.html>
- Figure 2 | Chanel Haute Couture. Retrieved from <http://www.nicoleta.me/2013/10/today-is-day.html>
- Figure 3 | Chanel RTW FW1415. Retrieved from <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/66498531972575673/>
- Figure 4 | The Catwalk. Retrieved from <http://the2hungupblog.blogspot.fr>
- Figure 5 | Size Zero. Retrieved from <http://shes-changed.tumblr.com>
- Figure 6 | Sustainability. Retrieved from <http://lovewarriors.se/shop/all/potsurns/urn-s>
- Figure 7 | Alexa Chung for Lucky Magazine. Retrieved from: <http://ericchakeen.tumblr.com/post/85127707146/alexa-chung-for-lucky-mag-nyc-2014>
- Figure 8 | Honest By Campaign. Retrieved from: <http://www.thefashionisto.com/eugeniy-sauchanka-for-honest-by-bruno-pieters/>
- Figure 9 | The Hand-made Process. Retrieved from: <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/229824387206132121/>
- Figure 10 | Pure Wool. Retrieved from: <http://www.feedmyego.net/2011/09/09/nanna-van-blaaderen>
- Figure 11 | Shuan Ross, Albino Model: <http://www.drivingadelorean.com/the-fresh-taste-albino.html/shaunross2>
- Figure 12 | Decorated Starbucks Coffee Cup by Johanna Basford, logo of 1992: <http://www.citizenbrooklyn.com/news/eat-news/beautiful-doodles-on-starbucks-cups/>
- Figure 13 | Samples. Retrieved from: <http://mapsinchoate.tumblr.com/page/30>
- Figure 14 | Protect the Planet. Retrieved from: <http://bittebleibfuerimmer.tumblr.com>
- Figure 15 | Cotton-field. Retrieved from: <http://bittebleibfuerimmer.tumblr.com>
- Figure 16 | Abby Lee Kershaw, Model with Gap Teeth. Retrieved from:
- Figure 17 | McDonald's Campaign Paris 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.adweek.com/adfreak/mcdonalds-unveils-simplest-ads-its-ever-made-157906>