

SHANGHAI'S DEVELOPMENT INTO SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION - AN INSIGHT FROM A RETAIL APPAREL'S INDUSTRY ON CHANGE IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Examensarbete – Kandidat
Business Administration

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2015: VT2015KF13



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Title: Shanghai's development into sustainable consumption - an insight from a retail apparel's industry on change in consumer behavior

Year: 2015

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Abstract

The concept of sustainable consumption is today an important area, due to the fact that humans of the world consume goods and services on a regular basis which contributes towards environmental change and deprivation of both renewable as well as nonrenewable resources. One of the areas that this concept can be applied within is the retail apparel industry. The consumption of clothing is an influential cause of the ongoing environmental alteration and the unsustainable consumption of textile and apparel is becoming an increasingly important phenomena. This study investigates how the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceive consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption. The Chinese middle class is anticipated to increase a certain percentage the upcoming years. As a result it will lead to a heave in the consumption of all resources which will leave a considerable environmental impact. Sweden is considered to be one of the leading countries when it comes to sustainable living. In order to follow Sweden path of success in sustainable consumption a review has been conducted regarding important drivers which Sweden has adapted in order to improve attitudes towards sustainable consumption. These drivers are then later on compared to Shanghai's current situation to see if they can be used to achieve the same result in Shanghai as they did in Sweden.

The primary data consists of semi-structured interviews which have been conducted in Shanghai with established recycling retailers and Nordic retail vendors with a strong base in Sweden that have managed to establish their brand in China. The research findings that were concluded in the theoretical framework and the organizational review positioned three important drivers that can be used when analyzing the concept of sustainable consumption - *consumers, businesses and the government*. It has also been empirically proven that in comparison to Sweden where consumer's behavior and attitudes towards sustainability are increasing and socially accepted, Shanghai demonstrates that the concept of sustainable consumer behavior and consumption is not as equally developed and accepted.

Keywords: sustainable consumption, retail industry, Shanghai, recycled apparel

Acknowledgements

First of all we would like to thank the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) for giving us the opportunity and support to go abroad and investigate a subject that is becoming progressively more important to explore. We would also like to thank our supervisor Jenny Balkow for arranging group meetings with other students that were currently writing their theses as well as it gave us great feedback and good advice throughout the process. Lastly, we would also like to thank all respondents that have been involved and contributed with personal time and knowledge which has made it possible for us to carry through this bachelor thesis.

Borås, 2015-05-18.

Magda Hörndahl

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1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic of sustainable consumption within the retail industry in Shanghai, and previous research within this area. This followed by the problematization where the reason behind the choice to focus on Shanghai will be explained. To sum up the introduction, the thesis main questions and delimitations will be discussed as well.

The concept of sustainable consumption falls into the notion of reshaping consumerism and it is not about consuming less but rather about consuming differently as well as more efficiently (Beaton & Perera, 2012) and has become one of the primary goals within the development of sustainable objectives today (Mathews, 2012). Moreover, the concept of sustainable consumption may be applied in many different areas but in this study focus will be put on the sustainable consumption of apparel. The consumption of apparel refers to an individual's apparel procurement decisions and how the apparel is used by the individual. The theory embraces procurement, storing, using, preserving and discarding of the apparel products (Winakor, 1969). When considering different consumer actions that in some way may damage the natural environment, it is quite conjoint to focus on products that may have a depraving effect on the environment such as products that use petroleum or can only be used once. However, most consumers do not consider the associated environmental impacts their apparel purchases come bearing with. Subsequently, the consumption of clothing is an influential cause of the ongoing environmental alteration. Therefore, unsustainable consumption of textile and apparel is becoming an increasingly important phenomena that needs to be investigated (Mathews, 2012).

In this study focus will be put on how the retail apparel industry perceives consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption in Shanghai in comparison to Sweden. Furthermore, the chosen research area will be described more detailed further on in this chapter.

1.1 Background and previous research

As humans of the world we consume goods and services on a regular basis, contributing towards environmental change and deprivation of both renewable as well as nonrenewable resources. The Chinese middle class is anticipated to double its scope of 300 million to 600 million inhabitants by 2025 and the expected increase of inhabitants will lead to a heave in the consumption of all resources which will leave a considerable environmental impact (Wang, 2010). In accordance to Watts (2010), to be able to provide every individual in China with a lifestyle comparable to those living in Shanghai, the factories in China will need to produce for example, 213 million TVs and 187 million cars, which subsequently makes China the world's highest rates of growth in both household and total consumption (Sinha and Griffiths, 2011). In addition to the increasing consumerism with the Chinese consumers, the Chinese government is constantly endorsing consumption in order to further boost the economic growth in China as a substitute for the existing drivers of in-house investments and the export demand (Farell et.al, 2006). As a result, the need of reshaping the consumerism is present in order to help prevent the deprivation of resources and the consequences it comes bearing with.

Some researchers have developed frameworks for sustainable consumption and cross-cultural comparison of the clothing consumption for recycled/reused apparel (Mathews, 2012; Xu et. al., 2014) stating that it is hard for Chinese consumers to accept the use of wearing and buying used clothes because it is not a part of their norm nor culture. At the same time there are different values that can affect a consumer's behavior. Cultural - , attitudinal - , contextual -

and personal values as well as if it is a habit or a routine, these are all values that may affect the decision of a consumer's purchase (Stern, 2000). Nevertheless, even if there are different values that may affect the Chinese consumers' behavior regarding clothing consumption, it has not been researched about how the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceives consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption. As a result this study will focus specifically on Shanghai and no other parts of China.

The attitude towards sustainable consumption in Sweden and other Western countries can be seen as more developed than in China. It has been a major increase in the economic power and global scope of the reused/recycled clothing trade since the beginning of 1990 in the Western parts of the world (Hansen, 2010). In a policy about Nordic textile reuse and recycling Palm et.al (2015) discusses that the amount of used textiles in Sweden and the amount of textile wastes that are recycled are constantly increasing. The reason for this is primarily based on a result of the increased sorting of collected textiles. The reuse of used clothes and household textiles in Sweden has also increased due to the increased demand for recycled/reused textiles (ibid.). Schrader & Thogersen (2012) state that Sweden is considered to be the forerunners in the field of sustainable consumption and in comparison to the Chinese consumers they have a norm of buying recycled/reused apparel. There seems to be a growing interest in the ethics behind the clothes, concepts such as the environments well-being and social responsibility are on many of the Swedish consumer's thoughts before a purchase is being done and the individual is being expected to apprehend themselves through creative and sustainable consumption. The reason for this is primarily based on a result of the increased sorting of collected textiles. The reuse of used clothes and household textiles in Sweden have also increased due to increased demand for recycled/reused textiles (ibid.). This is coherent with the establishments of markets for recycled, second-hand and used goods. In fashion and retail settings the term of "vintage" has become an appealing expression as well as the "Do-it yourself" craftsmanship where different flea-bargains are being refurbished and put in the fashion context (Fredriksson, 2012). Therefore, different organizational drivers which promote sustainable consumption will also be investigated in this study in order to apprehend how Sweden has adapted them and if they can be used in the same way in Shanghai to achieve the same result.

1.2 Problem area

In China's National Report on Sustainable Development (Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, 2012) it is described how important sustainability is for China, but that China needs to improve their contribution to sustainable development. Consumption is described as an important engine of economic growth. Advocating green consumption can guide consumers to buy environmentally friendly products. Zhuang (2013) discusses that China is one of the most populated countries in the world and the economy has been developing rapidly and steadily. This has resulted in a increased demand of retail consumption. Chinese Internet users have rapidly been growing to 513 million by the end of December, 2011, becoming the largest national population of Internet users in the world as well. This has affected the Chinese retail industry by providing consumers with a new way of shopping and consuming goods. The online shopping agenda has opened up a new marketplace for Chinese consumers. Mathews (2012) describes that the increasing personal income in China has led to the consequence that Chinese consumers want to display their wealth through their purchases and are therefore buying more and more. With the growing retail consumption sustainability can actually become an issue. Schrader & Thogersen (2012) argue that private consumption is one of the factors that lead to environmental degradation and resource depletion. Schaefer & Crane (2005) also refer to the fact that human

consumption is environmentally costly. It is also conversed that governmental policies and retail industry plays an important part in promoting sustainable consumption, particularly through its marketing efforts. A survey conducted by the National Geographic (2010) which measures and monitors consumer progress toward environmentally sustainable behavior. Eighteen-thousand consumers were polled online in 2014 (1,000 in each country). The results showed briefly that recycled goods has increased in China since 2012 but the consumers still prefer to replace an item when broken instead of repairing it. The same survey also showed that Chinese consumers are concerned about the future environment. Nevertheless, as mentioned before there has not been any study that falls into the area of this thesis. Delace (2011) state that markets, fashion researchers and the apparel retail industry continue to show an interest in developing and understanding the social values which influence groups and individual consumers in their procurement process. As a result, we argue towards why an insight from the apparel industry would contribute to a better understanding of how the perceived consumer behavior towards sustainable consumption is seen and what parts of the market can be changed in order to further improve the area of consumption.

1.3 Purpose and research questions

Sweden and Sida have taken the lead to bring up the issues of environment and sustainable development on the global agenda. Thanks to the Minor Field Study (MFS) scholarship we received the opportunity to travel to China and conduct a field study within sustainable consumption. In order to contribute to Sida’s cause we choose to investigate how the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceives consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption, not only because it is considered to be a present topic but also because previous research shows that there is a current gap in the research towards sustainable consumption. Furthermore, will the thesis investigate how sustainable consumption acquires promotion and to what extent it is affected by the different drivers from the organizational perspective in this thesis. The theoretical framework, the organizational review as well as the conducted interviews with respondents within Shanghainese/Nordic retail apparel industry will then be put in context with how Sweden works and uses these drivers to see if the same thing can be applied in Shanghai. The figure below (1.3) presents a roughly sketched out purpose which is being put in main focus throughout the whole study.

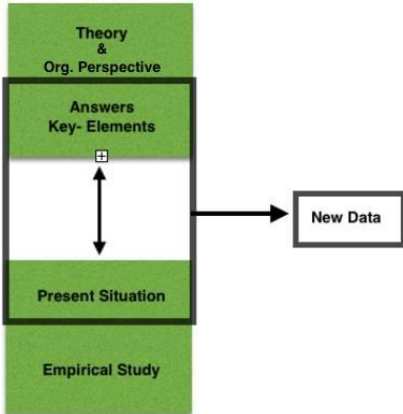


Figure 1.3: Research structure

Main RQ:

- *How does the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceive consumers behavior and attitudes towards sustainable consumption in comparison to Sweden?*

To help create a better understanding of our purpose the main question was divided into two more specific topical questions:

- *How do apparel recycling retailers and apparel retail vendors in Shanghai perceive the attitude towards sustainable consumption among the Chinese consumers?*
- *How can drivers which Sweden has adapted in order to improve attitudes towards sustainable consumption be used to achieve the same result in Shanghai?*

1.4. Delimitation

To accomplish the purpose of this study both empirical and theoretical material have been used. As mentioned before the focus has been on Shanghai and not China as a country. In order to present a study with quality we believe that each city should be studied separately because China is a large country in terms of area and population and the differences between different cities in China is huge. Furthermore, the research area would be too wide and not present a conclusively result. The empirical study is also just aimed to focus on interviews with recycling retailers and the retail vendors in Shanghai. As a result no Shanghainese consumers' will be interviewed in the empirical study.

1.5 Target group

This study is primarily aimed to help China identify the present situation within the sustainable consumption market in Shanghai and what improvements could possibly be done. Moreover, this study also complies with those who works within retail industry in Shanghai. These individuals can use the results from this study to get a better understanding about how retail industry in Shanghai perceive consumers behavior and attitude towards sustainable consumption.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework. Definitions and useful terminology is introduced to give the reader an insight into the notion of sustainable consumption as well as consumer's patterns and behaviors.

One of the main purposes with this study is to find out how the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceive consumers behavior and attitudes towards sustainable consumption in comparison to Sweden. To help solve this question this chapter will summarize existing research and present terminology and approaches within sustainable consumption, different fashion movements within the apparel industry as well as consumers patterns and behaviors. The research findings of this chapter will then be used to build up an organizational review on how the promotion and use of sustainable consumption is actually put into the context by both business and governments.

2.1 Sustainable consumption

The concept of sustainable consumption (SC) is one that attends a bigger amount of attention from both the scientific and the business community because the current level of consumption of natural resources is considered to be unmanageable (Banbury, Stinerock & Subrahmanyam, 2012). Nevertheless, the terminology of SC is considered to be in a field that is currently undergoing an evolution with limited promise around consolidating questions, key definitions, overarching frameworks and fundamental disciplinary traditions (ibid.).

The actual concept of SC was founded by the Rio Summit of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 as one of the 27 principles of the summits declaration on "Reduction of Unsustainable Patterns of Production and Consumption" and contributed to exploring new concepts of capital and fortune in order to allow higher standards of living by altering into lifestyles that were less dependent on the use of the Earth's resources (Mathews, 2012). Nonetheless, the multiple definitions of SC that were proposed by the various international policy communities lead to an undecided agreement on what SC actual establishes until 1994 when Oslo Symposium on Sustainable Consumption hosted by the Norwegian government involving NGOs and intergovernmental organizations established the following working definition:

The use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations.

(Viñuales, 2015)

While the working definition clearly states the need for decreasing resource utilization it is not clearly stated how the role of consumptions should be fitted against all of this or weather the consumption phase has the capacity to contribute to the main mission of resource conservation (Peattie & Collins, 2009). The term of sustainable consumption has evolved since then and is used in differing ways by different stakeholders and academic researchers to label or advocate acts from individuals to in some terms revolutionize the shared consumer practices (Assadourian 2010; Cohen et al., 2013; Lebel et al. 2010; Shove 2012). Since consumption finds itself on the opposite end of SC some mean that SC falls into the notion of anti-consumption or controlled simplicity (Cherrier, 2009; Banbury, C., Stinerock, R. & Subrahmanyam, S. 2012) while others approach it as the use of "green" or/and energy efficient

products (Young et al., 2010) and consider fair-trade or “sweat-free” products as a part of SC (Varul, 2009). According to Manoochehri (2002) SC implicitly assumes that individual choices connected to lifestyle and behavior patterns would expressively lower the use of resources by implementing market mechanisms that would enable individuals to make such choices. Nevertheless, consumers often fail to make the embedded connection between their consumption behavior/patterns and the elements of the sustainable consumption agenda leaving a paradox between where the term “sustainable consumption” falls into when current patterns of consumption are considered to be the problem while new patterns of consumption –“sustainable consumption” – are becoming the solution (Maniates, 2014).

2.2 Patterns of consumption

Consumption can be defined as any motion involving selection, purchase, use and disposition of both goods and services by both individuals and groups in order to meet one or several aspirations (Common & Stagl, 2005; Cambell, 1995). The fundamentals of consumption can be validated by the dynamics of learning and satisfying one's needs. Behavioural science explains that, if an organism is deprived of something a following action is to build up a motivation and take a step towards reducing deprivation (Witt, 2011). Consumption which is found across many different categories of products is influenced by the human desire to define meanings about oneself and to create an identity to show off to others, this is profoundly found within the apparel industry which constantly gets put up on display (Berger & Heath, 2007). Nevertheless, because of the importance of this so called “identity construction” many consumers choose to focus on certain drivers of a products which later on seem to outweigh other important drivers such as being ethical or sustainable (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Even though there has been an increase in awareness and knowledge of the society's unsustainable behavior the problem seems to be a consistent problem that needs to be dealt with. Some researchers suggest that reasons for why this problem seems to be growing has its roots in irregularity in consumer activities and attitudes, a lack of awareness and action surrounding citizen duty, and greater need for research regarding sustainability and policy initiatives (Prothero et al., 2011). Individual consumer acts are often embedded in a social, cultural and material contexts leaving the patterns of consumption not only to individual acts but also to a larger scope than the narrow transactions meant to satisfy the objective material needs (Maniates, 2014). Kotler (1994) defines several key concepts that are related to patterns of consumption as well as consumer behavior. These concepts include consumers need, wants, demands, products, value, cost and satisfaction as well as exchange, transactions and relationships. People have for example physical needs for air, water, clothing, food, warmth, and safety; social needs for affection and belongings. Wants are when people needs take as they are shaped by individual and cultural personality. When there is buying power, wants become demands. However, as both Finney (2014) and Witt (2001) state, important concepts that relate to consumption and consumer behavior are more diverted into consumer motivation, ethics/attitudes and decision making.

2.2.1 Attitude and behavior

Fishbein (1967) theorized a consumer's intent to being a consequence of their attitude. Evolving that consumer behavior is predicated on a model based upon consumers rational and purchase decisions are the outcome of logical and predictable steps. Wicker (1969) questioned whether there was a relationship between consumers' behavior and attitude. His research showed that the correlations were considered weak and that developed levels of regularity would be reached by including personal factors such as motivation and situational factors such as actual and expected consequences of the behavior in question. Nevertheless, Fishbein

& Ajzen (1975) developed a theory of reasoned action (TRA) where three variables claimed to be sufficient for the prediction of behavior:

- Attitude towards the act
- Personal and social normative beliefs
- Motivation to comply to others

The theory suggested that specific evaluation of different alternatives is partly influenced by consumer's attitudes and beliefs as well as the situation influences on a purchase. The ultimate purchase decision is a direct social response to attitudes by engaging actions that take account of their previous consumption history (ibid.). Whilst taking into account these diverse perspectives that can be found within consumption, Barnett et al. (2005) positions that consumers that have a more ethical sense and an established attitude to them can generally be labeled into those that consider on how their consumption affects the world around them. Characterizations of the ethical consumer still remain broad and uncertain nevertheless it still gets applied to numerous contexts and belief systems (Shaw and Connolly, 2006).

Previous research (e.g. Varey, 2010) positions an imbalance in consumption where the consumers' motivation doesn't always result in satisfaction. Thus, leading to a belief system that converses requests with altruistic and status needs (Autio, Heiskanen & Heinonen, 2009). Frank (2000) states that consumers chase their own self-interests and goals whilst not reflecting over how that affect the larger society. What individuals purchase is often affected by what others have purchased (Varey, 2010), as a result, a more growing movement has been recognized over the past years towards changing the individual rather than trying to affect the public behavior (Barr, Gilg & Shaw 2011). Based on the belief system that it is more effective and more achievable to target segmented groups, those consumers that are more open to a change in consumer attitude and ethical notion are more likely to adopt to these new changes and to their overall consumption patterns (Thogerson & Brunert-Beckmann, 1997).

2.3 Consumer behavior in the apparel retail industry

McNeill & Moore (2015) described that consumers can have different attitudinal behavior regarding consumption. This have resulted in several ways of how consumers consume apparel and have increased the attention to phenomenon as fast, slow and sustainable fashion.

2.3.1 Fast & slow fashion

Hayer and Jones (2006) describes fast fashion as the apparel industries ability to react to trends and improve their response times to these trends. Lee (2007) discusses that the development of fast fashion has resulted in that retail stores that used to change their collections just twice a year, now need to have something new in store every month due to the demands from the consumers and the never-ending new trends. Fast fashion aims at a culture of fast purchasing and disposal. It has been made possible by the expansion of low value retailers that can buy in cloths with low purchase price. According to Claudio (2007) fast fashion provides the retail marketplace with affordable apparel Abeles (2014) discusses that in a consumer-driven society products such as clothing and apparel change rapidly in order for the economic system to function. Fast fashion is one consumptive activity to maintain an economic system dependent on material goods instead of for example knowledge consumption and services. According to Sheridan, Moore & Nobbs (2006) fast fashion also requires that companies implement a business structure in ways that support wide product ranges. As a result, the fast fashion movement does not only affect the retail products, but also businesses promotions and the ranging support.

However, Jung & Jin (2014) discusses that an opposite movement to fast fashion in the apparel industry is the slow fashion. Slow fashion shifts consumers' mindsets from quantity to quality, encouraging people to buy high-quality items but not as often. Slow fashion is related to, but not limited to, environmental sustainability. The distinction between slow fashion and environmentally sustainable fashion is according to the authors very vague. Fletcher (2008) describes slow fashion as a way of designing, producing, consuming and living better by considering environmental and social sustainability and by producing garments at a lower speed. Slow production allow producers to spend longer on each piece of a garment (ibid.).

2.3.2 Sustainable fashion

Hill & Lee (2015) conducted an international survey where they examined consumer perceptions of a potential sustainable line extension introduced by the fast fashion retailers H&M and Zara. Findings showed that consumers view sustainability and fast fashion as fitting well together. Consumers who shop frequently fast-fashion products may be more willing to accept new sustainable products introduced by that retail company. Also Lai et.al (2015) discusses that consumers' who buy fast fashion are not necessarily linked with negative attitudes toward environmental protection. In a survey conducted in Asia with 327 consumers it was showed that even if consumers tend to buy fast fashion, they at the same time care about environmental protection.

However, Claudio (2007) reasons that fast fashion leads to increased shopping habits and leaves a pollution footprint that generates potential environmental and occupational hazards. One approach to decrease the negative environmental effects is implementing regulations requiring apparel retail industry to use sustainably grown cotton and organic materials. Manufacturers can also be required to give consumers information about potentially hazardous chemicals that may be present in their products and can leach out. Different approaches from both retailers and new regulations may increase the sustainable fashion development and drive consumers' to purchase fewer and more durable garments, and recycling these garments into the second hand clothing market (ibid.).

3. Method

This chapter presents the manner in which the data for this bachelor thesis has been collected. Here will we discuss the research approach, scientific method, data collection, selection and analysis model. The last section also reviews the method and discusses the method criticism.

3.1 Research approach

This scientific research within business administration has a social science perspective. Recker (2013) writes that social science is the study of people and their behavior. This thesis will partly also be influenced by a hermeneutic approach. Bryman & Bell (2011) discusses that the central intent for authors to use a hermeneutic approach is to bring out the meanings of a text from the author's perspective. The approach is used in relation to the understanding of texts and a strategy that has potential in relation both to social actions, texts and documents. Patel & Davidsson (2013) describes the hermeneutic approach as a method to analyze the empirical collected data with support from the theoretical framework.

To accomplish the purpose with this study interviews will be conducted in Shanghai with established apparel recycling retailers and apparel retail vendors. The interviews will contribute with input about how the apparel recycling retailers and apparel retail vendors in Shanghai perceive the attitude and behavior towards sustainable consumption among the Chinese consumers. Some of the retail vendor respondents have strong base both in Sweden and Shanghai which will help us gain an understanding about how the perceived consumer attitude towards sustainable consumption is different in Shanghai in comparison to Sweden. Furthermore, chapter 4 will examine the organizational drivers that can be found within sustainable consumption in Sweden. This part will be used in order to comprehend what Sweden has adapted in order to improve attitudes towards sustainable consumption and how these drivers can be used to achieve the same result in Shanghai.

3.2 Scientific method

The characteristics of the study specifies that it is of both qualitative and explorative character. Studies that are of qualitative research are based on verbal analysis and with interviews that are less structured (Patel & Davidsson, 2003). Interviews that are less structured are better suited for a more exploratory and interpretive answers. If a quantitative approach had been more suitable has also been taken under consideration. Bryman & Bell (2011) define the quantitative approach as a demanding the collection of numerical data and demonstrating a view of the relationship that can be seen between theory and research. Conventional instruments that are used in a quantitative approach are different types of questionnaires with pre-arranged alternatives to be chosen by the respondents. However, since the purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding and not to quantify anything or get statistical results, qualitative approach is considered to be more suitable.

3.3 Data collection process

This qualitative research involves primarily two qualitative methods for the data collection; interviews and the use of scientific articles (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In this thesis both primary and secondary sources have been combined. Björklund & Paulsson (2003) debates over that primary sources are classified as knowledge and information which is specifically collected for this research. For example, it can be interviews and/or questionnaires and secondary sources can for example be articles and books.

3.3.1 Primary sources

For this thesis primary data will be gathered through semi-structured interviews with recycling retailers and the retail vendors in Shanghai. The purpose with the empirical study is to investigate how the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceive consumers attitudes and behaviors towards sustainable consumption. Some of the respondents also have experience from the Swedish retail apparel industry and will contribute with information that can be used in the comparison between Shanghai and Sweden. The interview questions for the empirical research were created in accordance to Bryman & Bells' (2011) semi-structured interview method. When using this method the respondent has the opportunity to express their subjective opinion. The chosen interview method applied well since the sustainable consumption trend that is discussed during the interview requires the freedom to discuss and express the respondents' views in their own terms. Moreover, Recker (2013) discusses that when interviewing respondents personally rather than in a structured manner they will be more inclined to discuss sensitive issues. This was also one of the determinants to why we chose semi-structured interviews. When formulating the interview questions the theoretical framework has been taken into consideration, as a result it will be easier to compare and analyze the results.

The thesis is written in English but to make it convenient for the Chinese respondents to understand the questions the interview questions have also been translated to Mandarin. When conducting these interviews a student from university of Borås that speaks Mandarin accompanied us to act as an interpreter. The respondents had therefore the opportunity to answer the questions in their native language, so they could express themselves more freely. The disadvantage using a translator could be that the person maybe misses some important information when summarizing the responses. However, the interpreter was well prepared with information about the interviews and our purpose of the study, so the risks was estimated as low. Three interviews were also conducted with managers from retail vendors that are established both in Nordic countries and in China. All of them have experienced both the Nordic and the Chinese retail industry and have seen how the sustainability trend has developed in both Sweden and Shanghai. This gives the study a greater review and clarification about differences within sustainable consumption trend. With allowance from the respondents, all of the interviews were recorded. After the interviews the files were transcribed and summarized. The result from the interviews are presented in Chapter 5.

3.3.2 Secondary sources

There has been a growing interest with different organizations regarding improvement in sustainability and social responsibility, as a result organizations have been developing policies and practices to improve their sustainability concerns (Fenwick, 2007). However, as the Committee on the Development of the Third Edition of the Reference Manual on Scientific Evidence, Federal Judicial Center & National Research Council (2011) state, there are some limitations to what can be found only through theoretical framework and that answers regarding abstract subjects may require input both from experts involved in the field of sustainability and application from knowledgeable organizations. As a result, secondary sources will be collected from previous studies and reports about sustainable consumption conducted by organizations and different administrative authorities. The concepts found in the organizational perspective are based upon elements which can be found in the theoretical framework for example patterns of consumption and consumer attitudes and behavior. These secondary sources are based upon organizational reports done by different organizational authorities such as Naturvårdsverket as well as by the UN organ World Business Council for Sustainable Consumption Development (WBCSD). These organizations have been chosen

due to their updated knowledge about sustainable consumption and as stated by other researchers (Wright, 2006; Linell, 1998) they are also strong advocates in the field of eco-efficiency and sustainability. Therefore, we argue that the input from these organizations may contribute to valuable information that can be used in the report in the process of analyzing and discussing the empirical study from an organizational perspective.

The findings of the theoretical framework as well as the organizational review can be rediscovered in chapter 2 and 4.

3.3.3 Selection

In accordance to Trost (1997) a strategic selection has been made for when choosing suitable respondents. Strategic selection involves that the researcher identifies and then chooses important variables for the research question. The strategic selection for the respondents were based upon the following variables in order to sustain relevant insight in how the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceive consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption in comparison to Sweden:

- Active within the retail apparel industry and had knowledge about sustainable consumption in Shanghai.
- Significant experience and bond to the apparel retail market in both Sweden and Shanghai.
- To increase diversity, respondents had to be of different genders and age and representatives from different companies.

In order to select relevant respondents according to the variables and the thesis main focus, advice was received from both supervisors with first-hand experience within Shanghai's retail apparel market as from members within the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai with company contacts. As a result, three retail apparel vendors with experience from both Shanghai's and Swedish apparel retail industry were contacted and later on interviewed for the following cause. Furthermore, four Shanghainese apparel vendors within the recycling & sustainability concept participated in order to acknowledge a domestic insight to the study's focus. Kvale (1997) states that the number of interviews that needs to be done should only involve the amount of interviews that it requires to get the questions answered. Furthermore, Trost (1997) argues that it is the quality of the interview that matters over the quantity. Since the interviews are time-consuming it is the researcher's mission to confine the conducted interviews. In this study seven interviews seemed reasonable for the deadline that was given to accomplish the study. Each interview took approximately forty-five minutes to conduct. The data that was extracted from the seven conducted interviews gave the impression to be suitable enough to present a result for the study and to conduct an analysis in favor to the research scope.

During the interviews, the respondents' statements about the sustainable consumption in Shanghai were perceived as a sensitive area and on many occasions they were refined to give a better impression. Taken for example, the owners of the recycling retailers couldn't disclose any specific details about their customers or the Nordic companies who choose not to put focus on the sustainable consumption trends but on other aspects in which they excelled much more in. China is known to be a nation state with a government that holds strong influences of their inhabitants and censorship is a given fact in the country. As a result, a precaution was made before interviewing respondents. All of the respondents were offered anonymity in the study in order to make them feel more comfortable and to be able to talk with them more freely regarding the subject of sustainable consumption. The reason for this is also because we

as researchers wouldn't comprehend any of the respondents by their answers and expose their companies or the information that was given to us. Therefore, the respondents from the seven companies have been given other names than their real ones and the company name has not been declared. Nevertheless, the respondents' job-role within the company is declared as well as age and gender. To apprehend a better outline of the respondents that participated in the study a summarized agenda of the respondents is presented in the table below.

Table 3.3.3: Presentation of respondents that participated in the research

Name & Company	Gender	Age	Job Role
Anna Retail Vendor A	Female	25	The CEO of the company also a fashion designer in Sweden & China
Sara Retail Vendor B	Female	34	Marketing manager, China. Nordic shoe company.
Anders Retail Vendor C	Male	45	Production manager, China. Nordic retail company.
Li Wei Recycling retailer W	Male	20	Recycling retailer, sells cloths - Anxi clothing market
Wang Fang Recycling retailer X	Female	38	Recycling retailer, sells shoes - Anxi clothing market
Li Jun Recycling/Vintage retailer Y	Male	32	Recycling retailer, sells vintage apparel
Wang Weo Recycling retailer Z	Male	53	Recycling retailer, sells clothes- Anxi clothing market & involved in a recycling organization

3.3.4 Interview Guide

With inspiration from Bryman & Bell (2011) guidelines in business research methods an interview guide was created. For example is the guideline helpful when formulating interview questions that are relevant for answering the research question/s. Three main topics were created in the interview guide. The same topics can also be find in the review about sustainable consumption from an organizational perspective. The topics were created to readily analyze and answer the research question. Before the interview questions were answered by the respondents, questions of a general kind (gender, age, job role) were asked. This kind of information is useful for analyzing the interview results. To sum up the interview, question was asked if follow-up questions could be asked if necessary.

In the table (3.3.4) below the interview questions are presented:

Table 3.3.4: Outline of interview guide

<p>Drivers of consumption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- In Europe the sustainable consumption is increasing. Consumers buy more second-hand and sustainable retail apparel products. Can this behavior also be seen in Shanghai?- Do you think people in Shanghai get influenced by behaviors and attitudes in Western countries? <p>Role of business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Is the rivalry between recycling retailers and retail vendors with sustainable products competitive in Shanghai?- Is the supply of sustainable retail products/ recycled/reused increasing or decreasing? <p>Role of consumer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What sustainable retail products are purchased by typical Shanghainese shoppers?- What factors do you think influence their choice between competing sustainable and non-sustainable retail products/services?- Are there significant differences in the sustainable consumption behaviors among different segments (gender, age, districts) in Shanghai?
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3.5 Method of Analysis

Jacobsen (2002) discusses that analysis can be performed continuously in an iterative process. Recker (2013) describes the iterative process as a constant comparative analysis where theory and data are continuously compared to one another. In the analysis the empirical study will be compared with the secondary sources that identifies key drivers that Sweden has adapted in order to improve attitudes towards sustainable consumption. This type of analysis will contribute with significant understanding about differences between the perceived consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption in Shanghai in comparison to Sweden. The comparison will also give a lead about how drivers which Sweden has adapted in order to improve attitudes towards sustainable consumption can be used to achieve the same result in Shanghai. When analyzing the results a type of conceptual analysis is conducted. Recker (2013) describes this kind of analysis as a method for examining text materials to uncover dominant concepts. In this research results are divided into three groups where each group has a specific theme related to the research questions. The themes have also been divided into a Nordic perspective and a Shanghainese perspective.

3.6 Criticism and Assessment of the Selected Method

When conducting a qualitative research some critiques for using this research method are often mentioned. Bryman & Bell (2011) argue that the qualitative research method is seen to be unscientific and biased. Research with qualitative approach is often seen as unstructured and doesn't follow the standardized process. Due to this, qualitative approach is seen to be inflexible when it comes to replication of a study. A qualitative study postulates a smaller and more limited selection to a population size, due to this and as a result it is harder to specify the results the study provides (ibid.). However, Brinkmann and Kvale (2009) have decided to meet the criticism conflicting the use of a qualitative approach. If a research that is based on the use of a qualitative approach has the purpose to explain a phenomena or a concept that arises from interviews, it can help to generate valid results to the research. Though if the purpose of the research is supposed to be a basis for a generalization amongst other studies

then validation towards the study becomes a part of questioning, interpreting and controlling the theoretical framework and the given result intermittently for a more valid result to the research (ibid.). Therefore, the criticism towards qualitative interviewing methods an interpretation question based on the number of people. Some of them who criticizes this method believe that the use of qualitative methods cannot generate valid result because of the limited population size, while others think that population size varies depending to the purpose of the research. The criticism toward the qualitative research method has been reflected upon throughout the process of this research. Research has been reappraised within the scope of the criticism.

3.6.1 Credibility, replicability and relevance

To evaluate the quality of the selected research method Bryman & Bell (2011) use different criteria in order to accomplish this. The most common criteria in a quantitative research approach is reliability and validity. Furthermore, the same two criteria have been questioned whether they are seen to be relevant in a qualitative approach as well. Researchers (e.g. Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Guba & Lincoln, 1994) have presented two different criteria's which can be seen as alternatives to reliability and validity, that is trustworthiness and authenticity. The criteria of trustworthiness can also be separated into four other criteria's where credibility is one of them. The principles of credibility has a specific attention towards the findings of the research study. The principal demands that the research is carried out in accordance to the specific rules and norms that are considered to be "good practice". The research findings also need to be submitted to the participating members in order to assure that the investigators have perceived and interpreted the information that was collected during their meetings (Bryman & Bell, 2011). To enrich the credibility of the study, we emailed our primary questions to the respondents before the interview took place. The purpose with this was to give the respondents a chance to review the questions and to feel that they can gather the information that was needed for each question. One of the techniques Bryman & Bell (2011) recommend to enhance the credibility of a study is respondent validation. This was conducted by documenting, transliterating and cross-checking the interview transcriptions with the respondents to see if everything was interpreted according to their contemplations and towards the given context. Consequently, this ensured that the empirical material was collected truthfully for which we could later on base our analysis on.

Bryman & Bell (2011) argues that the theory and findings should be able transfer to other environments i.e. replicability. However, sometimes this is considered to be hard to achieve when conducting a qualitative research. The reason for this is the concern is depth rather than scope of the findings. By providing the reader with an extensive and detailed description about the used methods and materials makes it possible to repeat the same findings. Furthermore, since the focus in this research has been on Shanghai the study will probably just be relevant to Shanghai and no other areas. However, the study will also reveal key perspectives from the Swedish sustainable consumption trends and these perspectives could also be compared and applicable to other areas.

Relevance of a study refers to how the study itself contributes to research which is already present within given the field of study. Relevancy of this study was ensured as a broad literature review was conducted before the study took place. This literature review showed a gap in the current research field and by our knowledge, we made sure that there was no similar study done which marks it as a contribution to the already existing research within the field of sustainable consumption.

4. Organizational review on sustainable consumption

This chapter presents how sustainable consumption gets promoted and affected by different drivers from an organizational perspective. Different approaches regarding the consumer and businesses are introduced as well as the concept of sustainable consumption.

Three important drivers of sustainable consumption have been identified when summarizing existing research about sustainable consumption conducted by organizations; the policy makers/society, the role of business and the role of the consumer. Furthermore, each of the perspectives will also show how Sweden has dealt with these drivers in order to endorse sustainable consumption with their consumers in Sweden. As a result, the chapter will have a main focus on these three specific aspects. The conclusions that can be drawn from the organizational perspective will then be used to analyze the results from the empirical research to see if drivers which Sweden has adapted in order to improve attitudes towards sustainable consumption be used to achieve the same result in Shanghai.

4.1 Drivers of consumption

With an increasing population growth and economic development around the world is currently driving the consumption in a faster paced speed than before. The increasing pressure which is created by competitive spending and noticeable consumption patterns are showing on global consumption patterns and levels which include the rise in global affluence, a culture of “consumerism” and the rapid growth of the population in the world (WBCSD, 2008). Nevertheless, the driving force of consumption and different types of attitudes and behavior can transpire when the three important factors which include the government, business and society acts as a united whole.

4.1.1 Supply and demand

The development of the sustainable consumption agenda has been slow during the recent years and a key factor in this strive for change means that several factors need to be taken in consideration; production, market, interaction and consumer behavior (Beaton & Perera, 2012). Consumers and business that have gone down the path of “greening” themselves can do a lot to foster change in sustainable consumption. Yet, to some extent markets will develop the habit of reflecting the inadequacy of resources and other sustainability problems but in the methodical nature of the challenges with sustainable consumption suggests that being dependent on only business and consumers has its limits (ibid.). These two actors are confined in a complete interdependency, where a market based action solitary will cause in a fundamental change if it gets backed-up by top-down support and a framework change. By involving policy-makers to collaborate with businesses and consumer creates the magic “triangle of change” (UK Sustainable Consumption Roundtable, 2006). Every actor within this triangle of change has a specific role to fulfil by engaging, enabling and encouraging different aspects of the market (see figure 4.1) (ibid.).

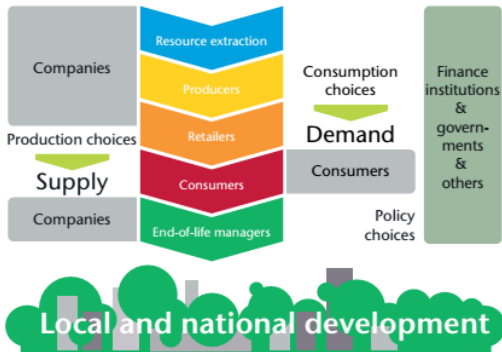


Figure 4.1 The role of consumers, businesses and governments in endorsing sustainable consumption (WBCSD, 2008)

Both the supply and the demand influence the production and consumption of both services and products. Businesses, governments, the civil society and the consumers all have the power to distress transformation, even if sometimes they are traditionally perceived to their role. As WBCSD (2008) states, consumers may feel a certain moral responsibility to live sustainably but with the lack of effective support from the government, NGO's and business in which they interact with on a daily basis there is a bigger chance to live in a more "consumption" state. By enabling change through eradicating barriers and by providing relevant facilities, information and education change is inevitable to come. The engagement will further on start on the change of attitude by choosing to involve people and businesses in reflections against sustainable consumption. Lastly the enablement and engagement will also have to encourage both businesses and consumers through a rewards system. Businesses choose how they want to have their products extracted, processed, sold and managed. These specific selections are influenced by the spending and lifestyle choices of the consumers as well as the financial institutions e.g. policies and frameworks and by the government (UK Sustainable Consumption Roundtable, 2006).

4.1.2 Drivers of society and the role of policies

According to WBCSD (2008) governments and policy-makers at all levels have an important role to play in creating the right legal, fiscal and cultural environment for sustainable businesses and consumption. By removing indecisions and outlining and defining the playing field for the business and the society, they can help shape the activity of consumerism (Groezinger & Tunçer, 2010). Interventions from policy-maker can materialize on different levels and are sometimes linked to each other in order to complement and visualize a bigger picture. The EU sets many different frameworks in many areas of intervention for the member states of EU, these include the Ecodesign Directive, Ecolabel Regulation and the Waste Framework (ibid.). As a result the member states are obliged to prepare national plans for each of the regulations. Nevertheless, policies can be used on different levels in order to help foster sustainable consumption and are often categorized to their type of intervention ranging from soft to hard. The Ministry of Finance in Sweden (2005) displayed the action-plan that was created by the Swedish government for increasing sustainable household consumption among the Swedish consumers. One of the more vital drivers which help the Swedish consumers be more sustainable are efforts that are made from the government. Sweden also works proactively towards sustainable consumption issues which are being given priority at the international level, mainly within the UN and EU. The focus is on enabling sustainable consumption and on strengthening the consumer's motivation for a change in their behavior. It is also important to implement a well-functioning cooperation between different stakeholders. In order to enable sustainable consumption, Sweden's government wants to make information about sustainability accessible to everyone, because knowledge is a key factor for achieving sustainable development. The trade sector and organizations should also be invited to take part in these communicative efforts. The motivation may be strengthened by decreasing consumer costs for sustainable behavior. In 2011 the Swedish government presented a new sustainability strategy to establish favorable conditions for the growth and development of environmental technology companies. The objectives were for example to make it easier to commercialize innovations and promote research about sustainability (Swedish Institute, 2012). Nevertheless, Elander et. al. (2014) discusses that the Nordic countries together strive to become leading in green growth. Different projects have been established with the aim to develop a Nordic collaboration to assure that companies and

consumers increase the use of sustainable textiles. Consumer behavior is as an important element in a country's consumption drivers not only because of the fact that they are the ones that are spending money but also of the possibility to affect and influence other countries as well (Naturvårdsverket, 2010; Palm et al., 2015). With increased focus on sustainability by the consumers, it will be a competitive strength in the market for organizations and companies that can market their products and clothes based on recycled materials with documentation of better environmental performance. Due to the increasing Swedish consumer awareness of the importance to collect, reuse and recycle used textiles, there is an increased potential involvement by companies and retailers that might for example decide to start collecting textile at their stores.

4.2 The role of the business

The sustainability concept has become a greater issue for many Nordic businesses that are involved in the apparel industry during the last few years. Even though many of them see it to be contradictory especially the fashion industry, they still necessitate the importance of evolving new attitudes towards ethical and environmental practices (Vennström, 2012). According to Entwistle (2000) the apparels system or especially the fashion system is created by e.g. individual agents, producers, buyers, magazine editors, retailers and consumers. Since the WBCSD's (2008) policy in 1995 was established concerning sustainable consumption and production many business have been able to diminish the per-unit impacts of their production operations. This has been done by using eco-efficiency mechanisms and applying life-cycle management techniques to different products. Current findings in the area of sustainable consumption display that there is an increased importance on associating the production with consumption – how certain products and services are selected and used – in order to address the unsustainable consumption patterns (WBCSD, 2008). As a result the role of the business is not anymore defined only to companies but it expands towards a greater scope which in return are all needed for supporting the change for sustainable consumption.

4.2.1 Positioning of the different businesses

Commencing a business perspective on the use of sustainable consumption leaves it to matter only in the broader concept of a sustainable marketplace. According to WBCSD (2008) the context of a sustainable marketplace depends on; the development of sustainable products, processes and business models; the use of marketing communications in order to enable and encourage the consumers to choose and use products in a more sustainable approach and the removal unsustainable products and services from the marketplace. The companies or the other individuals that play a part in the production chain have an important role to play in promoting sustainable consumption and production. These enterprises occupy an irreplaceable position in the life-cycle chain of apparel and can therefore be seen as a “doorkeeper” between the apparel in focus and the consumers (see figure 4.2.1).



Figure 4.2.1 Life-cycle chain

WBCSD (2008), has in recent years seen a shift in nature from the sustainable consumption agenda, where businesses have evaded the introduction of sustainable products and instead trying to embed the sustainability principles into the core business models. The individual enterprises can offer the consumers a wide variety of products and as a result they are involved with a greater sum of suppliers, manufacturers and distributors. The individual

enterprises get the opportunity to select which products they will display to the consumers and can therefore influence the consumers purchasing habits by choice-influencing certain products. Additionally they can also reduce the environmental impact their products leave by focusing on in-house environmental management as well as transportation and logistics (The Danish Environmental Protection Agency, 2013).

4.2.2 Actions taken on by the businesses to improve sustainable attitudes and behavior

Sustainable consumption behavior can only emerge when businesses, the government and society acts together. The triangle of change can play a significant role by providing guidance and reliable information to both the consumers and the society altogether. As mentioned before WBCSD (2008) discusses three important aspect that a business can embolden in order to encourage sustainable consumption:

1. Development of sustainable products

Innovation of both products and design is an important driver for sustainable consumption. The goal with innovation is not solely centered as the business core function but it can also respond to the challenges of sustainable consumption. Innovations for sustainable consumption are responded through the use of eco-efficiency measures, product innovation and design, supply chain management and business model innovation. As an individualized country, Sweden refers to the process where consumers act as individuals rather than collectively. As result, the use of consumers goods have been penetrating the thoughts of the consumer psychology and the self-expression of using materialized goods becomes an important aspect in the “I am what I have and what I consume” (Dittmar, 1987). As a business much time and effort goes into developing and establishing products that likely can appeal to the individual taste. By delivering products with high levels of emotive and purposeful values while minimizing resource use and environmental impact, products can have an even greater meaning to the consumers while still keeping the label of a “cool” product (WBCSD, 2008). The Swedish multi-branded retail store Intersport is bearing in mind of labeling their own products with information regarding the items life-expectancy. They believe by making the short-lived items of materials apposite for recycling and the long-lived of greater quality, it would boost their consumers to pay for quality and reduce the “throw-away” mentality that they see is present (Ekström and Salomonson, 2012).

Several Swedish businesses within apparel have within the recent years developed an initiative to help develop more sustainable products through the use eco-efficiency measures, supply chain management as well as both product and business model innovation (Tojo et al, 2012). In the natural surroundings, everything is a part of a sequence. This idea of a cycle can also be seen in the economy where we copy nature and have everything that is produced revenue to the system in a closed coil (Hofner, 2013). Systems operating in a closed loop has been in the chief interest of industrial solicitations for a long time (Ljung et al., 1999). Industrial sub-solicitations can tactically use the concept of closed loops for evaluating and stimulating improvements in industrial sustainability. These loops can be closed, for example by repossession, re-use or reutilizing (Suistanableplant, 2013). Some of the largest companies within the Swedish textile industry such as H&M, KappAhl, Lindex, Ikea, Indiska and Åhlens have developed a voluntary initiative called Textiles for Recycling Initiative (T4RI) in order to help work on closing the material loop due to the lack of a larger scale textile recycling system in Sweden. The purpose with this initiative was to help create improved conditions for the textile recycling and assist in developing better fitted solutions for when working with different stakeholders in the textile recycling industry. Additionally, T4RI also famines in

creating better conditions for the cyclic material flows (e.g close loops) and increasing the reuse and recycling of textiles (Sandow, 2012; Tojo et al, 2012).

2. The use of marketing communications

The philosophy behind marketing communications has the essential part of reducing material consumption from consumer value. It displays the ability of simplifying both innovation and choice influencing for the sustainable consumers, since it allows both products and information to flow between consumers and producers (Kleanthous & Peck, 2005). The communications of marketing works in two separate ways; it helps the consumer find, choose and use sustainable products by providing suitable information, confirming accessibility and setting the appropriate tone. A different approach is focused towards the businesses, where sales data and market research can help provide comprehensions regarding consumers' attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. This can later on be used in the planning process, driving innovation further and guide key business decisions (Groezinger & Tunçer, 2010).

According to WBCSD (2008) common sustainable marketing approaches have included a single-issued focus in different brand and corporate campaigns by using different types of labels, screening and optimizing the businesses portfolio, "green lining" different products to help gain the mindshare with consumers, innovations addressing social challenges and choosing to responsible market communications. Another important feature to be considered is the role marketing possess in leveraging a company's sustainability authorizations in order to build brand equity. Branding has become an increasingly important matter in today's economy which seeks its influences on emotional value. Purchasing decisions are no longer only based on the characteristics' of a product but more on emotional experience and symbolic qualities (van de Ven, 2008). In order to evade the so called green-selling or green approach, where unproven "green" claims on unchanged products lead to consumer suspicion and fruitless marketing (Peattie & Crane, 2005) it is vital to ensure that there is a clear consistency with the business sustainability strategy. In the Nordic countries, a system has been developed where a so-called "Ombuds-man" deals with complaints regarding these issues. A common set of guidelines for marketing and advertising regarding social and environmental claims has been developed. Where for example the term "environment-friendly" cannot be used without having a study made of the eco-impacts it exhibited during the entire life-cycle of a product (OECD, 2008). Regulations prevailing the truth in different means of marketing tools are basic tools used in order to help protect the consumers, which are usually delimited in fair trading legalizations and policed by consumer protection agencies (WBCSD, 2008). These regulations cover when different approaches of marketing and advertising claims regarding social, ethical or environmental attributes of a product.

3. The removal of unsustainable products and services

The role of the businesses is to encourage and inform consumers on how to improve sustainable attitudes and behavior. In order to make their choice easier and to succeed in the enlighten process businesses and shareholders in the value-chain must display an involvement in developing solutions. By enabling control over decision that impact the attitudes towards consumption, removing unsustainable products and choice editing for the consumer is considered to be a path towards presenting sustainable products (WBSCD, 2008). According to Hagerman (2010) under the last ten years there has been a growing interest of consumers and stakeholders for sustainable development issues, such as human rights, recycling and production. As a result the companies have been pushed into increasing their transparency in their activities. Furthermore, this increased transparency has gone from being an isolated area to becoming a part of the concept of sustainable development. Transparency of a company is

vital in order to win over the trust of the consumers. By developing a conjoint and robust set of indicators and an evocative way of reporting performance on the business economic, environmental and social performance the shared relationship between the business and consumers gets improved in several aspects (Bendell & Kleanthous, 2007). Engwall's (2008) research stated that Swedish clothing companies lack transparency in their supply chain, have low environmental requirements and lack the control of foreseeing that regulations are being followed. On the other hand, several Swedish companies have taken responsibility in their supply chains and shown improvements on issues such as child labor and safety in factories have enhanced as well. They are also making sure that hazardous chemicals are not present in the final product and some are even using recycled materials when developing new apparel collections such as H&M and Lindex (Sundin, 2011).

The concept of sustainable consumption or leading a sustainable lifestyle is at the moment very vaguely defined (WBCSD, 2008). Different businesses choose to focus on different aspects, businesses may determine the sustainability of a product based on the life-cycle while other choose to assess it based on various disclosure criteria or social pressure. Research has shown that consumers are not willingly giving up price or performance for sustainability, as a result it has come up to the businesses to provide sustainable goods which fall into the category of good-quality and cost-effective. In 2011 the fashion chain, Lindex offered their customers more than 300.000 apparel items made out of recycled items (Ekström and Salomonson, 2012). Lindex state that by keeping their fashion agenda alive while still they want their apparel items to be a part of a more sustainable recycle for when their customers finally discard them. By creating apparel items out of recycled textiles it is easier to establish a cycle of materials with fiber recovery, when generating fibers that can later on be used in the manufacturing of new apparel items. According to Lindex, this will help diminish the need for new and raw materials in the manufacturing process of apparel items (Ekström and Salomonson, 2012). Nevertheless, the responsibility for sustainable consumption is shared between the business and consumers. By working together in order to develop a common knowledge, expertise and policies on sustainable consumption it becomes easier to live a lifestyle where sustainable consumption becomes a part of the daily routines (Bendell & Kleanthous, 2007). H&M (2013) launched in 2013 a clothing collection scheme worldwide where they have the customers bring a bag of discarded clothes to the store and in return they get a gift voucher. By involving consumers in the concept of recycling and understanding why it has to be done H&M hope that the concept of recycling textiles is going to be just as natural as recycling glass or any other product in the near future (Kennedy, 2015).

4.2.3 The second-hand enterprises

The representatives of the second-hand market are increasingly getting bigger and taking as equally much space as the retailers of today's fashion (Palmer & Clark, 2005). Even though the original concept was to provide cheaper clothing to the unprivileged it has now developed into the consumers desire to seek out a unique appearance (Reiley & DeLong, 2011). Their study showed that many of the participating respondents found that buying used apparel seemed to be more sustainable in regards to the environment but also that it was more affordable than buying in regular boutiques (ibid). According to Ekström, Salomonson, Gustafsson & Hjelmgren's (2012) study at the University of Borås, there is a growing interest seen in the second-hand apparel industry amongst the younger Swedish consumers. Nevertheless, those consumers that were interested in fashion increasingly shopped at vintage stores to express a more distinctive look. Second-hand has seemingly developed into a high quality/slow fashion trend in the western society and the word "vintage" is becoming an even more sought after item (Palmer & Clark, 2005). In addition to the non-commercial exchange

of used clothes between friends and family there are three main categories of thespians that enable such give-and-take commercially; second-hand stores that do it for-profit, charity second-hand stores and different internet sites such as Blocket and Tradera in Sweden. However, even if the sustainable fashion trend is on the rise in the Nordic countries, the volume of donated clothes that the charity organizations receive vastly exceeds the present demand on the internal markets. As a result there is a larger fraction that gets shipped rather than resold on the native market. Several companies in Europe focus on procuring and sorting second-hand apparels which later on gets exported to commercial buyers in developing countries (Carlsson et al., 2011). Recycled apparel from both Sweden and Danmark have been exported to Easter European countries, were some parts have been sold locally and the remaining of the apparels have been repackaged and exported further into countries such as Africa (ibid).

According to the Swedish Institute (2012) the secondhand clothing market doesn't stop at the second-hand stores but even established chains such as Boomerang and Filippa K are encouraging recycling and reusing clothes by establishing their own second-hand stores. For example Boomerang has their customers come in with their branded clothes and those that are of good condition are washed and resold again in the shops (Sundin, 2011). Nevertheless, with the growing interest for second-hand apparel and vintage furniture seems to be developing even further in the Nordic countries, Sweden has been the first one of the Nordic countries to launch a clothing fair dedicated to vintage apparel and ever since the launch they are now attracting more than 6000 people every year (Swedish Institute, 2012).

4.3 Role of consumer

WBCSD (2008) discusses that consumers today are increasingly concerned about environmental issues and increasingly willing to act on those concerns. Larsson (2015) discusses in a report from Naturvårdsverket about sustainable consumption patterns, that consumer attitudes and behavior on sustainability are connected with the information and knowledge the consumers obtain. In Sweden focus has been on having environmental information on products, eco- labeling, consumer and environmental studies in the school system. These actions have been taken to improve Swedish consumers' sustainability attitude. However, it is also discussed that norms that regulate how we see ourselves in relation to others, make it difficult to inform or persuade Swedish consumers to consume fewer products for reasons of sustainability. To feel socially accepted in the society people consume products that are connected by idealized identities that always isn't sustainable.

A report conducted by the Sustainable brand insight (2015) where 27000 Swedes answered questions about sustainability showed that the increased emphasis in Sweden about sustainability has helped develop consumers understanding and positive attitude of the concept of sustainability and what it means for them in everyday life. In a report conducted by the Copenhagen Business School (2013) it is described that younger consumer in Sweden are displaying higher levels of environmental and social concern when it comes to their consumption. However, this sustainability awareness does not automatically affect their behavior to become more sustainable. The wide range of environmental products have also created confusion and skepticism among consumers. Sometimes consumers don't trust that the products and labels promising sustainability actually are environmental friendly (ibid). In another survey conducted by Gwozdz et. al. (2013) where 1175 young Swedish consumers participated, it was also described how young people in Sweden are trying to become more sustainable and responsible consumers. Sustainable choices and behaviors are becoming an even more important factor in their daily lives in regards to all consumption domains.

However, a majority of the respondents lacked knowledge and found it too hard as well as time consuming to change their behavior and thought processes. Though, nowadays E Commerce is becoming an important tool for consumers to find information and gain knowledge about sustainable products. WBCSD (2008) describes that consumers are increasingly turning to the Internet as a trusted source to find information. It has become easier for customers to access and share information. In Elander et.al (2014) report it was also discussed that the proportion of second-hand textiles mediated via ecommerce sites on Internet increased by 33 percent between 2011 and 2013. The most popular secondhand ecommerce sites in Sweden are as mentioned before Blocket and Tradera.

4.3.1 Barriers to sustainable behaviour

Isenhour (2010) discusses that Swedish consumers have in recent years started to turn toward a more sustainable behaviour. However, there are significant barriers that consumers' sustainability knowledge and attitudes cannot confront. Consumer's sustainable product demand may not be enough to influence sustainability change. In the article it is described that people's attitudes, behaviors and actions are not solely the product of their own personal values, interests and agency, but also country's political and cultural history influences a lot. For example, Sweden's history have for a long time worked to emphasize fairness and equality. Swedes are often insecure to separate themselves from the comfort of mainstream consumerism and to leave the safety of Swedish cultural symbols and normative frameworks. So to encourage reduced consumption or increase demand of sustainable products it is unlikely that a small group of consumers can influence significant change. Mutual changes are therefore important and public policies and programs must be implemented to encourage sustainable consumer behavior. Also Solér (2010) discusses Swedish consumer behavior is shaped by different social norms that dominates in the society. For example, earlier decades had the church's norms high impact on Swedes about what was right and wrong. However, in today's Sweden different businesses through advertising and the range of products are shaping what is considered desirable. The demand for new products is often created by linking them with advertising idealization based images, such as a successful man driving a new car or a beautiful couple who have new modern clothes. Since lots of Swedes want to become successful and beautiful, and then these idealized identities linked with certain products, creates social pressure to buy new. The strong normative power of the market is a barrier to getting people to consume sustainably.

4.3.2 Achieving sustainable consumption

NICE (2013) that is joint initiative led by the Danish Fashion Institute and BSR under Nordic Initiative, Clean and Ethical, discusses options how to help Swedish and Nordic consumers make more sustainable choices in the acquisition, use, care for and disposal of cloths. According to them it will require a long-term transformation in consumers' attitudes and behaviors. Consumers need first of all be aware of and care about sustainability and the environmental, social and economic impacts of their consumption. Consumers also need to decrease their shopping habits. They should keep and wear garments for more seasons and occasions. When consumers want to throw something away they should contribute unwanted stuff to second-hand, reuse and recycling schemes, including for recovery or upcycling of fabrics and fibers. According to Palm et.al (2015) clothes and household textiles in Sweden are typically discarded because they are damaged, worn out, outgrown or have gone out of fashion. However, it also depends on the consumer's habits, economy and collection opportunities. The main part of the used textiles and textile wastes from households in the Nordic region is not collected separately, but rather disposed of via the residual waste collection.

4.4 Summary of organizational perspective

The table below (4.1) summarizes the most significant aspects of the review that was presented above.

Table 4.1: Summary of organizational perspective

Approach	Sustainability aspect
Drivers of consumption	Government is an important driver. For example, the Swedish government has formed an action plan to improve and adjust Swedish consumers into sustainable household consumption. Another important driver of sustainable consumption are the consumers. With increased focus on sustainability by consumers, it will be a competitive strength in the market for organizations and companies that can market their products as sustainable.
Role of business	The sustainability concept has become a greater issue for many Swedish businesses the last few years. The role of the businesses is to encourage and inform consumers on how to lead sustainable lifestyles. Businesses have to strive to deliver products with high levels of emotive and purposeful values while minimizing resource use and environmental impact.
Role of consumer	Consumer attitudes and perceptions on sustainability are connected with the information and knowledge the consumers obtain. Consumer behavior is also shaped by different social norms that dominates in the society. Actions have been taken on by the Swedish society to improve consumer's knowledge about sustainability, for example environmental education in school.

5. Empirical study and results

This chapter presents the interviews that have been conducted with respondents that are active within the retail apparel industry in Shanghai. Chapter ends with a summary of the empirical result.

The figure below (5.1) represents a sketch that visualize how we have chosen to connect the empirical research and the chapter about sustainable consumption from an organizational perspective. The glasses in the figure represent a lens that yields to clarify the key perspectives that have been discovered in the organizational perspective. These perspectives have been used when creating groups in the interview guide. To enhance the distinctness of the empirical result in this chapter we have chosen to split and group the answers into Nordic perspective, where respondents have experience from both Shanghai's and Swedish apparel retail market and Shanghainese perspective, where respondents have experience from just Shanghai's market. This will make it more convenience for the reader to create an understanding of how each of the following respondents look at the various aspects of sustainable consumption within the apparel retail industry in Shanghai. The answers in this chapter have been summarized of the transliterations that were made after each performed interview.

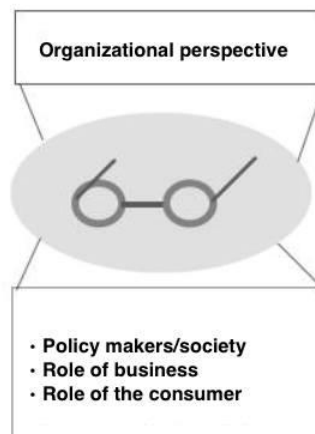


Figure 5.1: Empirical connection to organizational perspective

5.1 Society towards sustainable consumption

As the organizational review points out (see chapter 4) there are different important drivers that makes Sweden one of the leading within sustainable consumption. To determine perceived behavior and attitudes towards sustainability consumption within apparel industry in Shanghai, the following questions were brought into focus:

- *In Europe the sustainable consumption is increasing. Consumers buy more second-hand and sustainable retail apparel products. Can this behavior also be seen in Shanghai?*
- *Do you think people in Shanghai get influenced by behaviors and attitudes in western countries?*

5.1.1 Nordic perspective

The respondents from company B and C state that the sustainable fashion trend in Europe, especially in the Nordic countries show on a huge demand from their customer base. Sara at company B explains that their consumers in Europe are more aware of how the company's shoes are produced and manufactured, and the demand of sustainable shoes is much higher in Europe than in China. She explains further that the company has a different approach to the buzzword of sustainability; in company B they believe that the sustainable consumption is related to care, design and respect to the product you purchase. In Company B they have some models of shoes that are timeless, and have been with the company since they started. They see that as a way of sustainable consumption, delivering a product to the customers that always seems to be popular. Anders from Company C seems to agree with Sara on that point, by delivering and producing a timeless classic that is always of interest with the customers is in a sense a way of promoting sustainable consumption. However, as both of the respondents clearly state, the demand of sustainable fashion can only unfortunately be seen with the European customer base. Anders at Company C continues to explain that the European customers are more interested to understand the different production and manufacturing stages and that keeps companies, or at least their company on their toes in order to give their customers what they want in regards to sustainable fashion concepts, but in China nevertheless in Shanghai those concerns are not as equally important. Anna, whom has managed to establish her own brand and her own business states that Shanghai is a fast fashion city and as a result she believes that the second-hand market and sustainable fashion will never become as big as it is in Europe mainly because fashion is all about being innovative and creating something new and aspiring and not about wearing something that is from last season. Anna from company A disclosed the fact that much of her clothes are inspired by the fashion trends in Sweden and that much of the chic, elegant and simple lines go really great with Chinese consumers. However, she also expresses that even though the Chinese consumers are inspired by Western apparel, they are only influenced to some extent. She continues to explain that she had trouble with developing a clear strategy for her clothing concept as the Chinese consumers is so diverse from one another, they can sometimes dress really strange and use all crazy combinations and sometimes they can go all in on the chic and elegant look. She has also expressed that it is impossible to place the Chinese consumer in a box as we can do with the Nordic consumer, because every individual in China is really unique in their way of clothing. Sara from Company B tunes in on this as well and explains that when Company B first wanted to enter the Chinese market they believed that all of their popular shoes from the West would sell great in China and they did to some point, but not all of the expected models. The Chinese consumers has a specific taste and in some extent it can be found in the Western countries as well but the preference of colors and models are not much alike and as a result Company B needed to revise their current strategy in order to better fit in with the Chinese preference of shoes. All three companies also agreed that in Nordic countries the society promotes sustainable consumption a lot more than in China. Company A thought that this affects why the sustainable fashion consumption is not so fortunate in Shanghai. Company B believes that the Chinese population need to get more information and promotion from businesses and government about sustainability to be able to increase their attitudes and behavior towards sustainable consumption.

5.1.2 Shanghainese perspective

Li Wei from second hand store W sells clothes with his father in one of the Anxi market stalls. He believes that the younger adults in Shanghai prefer to buy new clothes, not just because they would be ashamed if they came to this market but also that the younger adults are more inspired by the Western brands. Respondents from second-hand company X and Z

agreed that it is older people that are visiting the market, the ones who don't have enough money to buy new clothes. Li Jun from company Y works in a vintage store and sells branded apparel. He perceives that his customer base is mostly centered around younger and middle-age individuals, mainly because it is this segment that enjoys buying branded products. Furthermore, he explains that many of his customers come to his store because the prices for bags, shoes and some clothes are cheaper here. Nevertheless, all of the sellers agreed to some point that the middle-class in Shanghai is growing, people have more money today than before and prefer to buy new apparel instead of recycled apparel. Wang Weo has been working in an organization that collects clothes that people don't use and then recycles them. He mentions that the sustainable consumption trend in Shanghai is low. People throw clothes and stuff they don't use any more into garbage bins, probably because they don't know that there is an organization that recycles these things. Wang Fang from company X says that the Chinese market visitors have decreased last couple of years, but that more Western people have started to visit the market. Both Wang Fang and Li Wei think that the Chinese consumers get influenced by the Western styles and want to buy clothes from the Western brands. Wang Fang hopes that more Western people come and visit the secondhand market. He also believes that if the Westerners think that that second hand clothes are fashionable, than maybe Chinese people in the future will do the same thing and buy recycled clothes. However, all of the second hand store respondents agreed that today the sustainable fashion trend in Shanghai is absent. People in Shanghai do enjoy shopping, but the tendency is today directed towards fast fashion and not recycled.

5.2 Role of business

As pinpointed in the organizational review (see chapter 4) the role of how the businesses choose to position themselves may have a great effect on the consumers. According to the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (2013) the individual enterprises play an important role in the life-cycle chain of apparel and can play the part as a "doorkeeper" regarding different products visibility. Furthermore can different businesses impact the way a consumer thinks and acts when it comes to sustainable consumption by reinforcing and/or introducing new initiatives such as giving vouchers for when recycling clothes or selling clothes made from recycled items (Sundin, 2011; Kennedy, 2015; Ekström and Salomonson, 2012). As a result the following questions were developed in order to gain further insight about how the businesses perceives consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption in Shanghai and how it affects the companies within the retail apparel industry.

- *It the rivalry between (second hand stores/organizations), (retail stores with sustainable products) highly competitive in Shanghai?*
- *Is the supply of sustainable retail products/ second-hand increasing or decreasing?*

5.2.1 Nordic perspective

According to Anders from Company C he doesn't sense any rivalry at all, he explains that even though there are a few second hand stores in Shanghai they do not get the attention from the Western consumers nor the Chinese consumers. Furthermore, Anders explains that it is important to comprehend that China is a country in which they promote fast fashion and the sustainable fashion trend for Chinese consumers are hard to get a grip on because when something is in season they want it now, and not 3 months after when the fling has passed by. As a result the supply of sustainable retail products is not as present in Shanghai as it is in other parts of the world. Sara and Anna from companies A and B tune in on Anders pronouncement. Sara carries the statement even further during the interview and expresses that as many of the Chinese consumers are in the middle class segments they can afford new

products and do not seek recycled apparel because that is not in their interest nor in their culture. Furthermore, Sara express that ever since their company has entered the Chinese market their online selling have improved much more than in comparison with the European/Western markets. As a result she believes that in China the rivalry is much more focused on ecommerce shopping then with the regular shops they have stationed in the shopping malls. As a result the second-hand shops get foreseen as they are mainly stationed in shops and not online. She believes that in the future the supply of sustainable retail products is going to decrease even more as China is becoming an economic superpower and that they are probably going to figure out an alternative way of using all of the used clothes instead of trying to sell them again.

Anna from Company A finishes the proclamation by expressing that only highly competitive business is present in China within the fashion segment and e-commerce. She also believes that maybe in the near future some kind of sustainable fiber that endures more than normal fibers in textile is to be invented. This would probably suit the Chinese consumers more and perhaps be the Chinese way of sustainable consumption but other than that she sees no future for sustainable retail within China. Mainly because Chinese consumers don't have the same demand as European/Western markets, however Anders hopes that the trend for sustainable consumption will turn for the better in China. Not only because of the amount of textiles that get used in order to saturate the Chinese consumers demand of retail, but also because China is still leaving a big ecological footprint in comparison with other countries.

5.2.2 Shanghainese perspective

Li Yun from the vintage store Y believes that there are just some few second hand stores in Shanghai that sell luxury branded apparel. However, even though the rivalry between stationed second-hand and retail shops are infinite the rivalry is higher between the retail shops and e-commerce. As mentioned before Chinese customers prefer to buy new apparel or nowadays they also buy vintage from different e-shops. Li Yun continues to explain that this is also one of the reasons he decided to open up his store on Internet as well. He also states that in the future he will maybe just sell his products on the Internet and close down his store, because the rent is high and the Internet shopping is increasing in China. Wang Weo from the second hand store Z explains that in the last couple of years some of the stalls have closed down in Anxi market and almost no new have opened up. The numbers of customers that come to the secondhand shops are decreasing each day, so even if the number of stalls have decreased the rivalry is higher. Li Wei from the second hand store W thinks that people in his age are nowadays buying more clothes from the Internet than in real stores, for example from Tmall. He also states that the Chinese people can buy reused apparel online. As a result the demand on reused clothes is in accordance to him probably higher on the Internet than in the second-hand shops. Wang Fang from the second hand store X complains that lots of other stalls also sell similar shoes as the ones she possesses in her stall. The agents often buy reused apparel from the same organizations, so the supply in the stalls are often similar and the rivalry becomes higher. Wang Fang states that she has taken her business to the internet as well and sells recycled shoes there. She believes that people buy more through the internet then in comparison with the stall. She knows that some of her customers live far away from the market and don't have time to visit her stall, so it is more convenient to order from the Internet. She believes that it is easier to set up an e-retail account on the Internet than to open up a stall. As a result, the rivalry on the Internet has increased and it has become harder today to find new customers.

5.3 Role of consumer

The role of the consumer plays an important part in keeping a country's economy vital and steady. However, as the behavior and attitudes to sustainability keep getting more attention, especially in the Nordic countries, the demand for sustainable products that have a lesser impact on the environment are seeing an upswing on the market (Copenhagen Business School, 2013). As a result the consumer demand for sustainable fashion and slow fashion products have been increasing in Sweden. Different apparel retail stores have adapted this growing trend and are now selling vintage and high quality pieces along with their regular apparel in their stores (Swedish Institute, 2012). To get better understanding about consumer attitudes and behavior the following questions were asked to the vendors:

- *What sustainable retail products are purchased by typical Shanghainese shoppers?*
- *What factors do you think influence their choice between competing sustainable and unsustainable retail products/services?*
- *Are there significant differences in the sustainable consumption behaviors among different segments (gender, age, districts) in Shanghai?*

5.3.1 Nordic perspective

Sara from company B was the first one that acknowledged that the Chinese consumers are buying sustainable products without even knowing about it. She explains that the shoes they manufacture are made from their tanneries that are Gold certified by the Leather Working group. This means that the leather they use has high environmental standards for chemical use and water treatment. Furthermore, she continues to explain that some of the shoes that are made also have green-rubber soles, and that these soles are made out of different recycled items such as car tires and rubber gloves. However, she does push on the fact that many of the Shanghaies customers do not care about these types of thing, the care about what is promoted by the company. The company first tried to market the shoes as regular but it did not work in the Chinese market, therefore they promoted their brand and products by having celebrities in their ads and that increased their brand awareness even more. Anna from company A corresponds with Sara about that. The Shanghainese consumers don't care if company's clothes has the most eco-friendly cotton or if it is produced in a certain way, they care about what celebrities wear and want to wear the same. Anna continues to explain, that to get acknowledged as a brand you need to pay the celebrities to wear your clothes in order to become popular amongst the consumers. This is why Anna has chosen not to put so much focus on having eco-friendly collections, mainly because there is no interest within her segment but also because the design of the clothes are much more important to her clients than sustainability. Anders states that the most important factors that seem to influence the Shanghainese consumers choice in products is the design of the product and the price of products. He explains that Shanghainese consumer is very self-aware and it is therefore important that they wear premium brands of which both the Western countries wear but also those brands which the celebrities wear. Anna continues on that proclamation and explains that ever since a dress of her design ended up on a celebrity here in China it has been mass-produced by somebody and sold for a fraction of the real price. And in some notion that can be seen as a compliment to her as a designer but she expresses that this only shows that no matter the age everybody wants to be able to wear what celebrities wear and to show that you can afford the luxury brands as well.

Anders from company C believes that there is differences in sustainable consumption amongst different segments. He expresses that through his years here in China he has seen that the not so wealthy segment is much more open to buying and using recycled clothes,

mainly because they do not have the same type of money to spend on clothes and they instead choose to spend their money on other important thing such as food and paying bills. However, both Anna and Sara explain that they cannot express what other segments think and do as their companies are mainly focused on the middle and luxury segment, from their perspective the sustainable consumption trend within these segments are unfortunately not present today.

5.3.2 Shanghainese perspective

Both Li Wei and Wang Weo from the second hand store W & Z state that their customers usually buy seasonal cloths. In winter mostly jackets are bought and in summer it is t-shirts and dresses that are bought by the customers. They explain that their customers consist mostly of the ones that are not that wealthy and whom can't afford to buy new cloths. Both Li Wei and Wang Weo agree on the proclamation and continue to explain that their customers don't buy their clothes because they are sustainable but more because they are cheap. Most of their customers are elderly men and women. Younger people don't come to this market, they buy clothes from the Internet. Li Wei says that his friends would never buy second hand apparel, because according to them and many other Chinese people, reused apparel is associated with poorness and not sustainability. They would feel ashamed if someone they knew saw them buy reused cloths. Wang Fang from the second hand store X explains that most of his customers buy leather shoes, because leather is more durable than shoes made out of textile. He states that his customers are also most people that belong to the lower class, but he also explains that nowadays he has seen some curious Western students on the market. According to him Western customers don't care as much as the Chinese people about the poorness association that Chinese customers have with reused apparel. Li Jun from the second hand store Z sells more expensive vintage clothes, so his customers are mostly younger and middle aged women from the uprising middle class. They are the ones that can for example afford a vintage luxury bag but not a new one. Li Jun thinks that the second-hand value for the products he sells is very good and that it is accepted amongst the Chinese people to wear reused luxury bags. Shoes and clothes are however harder to sell, Chinese customers prefer to buy new clothes according to him. Nevertheless, all of the second hand respondents agree that the price is what influences their customers the most. Li Wei explains that in Shanghai it is not important if the product you buy is environmentally sustainable, Chinese consumers choice is influenced by how much money they have and the fashion trends. He also tells that Shanghai have a very big market called Qipu Lu clothing market, that sells fashionable clothes, shoes and accessories for a very low prices. So according to him, they who can't afford luxury brands buy their clothes there. However, he hopes that one day it will become a trend to buy second hand, so he can sell and earn more.

5.4. Empirical summary

The table (5.4) below presents a summary of the respondent's answers. In next chapter the empirical results will be compared and analyzed with the chapter about sustainable consumption from an organizational perspective.

Table 5.4: Summary of the empirical result

Approach	Interview Results
Drivers of consumption	Chinese consumers get influenced by the Western styles and want to buy clothes from the Western brands, but the tendency is directed towards new apparel and not recycled. All three Nordic companies agreed that in Nordic countries the society promotes sustainable consumption a lot more than in

	China.
Role of business	Though there are a few second hand stores in Shanghai they do not get the attention from the Western consumers nor the Chinese consumers. Shanghai consumers today prefer to buy second hand clothes on Internet instead of visiting markets and retail stores. However, the demand of sustainable products and second hand are overall not high.
Role of consumer	In shanghai consumers often associate reused cloths with poorness, not sustainability. The Shanghai consumers mostly do not care if company's clothes are eco-friendly or if they are produced in a certain way.

6. Analysis

This chapter will discern the results from the empirical study and theoretical framework as well as the organizational review to answer the research questions we have verbalized. This analysis will be conducted on the basis of the previous parts, to help create a complete understanding which will later build up towards an answer to the research question.

The following chapter discourses an analysis of the collected empirical data; organizational review and theoretical framework that has been presented before throughout the study (see chapter 2 and 4). Each of the research questions will be analyzed in regard to the different standpoints of both the theoretical framework and organizational review as well the results from the empirical data that were found. The supposed conception with this is to find out if different patterns and differences between the findings of the empirical data and the theory can be recognized.

6.1 Drivers of consumption

The drivers of consumption are adequately perceived to be reliable on three important factors, consumers, businesses and the government. As described in the organizational review (see chapter 4) businesses, governments, the civil society and the consumers all have the power to distress transformation. The driving factors of consumption can be an important factor for when promoting a more maintainable approach to the consumption patterns of today's market.

6.1.1 Current sustainable behavior, attitudes and drivers

In the theoretical framework it is described that SC is receiving a bigger amount of attention from both the scientific community as well as the business community (Banbury, Stinerock & Subrahmanyam, 2012). The organizational review acknowledged that governments and policy-makers at all levels have an important role to play in creating the right legal, fiscal and cultural environment for sustainable businesses and consumption (WBCSD, 2008). Witt (2011) explained consumer's behavior in behavioral scientific terms of being an organism which is deprived of something and in order to respond to that feeling, an action is taken of building up motivation and reducing this state of deprivation.

In order to change a consumer's behavior Ministry of Finance (2005) explained that the Swedish government is an important driver when it comes to promote sustainable consumer behavior and attitudes. Support from an action plan for sustainable household consumption is used to promote sustainable attitudes. To make consumers feel a certain moral responsibility to live sustainably, the society need effective support from the government. The respondents from the Nordic retail companies expressed that Nordic countries informs their consumers about sustainable consumption a lot more than in China. Company B discussed that if the Chinese society informed the population more about sustainability it could maybe improve the present sustainable consumption behaviors. As Maniates (2014) stated, individual consumers are not only embedded in a social, cultural and material context but also in a larger scope where the surroundings can have the means to exhibit change. Both Finney (2014) and Witt (2001) relate that the change in consumers behavior and consumption patterns are more focused on the motivation, attitudes and decision making. The organizational review also stated that in order to make a population of consumers more aware about sustainable consumption the focus should be on strengthening the consumer's motivation for a change in

their behavior. It is also important to implement a well-functioning cooperation between different stakeholders (WBCSD 2008; The Swedish Institute, 2012).

Fishbein & Ajzen's theory (1975) of reasoned action discussed how consumer's attitudes, beliefs and situational influences influence each purchase. The organizational review displayed how Sweden as a country works hard to improve the sustainable consumption by striving to become a leader in green growth (Elander et. al, 2014). Respondents from the Nordic retail companies B and C discussed that the sustainable attitude in the Nordic countries show on a huge demand from their consumers. However, the trend of sustainability can only unfortunately be seen with the European customer base and not in Shanghai. For example, Anders at Company C explain that the European customers are much more aware of the different production and manufacturing stages and that this keeps companies more aware about the whole concept of sustainability. Frank (2000) pursues that consumers chase their own self-interest and don't put too much reflection in how this affects the larger society. Furthermore, does Naturvårdsverket (2010) describes that consumer behavior in a society will also affect and influence other countries. For example, Sweden imports a lot of retail products, so what Swedish consumers consume affects what other countries export and indirect also their corresponding environment as for example manufacturing process. The Swedish Institute (2012) described that the trade sector and organizations should be invited to take part in these communicative efforts. The motivation may be strengthened by decreasing consumer costs for sustainable behavior. For example, in 2011 the Swedish government presented a new sustainability strategy to establish favorable conditions for the growth and development of environmental technology companies. The objectives were for example to make it easier to commercialize innovations and promote research about sustainability.

The organizational review states that another important driver of sustainable consumption are the consumers (Palm et.al, 2015). Consumption with the consumers can be found across a variety of categories and is essentially influenced by the notion of defining and creating an identity of oneself, as a result many consumers choose to focus on certain aspects which later on may outweigh others such as choosing fashionable items over sustainable (Berger & Heath, 2007; McNeill & Moore 2015). The notion of increased focus on sustainability by the consumers will lead to competitive strength in the market for retail companies that can market their products and clothes as sustainable (Palm et. al, 2015). Li Wei from second hand X store thinks that today younger adults in Shanghai are more inspired by the Western brands and prefer to buy just new retail products. Respondents from second-hand company X and Z discusses that the drivers of second hand consumption today are just the older people, the ones who don't have enough money to buy new clothes and don't care about fashion trends. Wang Fang, one of the respondents from the second hand stores, believes that if the Western consumers buy recycled cloths, than maybe Shanghainese consumers also will think second hand as trendy in the future. However, Anna from Nordic Retail company A believes that the second-hand trend never will become as big as it is in Europe mainly because fashion is all about being innovative and creating something new and aspiring and not about wearing something that is from last season.

6.2 Role of business

The role of the business/individual enterprises can take on several forms, however one of the more important aspect is their role in how they choose to impact and affect consumer's behavior towards sustainable consumption (The Danish Environmental Protection Agency, 2013; WBCSD, 2008). The businesses/individual enterprises are the ones that can turn or initiate a behavior more easily by slowly introducing certain things. Nevertheless, it is the

consumers' choice in the end (Maniates, 2014). With the rapid growth of consumption in both textiles and apparel it is inevitable for the businesses to adapt and help lead the consumers on the right path.

6.2.1 Perceived demand of sustainable products

One of the objectives with this study was to investigate how the apparel recycling retailers and apparel retail vendors in Shanghai perceive the attitude and behavior towards sustainable consumption among the Chinese consumers. McNeill & Moore (2015) expressed that different consumers can have a different approach to how they choose to consume certain goods and the attitude which lays behind these reasons. In accordance to the empirical study that was conducted, the Nordic apparel businesses emphasized on the fact that in China, especially Shanghai the trend of fast fashion is very clear for both the consumers as well as the retailers. The fast fashion movement focuses at a culture of fast purchasing and disposal and has been made possible by the expansion of low value retailers that can buy in cloths with low purchase price (Lee, 2007). The fast fashion movement requires companies to implicitly implement a structure which support wide product ranges and in the long run affects also business promotions and support for the consumers demand (Sheridan, Moore & Noobs, 2006). Anders, for example whom works with Company C accentuates that the Chinese consumers are hard to develop an understanding for as opposed to the Nordic consumers. Furthermore, he explains that as a retailer you can't follow the trends from the bigger fashion countries because the Chinese consumers don't have the same palate as they Western countries.

The organizational review presented the business's role in the life cycle chain and how the role of a business can come to affect both the consumers and the suppliers (e.g. The Danish Environmental Protection Agency, 2013). Different actions which have been taken on by the businesses in Scandinavia, especially Sweden to help promote sustainable consumption were also presented (Sundin, 2011; Tojo et al, 2012; Ekström & Salomonson, 2012). The respondents from the Nordic retail vendors all concurred on the point that the supply of sustainable products is not as equally present as it is in the Nordic countries. Nevertheless, input from recycling retailers was also concluded in the empirical study conclude with the Nordic retail vendors, and explained that they perceive it as the Chinese customers prefer to buy new apparel as opposed to buying recycled apparel. However, many of the respondents from the Nordic retail vendors sought after a new type of sustainable consumption with the Chinese consumers. Anna, whom owns her own fashion company and brand expresses that because China is on the verge of being an economic superpower they supply of recycled products is going to see an even lesser demand. An alternative way would be to develop a sustainable fiber that endures more and the customer can keep the clothes a bit longer before discarding them.

6.2.2 The importance of e-commerce

Nevertheless, the thought of the procurement process of apparel in today's market is only limited to stationed enterprises is not perceived correctly. The organizational review discusses internet sites such as Tradera and Blocket which are becoming increasingly popular amongst the consumers for when wanting to buy assorted apparel and still be sustainable (Elander et. al., 2014). The respondents from the second-hand businesses state that they have seen a decrease of customers and believe that a reason for that is that many of the Chinese consumers rather shop online than in stationed shops. Taken for example, Li Wei that is one of the younger respondents, expressed that many younger consumers that are in his age are buying more apparel online. As, a result he also believes that the demand is probably higher if

you have an online shop as opposed to a stationed one. Sarah from the Nordic company A agrees on the same point and states that ever since Company A has been introduced to the Chinese market they have seen an upswing of sales in their e-shops in comparison to their stationed one in different malls. This is also one of the reasons for why some of the respondents from the second-hand businesses have decided to take their products online. For example, Li Yun that works in the vintage shop Y explains that even if there are only some vintage shops in Shanghai he decided to start selling online in his e-shop in order to reach out to more customers. The same thing goes with Wang Fang from the second-hand store X, he stated during the interview that in order to avoid the high rivalry between the second-hand stalls he started selling online as well. As a result more customers have the opportunity to buy your apparel just because it is unique or cheaper.

6.3 Role of consumer

The role of the consumer is significant in the economic system. The consumer's purchasing power helps accomplish the notion of business. Without the consumer the aspect of exchanging goods and services does not exist in the same context. Individual consumers make decisions on how to use resources, nevertheless it is also the same consumers that can introduce and demand certain products (Solér, 2010; Manoochehri, 2002). Consequently, the producers and the businesses value the demands of the consumers (WBCSD, 2008).

6.3.1 Different types of consumers

In the organizational review Larsson (2015) discussed that consumption patterns, consumer attitudes and perceptions on sustainability are connected with the information and knowledge the consumers obtain. Barnett et al. (2005) sites consumers which possess a more ethical sense and an established attitude to them can generally be labeled into those that consider on how their consumption affects the world around them. The Swedish society has taken action to influence their consumer's attitudes to become more sustainable, for example with environmental studies in the school system. Isenhour (2010) mentioned that the reason why Swedish consumers have started to turn toward a more sustainable behaviour is not just because people's attitudes and actions, but also country's political and cultural history influences a lot. Li Wei discussed that in Shanghainese consumer culture reused apparel is associated with poorness and therefore are sustainable retail products not popular to buy. However, Vintage seller Li Jun thought that the second-hand value for luxury products is good and that it's accepted amongst the Chinese people to wear reused luxury bags. Reused shoes and clothes are however harder to sell.

According to Copenhagen business school (2013) younger consumer in Sweden are displayed higher levels of environmental and social concern when it comes to their consumption. However, Anna and Sara from company A and B explained that in Shanghai consumers don't show the same concern as in Sweden. Consumers often care to chase their own self-interest and goals and not caring to reflect on how it affects the larger society (Frank, 2000). The Shanghainese consumers do not care if apparel has the most eco-friendly cotton or if it is produced in a certain way, they care about what the celebrities wear and they want to do the same. Anders from Company C stated that Shanghainese consumer's choice in products is the design of the product and the price of the products, not if the product is sustainable. Li Wei and Wang Weo, respondents from second hand store in Shanghai discussed that their customers don't buy their clothes because they are sustainable but more because they are cheap. Most of their customers are elderly men and women with a limited budget. However, they also argued that today many people in Shanghai who can't afford brand products choose

to buy fashionable but very cheap clothes, shoes and accessories from Qipu Lu market instead of visiting second-hand market.

6.3.2 Consumer attitudes towards sustainability

Both the organizational review as well as the empirical study displayed that Internet shopping has increased a lot this century and consumers in both Sweden and Shanghai use different types of e-commerce sites to buy regular apparel and second hand apparel. WBCSD (2008) conferred that consumers are increasingly turning to the Internet as a trusted source. Elander et.al (2014) described that the second-hand shopping in Sweden via e-commerce sites increased by 33 percent between 2011 and 2013. A similar behaviour can be seen with the consumers in Shanghai according to the empirical study. Respondents from Shanghainese second hand stores explained that younger Shanghainese consumers don't visit the market anymore, instead they are more inclined to buy second hand apparel from the Internet. Mainly because then the chances of them being spotted shopping second-hand reduces a lot more and it doesn't become as awkward or shameless. The respondents from the second-hand businesses explain that in China it is not considered "trendy" to buy recycled clothes instead many consumers draw parallels to poorness and lower class image.

A report from NICE (2013) discussed how to achieve sustainable consumption. The conclusion was that it requires a long-term transformation in consumer's attitudes and behaviors. Consumers need first of all be aware of and care about sustainability and the environmental, social and economic impacts of their consumption (Manoochehri, 2002). Respondent, Li Wei explained that in today's Shanghai consumers don't care if products are environmentally sustainable. Chinese consumer's choice influences by how much money they have and the fashion trends. However, consumers in Shanghai often get influenced by Western fashion according to the respondents. Hill & Lee (2015) displayed of findings where sustainability and fast-fashion appears to be a good fit together. The respondents of the empirical study concluded that an increased sustainability attitudes in Western countries can in the future increase the sustainable fashion consumption in Shanghai as well as both countries like fashion.

7. Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusions to the main research question that will also be discussed. The chapter also includes reflection about the choice of thesis method and recommendations of further research.

7.1. How does the retail apparel industry in Shanghai perceive consumers behavior towards sustainable consumption in comparison to Sweden?

From the empirical study which was conducted as part of the study, conclusion can be drawn that according to respondents from the retail apparel industry in Shanghai, the current sustainable consumer behavior is vaguely developed in the rising city of Shanghai. As many of the respondents acknowledge the consumers of Shanghai show no concerns regarding sustainability. So even though sustainability is something that is in focus in today's consumption society the study demonstrated that the overall consumer in Shanghai lacked focus and involvement into sustainable consumption. Leading the consumption society in Shanghai in a closed loop of fast fashion and unsustainable consumption patterns, which in the future may be seen as risk towards the country's environmental footprint.

As it is described in the organizational perspective, Sweden is one of the leading countries when it comes to promote sustainable consumption. For example did Isenhour (2010) describe in a report that that Swedish consumers are turning towards a more sustainable behavior. As well as Ekström, Salomonson, Gustafsson & Hjelmgren's (2012) discussed that there is an increased interest seen in the second-hand apparel industry amongst the younger Swedish consumers. So in comparison to Sweden where consumer behavior towards sustainable consumption is on the front edge, the respondents from retail apparel industry in Shanghai seems to agree that Shanghainese consumers buying behavior is more for fast fashion.

However, one of the respondents discussed that if the Westerners accepts sustainable fashion, than maybe Shanghainese people will do the same thing in the future. Several of the respondents also concluded that China adopts influences and styles of the Western world especially with apparel. Convincingly, how the retail apparel industry today perceives the behavior of the consumers may change in the future not only because of the fluctuating trends from the West but also because of the time that may elapse before the consumers of Shanghai chose to adopt any trends from that part of the world. Though, all of the respondents did not conclude on this. For example did one of the respondents state that Shanghai will always be involved with the fast fashion concept because in this city it is about being innovative and constantly creating something new, not wearing last season's clothes. Irrefutably, the respondent believed that sustainable fashion and sustainable consumer behavior will never become as big as it is in Sweden and rest of Europe.

7.1.1 How do apparel recycling retailers and apparel retail vendors in Shanghai perceive the attitude towards sustainable consumption among the Chinese consumers?

As WBCSD (2008) pointed out that one of the more important drivers of sustainable consumption are the consumers. The empirical study revealed that there is lack of consumer interest in sustainable consumption. The reason for this was according to the respondents based on the demand for fast fashion amongst the Chinese consumers and that the idea of purchasing reused apparel is associated with poorness and not with an act of contributing to sustainability. Many of those whom are currently buying recycled clothes in Shanghai belong

to the group of consumers which don't have as equally much money to spend on clothes. In the theoretical framework Kotler's (1994) key concepts such as needs, wants and demand were mentioned as a part of consumer's behavior. In Shanghai, sustainable apparel purchases such as second-hand appeared to categorically be a "need". Consumers who buy recycled apparel do it for a specific reason, such as for example because they need to have winter clothing when it gets cold and they can't afford to buy new clothes. However, one of the respondents also discussed that it is acceptable to buy reused luxury apparel. This behavior could be seen as a "want". Consumers who buy a branded second hand bag do it because they want a new one not because they need one. Influentially, even if Chinese consumers in Shanghai perceive to have a negative attitudes towards sustainable consumption the study revealed that there is still a small demand for sustainable fashion, namely second-hand luxury apparel.

Nevertheless, even if the lack of positive attitudes towards sustainable consumption is present in Shanghai respondents from the empirical study described different measures which foreign business have taken on. In order to contribute towards sustainable consumption foreign businesses that are established in China are for example having soles made out of recycled gloves and car tires as well as having the leather on the shoes come from a tannery where they have taken certain precautions. All of this is done in order to make the Chinese consumers in Shanghai buy and consume apparel that are sustainable in the long run. So even if the consumer's attitudes towards sustainable consumption is vague, the retail apparel industry in Shanghai sometimes manages to sell high quality apparel that also qualifies as sustainable.

One other driving factor described by the WBCSD (2008) was acknowledged to be the government. The empirical study exhibited that a contributing factor to why the Chinese consumer's interest in sustainable consumption is so low is mainly because of the lack of promotion and education towards sustainable consumption. As a result, a solution to improve this present state with the consumer's attitudes toward sustainable consumption could be to give the Chinese consumers in Shanghai more information as well as education in this specific area.

7.1.2 How can drivers which Sweden has adapted in order to improve attitudes towards sustainable consumption be used to achieve the same result in Shanghai?

In the organizational perspective review it is described by NICE (2013) that it will require a long-term transformation in consumer's attitudes and behaviors to accomplish a sustainable consumption. The consumers of Sweden didn't change their behavior to become more sustainable over one night. The WBCSD (2008) indicated the importance of governments and the policy-makers role when it comes to promote sustainable businesses and consumption. Taken for example, in 2005 the Ministry of Finance in Sweden (2005) created an action-plan where focus has been on having environmental information on products, eco-labeling, consumer and environmental studies in the school system. From the empirical study it was also conclude that the respondents from the Nordic retail companies believe that the society of Sweden as well as the other Nordic countries promote sustainable consumption a lot more than in China. In order to improve behavior and attitudes towards sustainable consumption in Shanghai a conclusion could be that China's government should promote sustainability more. For example with different campaigns and more sustainability education in schools. This could increase the Shanghainese consumers knowledge about sustainability and so their attitudes.

In both the theoretical framework and organizational review it was discussed how consumer attitudes can be shaped by different social norms that dominate in the contextual society (Larsson, 2015; Maniates, 2014). The demand for new products is often created by advertising with idealization based images in Sweden. Taken for example, the majority of people in Sweden strive for success and by advertising a new eco-friendly car with an image of a successful man driving it sales can be boosted significantly. In order to both change and improve consumer attitudes idealized images can be used in the same way for when promoting sustainable products. Putting this in context, in Shanghai we often see Western-looking people in advertising campaigns mainly because they associate the Western look with being beautiful. As a result, if for example the second-hand stores had campaigns involving Western people maybe the possibility to wear sustainable apparel would become more socially accepted to in Shanghai.

Furthermore, the organizational review concluded the importance of the businesses in the promotion of sustainable consumption. Sandow (2012) and Tojo et al (2012) explain in the organizational perspective review that Sweden's largest retail business such as H&M, KappAhl, Lindex, Ikea, Indiska and Åhlens have taken on an initiative in order to help close the material loop due to the lack of a larger scale textile recycling system in Sweden. However it is not clear if this initiative was taken on because of the fact that sustainability is an increasing trend for the Swedish consumers or because the pursuing of a sustainable marketing strategy is what attracts more customers. Nevertheless, global companies such as H&M and Ikea should promote and take recycling initiatives in China's as well and not only in the Western parts of the world. From a marketing perspective this would maybe not be huge success, because of the today's missing sustainable behavior in Shanghai. However, sustainable consumption is important for the world's future environment. Companies should not act sustainable just to attract and satisfy the existing consumers, but to try and create a sustainable future. Taken for example H&M has taken a first step to make Shanghai's consumers more aware and have launched their environmental friendly collection called *Conscious* in Shanghai. This is an important step to help increase the Shanghaiese consumer's attitudes towards sustainability. We hope that other retail business will in the future also launch their sustainable campaigns and collections in Shanghai.

Conclusively, what Shanghai can learn from Sweden is that actions are needed both from the government, businesses and consumers to help increase the attitudes towards sustainable consumption. It is also important to have in mind that this is a transformation that takes time. If sustainable fashion becomes accepted by the Shanghaiese consumers the challenge that awaits further on is even more complex, how to make it to a trend that will keep on going in a city of fast fashion.

7.2. Method reflection

The choice of method in this research has mainly worked well and fulfilled the intention with the study. The qualitative data collection method with semi-structured interviews, have enabled material to be analyzed and answered the research questions. However, to find relevant interview respondents took more time than expected, because the organizing of the interviews could only be done when in Shanghai and not before arrival. To find relevant background information to the problem area was partly hard to write, because it has taken more time than expected to find relevant literature. But this problem was solved when using new keywords when searching for suitable articles. We have also reflected if the reliability could be increased if a quantitative research method approach would be chosen instead. If conducting a poll, results from more respondents could have been compiled. However, when

reflecting over the choice of method a quantitative research method seemed hard to conduct because of the time limit in Shanghai and to find relevant respondents.

7.3 Recommendations for further research

As this thesis empirical study focuses on retail companies and secondhand stores in Shanghai, it would be interesting if a similar study was conducted where first hand data was gathered from a consumer perspective. As this research only was conducted with 7 respondents it can be seen as a bit implausible to draw definite conclusions from. Therefore, it would also be interesting if a similar study would be conducted with a quantitative research approach.

The focus in this study has been on Shanghai and not China as a country, because the trend differences between different parts of the country. Therefore, we also recommend that other parts of China could be investigated to help broaden the scope and the input.

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