APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A

Participant Profiles

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Participant 1

I: So to start off, I am going to ask you ‘What do you know and understand about the concept of fast fashion?’

P1: I understand some things but I would not say that my knowledge is very deep. I am not a professional but I guess I do understand some things.

I: Do you know which are fast fashion brands?

P1: For example, Zara… I think is one of the most famous FF brands. Also, I would consider H&M.

I: Primark?

P1: Primark, for sure.

I: So when you purchase clothing, do you usually go to FF stores?

P1: Yes, usually yes.

I: And which ones do you go to?

P1: I go mostly to Zara. I also go mostly to Primark here. There is a Primark here in Lisbon. We don’t have one where I’m from in Germany?

I: What about in Germany?

P1: We have one in Germany but not the city where I live. So if you want to go in Germany, you have to go in other cities, and that’s kind of far. So here I go to Primark. I go to Bershka. Lately, I don’t go to H&M anymore. I go to Pull and Bear.

I: And back home, where do you normally go?

P1: Back home, I usually go to Zara.

I: Is there a reason? Because you have said Zara a lot.

P1: I feel like, compared to a lot of other FF brands, their quality is kind of better and also, it’s more my taste.

I: So, think about your past decision-making process when you walk into a store. Can you walk me through the process? What do you think about? What factors do you consider when you make a purchase… price, quality, style?

P1: First of all style for sure because when I go inside the store I check what I like. And if there is something I like, I feel it. I touch it first and then I look at the price.

I: So, you say the style, the quality, then the price? So style is the most important?

P1: But I would not say it’s the most important, but the first thing you look at and then, you see the price and then you make your decision.

I: What role do you think fast fashion apparel or fashion in general plays in your life?
P1: I think it plays a big role.
I: How so?
P1: I think it plays a big role because I like fashion. I would not tell that I am a big fashion addict or something but I really like fashion, I like shopping, I like to buy clothes.
I: But why, how does it make you feel? What does it give you in your life?
P1: Happiness. It’s nice to have new stuff, to try new things. It’s nice to see myself.

I: So let’s talk about fast fashion. What does it mean to you to be a good citizen of the world or the community?
P1: Oh wow, this is a deep question. A good citizen of the community…of the world?
I: What do you think that means for you?
P1: For me? Wow.
I: Take your time, take your time. Think about fast fashion. Think about the fashion industry, purchasing clothes.
P1: Maybe I would like to say something different than I actually do, you know?
I: This is just what you think, not what you actually do.
P1: Best case is like being a good citizen with fashion is to purchase clothes which are produced under good conditions also maybe out of good material. You know fair traded fashion…also for a reasonable price that the people who are all involved in the production process that they are treated good and got as much as they deserved.
I: Fair wages…
P1: Yep
I: So how important is it to you to be a good citizen? Do you consider yourself a good citizen in this context?
P1: In this context, I would not consider myself a good citizen. Actually, I wish I would but probably because at the moment…Sometimes I want to buy more expensive clothes or maybe to look at these more but at the moment for example, I just cannot afford it…being a student it’s hard to actually afford this.
I: Do you think this will change when you start working? Do you think you will stop shopping at Zara as much?
P1: Mmmm, I think I would not stop shopping at Zara but I would stop shopping at these other fast fashion stores. Probably, I would not go to Primark that much. But Zara, I don’t think so.
I: You don’t think you will ever stop?
P1: No, I don’t think so.
I: Let’s talk more about ethics. What does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you in relation to clothing? We talked about it a little bit, but is there anything else you want to say?

P1: Um, let me think about what I can add.

I: You talked about fair wages, living conditions, quality, good quality?

P1: At the moment, no…but if I think of something else, I’ll tell you.

I: Do you know any, for example, big ethical issues or scandals with certain companies. Could you name any?

P1: Yeah, there was one scandal with the…do you remember when they found an ‘SOS’ on some clothes of Primark?

I: Tell me about this.

P1: They found, I think one of Primark’s pullovers or so. They found that somebody put in an ‘SOS’.

I: How did you hear about this?

P1: I heard about this on social media…Facebook, I think.

I: Okay. So do you know anything else about other fast fashion brands…other ethical or unethical behavior? For, example Zara’s CSR practices or any other scandals that happened with Zara.

P1: The only thing I know what happened to Zara is that they were copying the designs of some designers. Something like that and they were just copying them and producing them really fast and apparently, their designs were really close to some small designers and they just copied their styles from somewhere and produced that. I think that was last year.

I: Do you feel an obligation to keep yourself informed like going online, reading Zara’s sustainability practices or reading the news, watching the news? Or have you ever taken the time to look it up?

P1: No, only if there’s something that actually appears online then I would click on it and read it but I wouldn’t look for it.

I: Why wouldn’t you look for it, just asking?

P1: I would not just assume something and then…

I: Would you say that you ever consider ethical issues when you are in the store?

P1: Sometimes I do. Sometimes when you see the prices, you think “how can this be so cheap? How is this possible?” For example, I just bought a sweater, it was on discount, for 3 euros.

I: So what does this make you think, though? Do you think about people do you think…

P1: About people mostly. It makes me think about people “how much did the people who actually produced it get from those 3 euros?”

I: So you actually think about this when you’re shopping?

P1: Well, I think about it when I see the price on the first moment. I think like “How is this possible?”, but I don’t think further, I guess.
I: So why, obviously this isn’t your main priority. You’re thinking about them but it doesn’t change your behavior? So who would you hold responsible for fixing these ethical problems? The government, the companies themselves, yourself?

P1: I think all of us could do something. If customers, would at one point, stop purchasing at Primark, their revenues would go down and the company would have to change something and that would be a good opportunity to change their production locations or production conditions or increasing the quality and increasing something and at the same time, the companies could change something and I think mostly, maybe at the end it would depend on the customers because if the company sees that they are not buying here anymore, they would change something in the strategy.

I: So what/who are the obstacles that prevent the industry from being completely sustainable. Would you say that it’s consumers purchasing, then?

P1: Yes because people are buying it. Why should they change something if people are buying it?

I: So what’s interesting in fast fashion is that, the idea of FF doesn’t make sense with being ethical and sustainable because it is about adapting to consumer demand. Basically, if Zara sees that people are buying a certain style they are going to order more of this style and then they will place these orders and these factories must fulfill the orders right away and this may not always be done under ethical working conditions. How does this make you feel, knowing that in FF specifically, change should come from consumers? How does this awareness change where you place responsibility? Would expect governments, companies or would you again place responsibility on yourself…on consumers?

P1: I feel like all those three parts could do something. The government maybe, imagine there would be some regulations made by the government so all the prices would increase. So, you know if they say you have to pay more to your employees in Bangladesh then all the prices would increase and people would still buy it even if it goes up, right? And the company would have to follow those regulations, right? They would be mandatory for the whole industry. At the same time, I think because the company is following, customer’s demand, the customers must do something. AND at the same time, the company could also do something because they could also say they are not playing this game and they could say ‘we are just trying to differentiate’.

I: So you know…you talked about the consumers, is there a reason you wouldn’t be willing to limit your consumption of fast fashion products because if you know that you are purchasing is making the situation worse. Would you be willing to stop or limiting your consumption of fast fashion products?
P1: Nowadays the life cycles of the products are getting so small. You go there one week and the next there are new styles available. So I feel like the companies deliver so much that the people are buying even more nowadays and even more recently.

I: Do you see yourself limiting your consumption of FF products of stopping your consumption of FF products for ethical reasons?

P1: Honestly, you know sometimes I have those phases of my life where you really think about this more and then I feel like ‘I’m not going to buy this now. Maybe I will check out other stores’. But at the end, I am still a student and if I want to have something new or nice to wear on a special event or wherever, I have to go for those shops, right?

I: So when your salary increases, let’s say 10 years from now? Do you think you would be more willing to limit your consumption?

P1: Yes, I think so. 10 years from now I will not need so much clothes anymore.

I: So it’s really price you would say?

P1: Yes

I: Any questions you have…that was my last question? Anything else you want to add?

P1: Nope, not now.

I: Okay, thank you.

Participant 2

I: So to start off, what do you know and understand about the concept of fast fashion?

P2: I really don’t know much about the concept but I think it is like stores like Zara, H&M, Bershka. They produce a lot of quantities of clothes.

I: So it is basically brands that offer diverse clothing, but it is actually in smaller quantities and they adapt to consumer demand. So they see that a style is selling really fast so they make an order really fast so that’s why it is called fast fashion. When you buy clothes, where do you normally visit?

P2: Zara, H&M, Bershka, Pull and Bear, Mango

I: Do you have a preference?

P2: Zara

I: Why?

P2: They look more expensive, I think. They look better than the other stores; they are not so trashy. I think they, pretty much, they do the same clothes as designer clothes but in a cheaper way.

I: What factors do you consider when you purchase clothes? For example, price, quality, style…? Why are the most important for you?
P2: Price

I: The first thing you look at is price?

P2: No, no…style, then price

I: Then quality? Just think about the last time you were in Zara.

P2: Yeah, style, then I would check the price, then quality. If it’s worth it or not…

I: What role do you think fast fashion clothing play in your life or clothing in general?

P2: A big

I: How so?

P2: For me, I cannot live without clothes. I am kind of addicted…. Level of interaction

I: Why? Why do you think that is?

P2: I don’t know. I like to be pretty. Image

I: What is the value of clothing in your life? How does it make you feel?

P2: Better. If I’m pretty, I’m happy. And if I’m happy…. Happy

I: So you would say it is mostly about yourself, just making yourself feel good? So now, I’m going to talk more about the industry and ethics. I’m going to start by asking ‘What do you think it means to be a good citizen of the world and of the global community in relation to fast fashion…thinking about fast fashion? You can think, take your time.

P2: First of all, in this industry…we know that the conditions of workers are not the best. Labor conditions

I: How do you know this? I’m just asking.

P2: Documentaries and like that note. Sometimes they are fake and sometimes they are not, I don’t know. But that note in Primark, for example, “Help” Source of info Specific Issue

I: How did you learn about that?

P2: Internet, Facebook…You cannot believe in everything that you see so sometimes I am not so sure. I am sure that they had really bad conditions of work but… Source of info Mistrust of info

I: Who is they? Primark?

P2: In general all…even Adidas and Nike Adidas Nike

I: So how important is it to you to be a good citizen or do you consider yourself a good citizen?

P2: Not by fashion but like that is impossible, because for example I don’t have money to go order for someone to do my clothes and do pay the fare Student status

I: So would you say that you feel a responsibility for your community, for humankind, to protect their rights?

P2: Yes Obligation

I: But within the context of fast fashion?

P2: What? I am not understanding the question.
I: Why do you not act according to your beliefs about ethics about fashion?

P2: I just answered that today…I don’t have money.

I: So price?

P2: Yeah, price.

I: When it comes to fashion, what does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you?

P2: Like leather? Ethical in fashion? Like ‘don’t kill animals’

I: So you would say more about animal rights?

P2: That too and the workers too.

I: Do you know anything specific about ethical issues in fast fashion. You said something about Primark. Do you know anything about other brands like Zara?

P2: Yeah, I saw a documentary a long time ago so I don’t know the specific brands but almost every brand, Zara, Massimo Dutti, they are all from Inditex. They are all from the same company so probably they are all doing the same thing.

I: Which documentary is this?

P2: I don’t know.

I: Was it on Netflix?

P2: No, no it was on television some years ago. I was just zapping.

I: Do you feel an obligation to educate yourself? Going online to read about Zara’s practices to be ethical?

P2: Honestly, no.

I: But why not?

P2: This is kind of selfish but honestly, I don’t have the time for it. I don’t have the money for it to like search about that.

I: So when you are actually in the store, how often do you think about ethical issues?

P2: I don’t think.

I: You don’t think about it at all?

P2: No, I just buy my clothes. But I think everybody is like that; It is not only me. I think if people are saying that they think about it, they are lying.

I: So who do you hold responsible for fixing any ethical problems like you said about the working conditions?

P2: The companies…the companies have to pay for?

I: So you would say only companies?…governments, consumers?

P2: Probably the government has to make some measures or something

I: So companies, then governments and then consumers?

P2: Yeah

I: So basically the concept of fast fashion doesn’t work well with being ethical because their working on consumer demand. If they see that a style is very popular, they will place an order for this style and they will put pressure on factories. They will put pressure on laborers to produce right
away. So basically consumers are the ones making it worse, making it an environment that might violate human rights. How does this make you feel that specifically in fast fashion consumers have a more direct role in creating an unethical environment? Does this change how you feel?

P2: No it doesn’t change at all because we are consumers because of something and that something is like, for example, the media and other people that are not consumers that they say to you that you have to buy that thing. So now, you are the consumer. In the first place, like the bloggers say…

I: What do you mean they say to you that you have to buy it?

P2: That this is a trend now. You are not a consumer in the beginning but you will be because they say it is a fad because it is not a trend until someone says that it is a trend.

I: So then you feel like you have to adopt the trend? Why do you think you feel?

P2: Yeah, kind of. You don’t feel to. I just buy whatever I want and whatever I like. I’m not a trend follower, but sometimes I am sometimes I’m not. I am because someone says it is a trend and stores actually make trends before you know that it is a trend because for example, skinny jeans a long time ago, stores only had skinny jeans. You know?

I: So if you knew, for example, that you wanted to buy skinny jeans from Zara and they were using children to make those jeans like you saw a headline. Would you still buy those jeans?

P2: Of course not. Like if they say “These jeans are made by children”, of course I would go to another store. But of course, they are not saying that and you don’t know more.

I: So do you think if you knew more about some scandals, it would change where you bought clothes.

P2: Yeah, for example, I don’t go to Primark so often. I’ll go for earrings or something but not so…If I cannot go, I will not go.

I: So would you be willing to limit or stop your consumption of fast fashion products knowing that you as a consumer play a more direct role? You talked about price…let’s say 10 years from now you make more money.

P2: Yeah of course.

I: You would stop or you would limit your consumption?

P2: I think they are all the same even the high-quality stores like Louis Vuitton, they are kind of like that, you know. I think it is fashion.

I: So is there anything else you want to add about ethics, about ethical issues?

P2: No… I think in the fashion world, even the models…they don’t eat. It’s not ethical at all. In fashion, everything is wrong.

I: What do you think are the biggest obstacles that prevent the industry from changing…becoming more ethical?
The consumers, maybe. I don’t know. Oh and one thing, if the consumers said ‘No, I will not buy anything else.” The company would…yeah, no the consumers are at fault. Now I am seeing because if everybody said “Okay, I will not shop at this store anymore.”, they will have to change because they will get broke.

What do you think the obstacles are preventing consumers from changing?

The price…

Thank you

Participant 3

Let me start the interview by asking what you know and understand about the concept of fast fashion.

Fast fashion is when you buy in masses. You go to a store and there are plenty of clothes that are all the same and you buy.

You’re right, it’s a model based on producing trendy clothing, stylish clothing as seen at fashion shows but at cheaper prices. So when you purchase clothing, which brands do you normally visit?

Lefties, Zara, Pull and Bear, Mango

Why?

They have a lot of different styles. They have clothes that I can use for work at cheap prices and also for the weekends at cheaper prices.

So you mention work, clothes that you can use for work. Is that important to you?

Yeah it is because usually the working clothes are really expensive so it’s cool that I can buy them cheaper.

What role does fast fashion play in your life? What is its value and how does it make you feel?

I am young and I need to look older. To look, comfortable and older at the same time, it’s really important to me to choose clothes wisely. I need to wear something that makes me look older.

You are saying you want to look a certain way to communicate?

So the other people see me as more confident and able to talk and professional. Especially professional.

Can you walk me through your previous thought processes? So when you’re standing at the store looking at clothing, what are you thinking? What factors are you considering?

Yeah I usually think, “Do I look like a kid? Will I look like a child, a teenager or a woman? Will I look professional? Will it make me confident?”

Which factors do you consider the most? Price, quality, style?
P3: Style and price I would say.
I: Can you rank them? What would you say first? When you enter Zara, for example, Lefties, and you see a sweater that you like….
P3: Maybe the price because if it’s really stylish, if it’s expensive, I won’t buy it.
I: In general, what is your motivation for purchasing clothes?
P3: The need. Necessity vs. utility
I: So for work in your case?
P3: Yes
I: So I’m going to ask you a more general question. What does it mean to you to be a good citizen of the world and of the global community?
P3: Well, that’s a hard question. Maybe, I think it means for me to help the community by trying to integrate everyone and give opportunities to everyone but what I mean by opportunities and especially in the fashion industries, is allow the children to study and not to work in the factories and give everyone a chance.
I: How do you perceive a good citizen to act or behave in the context of fast fashion consumption?
P3: I think it’s that kind of stuff I just told you. Give the children the opportunity to study instead of working and also help the environment by not using every material. Use it with sense, in a way that we won’t waste. Perception of good citizenship
I: Would you consider yourself a good citizen in this context?
P3: Yeah, I think so.
I: In general, would you consider yourself a good citizen?
P3: In general, yes.
I: And in the context of fast fashion of fashion consumption?
P3: I’ve never thought about it.
I: So what does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you, in relation to clothes, the clothes that you buy.
P3: I think it’s about who produced it…how the clothes were produced. People and materials. Perception of Ethical
I: Can you tell me what you know about ethical issues related to the fashion industry, something more specific.
P3: That story about Nike and the kids. Sometimes in the factories, we don’t know who is working there; sometimes, there are children and even if they are not children, they work a lot of hours and that is not ethical. Nike Lack of information
I: Which ethical issues would you say are important to you (within fashion)?
P3: I just remembered one more, when they use animals . Animals
I: The hide?
P3: So that’s an ethical issue. More…when they ask children to work, when people work a lot of hours.
I: How do you consider these issues when you purchase fast fashion clothing?
P3: I don’t.
I: Is there a reason?
P3: I never thought about it. I’m just thinking about what I need to dress. If it’s on the media that Zara or another store uses children to work or if the conditions in the factory are not okay, if I recognize that, I would stop buying from the company.
I: Where do you get a lot of your news? Do you look it up? Do you go on the website of Zara or you google ethical scandals or where do you get your news?
P3: No, no. It’s just when they appear on TV or on papers or when everyone knows and tells me.
I: Can you name any specific scandals?
P3: The one about Nike
I: About fast fashion?
P3: I don’t remember now.
I: Nothing with Zara or other brands?
P3: No, I don’t remember.
I: I asked you this already but do you keep yourself educated by going online and reading the news besides what you see on TV?
P3: No, just on purpose, no.
I: So who do you hold responsible for fixing these ethical problems? Governments, companies, consumers?
P3: All of them
I: Would you say that you hold a group more responsible or you hold them all equally responsible?
P3: I’m not sure if I understand the question.
I: Do you hold all those groups, governments, companies and consumers, do you hold them all equally responsible or do place more blame on certain people or certain companies?
P3: I think the more responsibility you have, the more responsible you are for those issues.
I: So who would you blame if you had to place blame. Would you ask governments to do more work? Companies, governments?
P3: Yes, companies and governments…. and also consumers. We also have a role in it.
I: Can you talk more about it?
P3: If we stop buying from the stores that use unethical resources, they would stop it, I think.
I: Would you say that you follow these ethical beliefs?
P3: Maybe I don’t.
I: So what do you think is preventing you or what do you think are the obstacles preventing fast fashion industry from becoming more ethical?
P3: Cheap price, I think. In order for them to keep prices so low, they have to do whatever they can.

I: So you said earlier when I asked you about who you hold responsible and you said governments, companies and also consumers a little bit. What’s special about fast fashion is that the supply chains are very sensitive to consumer demand so really consumers play a more direct role in creating an environment where there are maybe unethical labor conditions because they are demanding a certain style at such a high quantity that factories need to produce them. So in this case, you can say that consumers play a more direct role. So knowing this, knowing this information, does it change where you place responsibility for preventing ethical problems? Would you still place the blame on governments and companies?

P3: For instance, the companies are the ones who know the conditions of how clothes are produced. So if they, or at least media should inform the public so we can make a decision.

I: You said you get a lot of your information from the media. Would you say that the media is doing a good job?

P3: Maybe not.

I: Would you say that the information that you get from the media….do you believe it to be accurate?

P3: It is but we don’t have that much information. But maybe now that I am thinking, maybe the blame is on us because I’m thinking now about that situation with Nike. We knew but we didn’t stop buying so they have no reason to change that behavior so maybe it’s our fault.

I: Can you talk more about…you said that you think there is not enough information?

P3: Because I don’t remember much about those kind of stories. Maybe they should be informing consumers more often.

I: You have also never voluntarily went online and looked?

P3: That’s true, no.

I: You would still expect the media to inform consumers or to inform the public?

P3: Yes, but in my case and in the case of that population that is ranked from 15-45 years old. I think we have the obligation to go search for that kind of information online.

I: Do you think that would change people’s consumption behavior?

P3: At least for me, I think it would change, yeah.

I: Why do you think you don’t take the time to do it to search for this information yourself?

P3: Because Zara is there, you know. It is so easy to go to Zara and buy stuff because its cheap. And go to Mango and Primark or wherever because its cheap. So if I know….I don’t think about it. Before our interview, I never realized.

I: You never realized what?
P3: That maybe the work conditions are not good and maybe I am allowing for them to continue with that.

I: So now that you know or maybe now that you’re re more aware that your role as a consumer a stronger impact on unethical problems, would you be willing to limit or stop your consumption of fast fashion products? Do you think you could stop or would stop or would be willing to stop shopping at Zara, Lefties, Bershka, Pull and Bear, Mango…?

P3: It’s hard to answer because clothes there are cheap.

I: So you would say price is really important. Do you think that when you will be making more money that this will change?

P3: Yes, I think so….maybe.

I: You would shop at other places?

P3: I’m not sure. I’m not sure.

I: Is there anything else you want to add?

P3: I just remembered now something about Bennetton.

I: What was it?

P3: I don’t remember.

I: But how did you learn about it?

P3: I was pretty young when I heard about it and I know that thing changed my mind. I never looked to Bennetton the same way. I never shop at Bennetton by the way and I have a Bennetton near me and I never shop there because of that.

I: Can I ask you a question? When I asked you would consider yourself a good citizen in this context, would you still say the same?

P3: Maybe not. Maybe I’m not a good citizen.

I: But why would you change your answer?

P3: I don’t take an effort searching for this information and I don’t change my behavior considering that information but maybe I will. I don’t know. I’ll try.

I: If you have no other questions. Thank you.

Participant 4

I: I’m going to start by asking what you know and understand about the concept of fast fashion.

P4: I don’t know…those kind of stores that you know you can find anything. You know you want a pair of jeans, a blouse, a jacket…you just go there and you pick it up. You have always a lot of choice and it’s not as expensive…accessible.

I: So when you purchase clothes, which brands to you normally go to and do you have a preference and why?

P4: H&M and Zara and Mango
I: Why?
P4: The sizes, the quality. I don’t…. I go there for jeans and shirts

I: Where?
P4: Zara and Mango. H&M is usually for the leggings or some shirts

I: So can you walk me through your thought process in the past when you’re standing in the store looking at clothes, what are you thinking? What factors are you considering?
P4: I’m honestly not a very big fan of going to stores… of shopping. I like shopping, like any woman, but I hate the process of having so many people around and the clothes are all spread around…I don’t like that but usually they are usually very well divided…Sorry, what was the question?

I: When you’re looking at clothes, when you see something, when you’re about to purchase something. What are you looking at?....Price, quality, style?
P4: All of it. Usually the first that catches your eye is the style. So, I go for some clothes because I like the style, I like the color; It’s what I’m looking for. Then, I usually look at the price, the size and then the quality, the fabric.

I: So in general, what would you say is your motivation for buying clothes?
P4: Well, in this case…I just got a new job so I need a wardrobe. For work. And also, whenever I am stressed out and I have some spare money, I say, “Okay, let’s go.”

I: So what kind of role do you think fashion or clothing plays in your life?
P4: I mean, I like to dress well, but it’s not the most important thing. It doesn’t have a permanent role in my life. I like to dress well, I like to buy stuff, but I am not the kind of person who follows trends, who buys stuff because it’s trendy this season.

I: So you just do it for yourself, for work, for?
P4: Exactly. I need to buy something, I go and see what I like. Usually, it takes me some time to actually purchase something because I like to see all of my options. I go to different stores; I see the options, and then I buy what suits me best.

I: I’m going to change the topic a little bit and talk more in general terms. What does it mean to you to be a good citizen of the world of the community in the context of fast fashion?
P4: A good citizen of the world, I don’t know. I think it’s like being aware of your rights, being aware that your rights end where another person’s rights start. Of course, you are entitled to a lot of things but as a citizen you are allowed to do whatever you want but you have to be aware that there are other people. You are not alone, so you have to respect that.

I: How do you perceive a good citizen to behave in the context of fast fashion consumption?
P4: Oh….Primark. I think that’s a topic that I did not put that much thought into, but it’s about Primark and even Zara and a lot of this fast fashion.
They are known for using children…child labor in the making of the clothes. Actually, that doesn’t fit into the good citizen concept but we still buy it anyway.

I: We? Why we, you’re also including yourself.
P4: Yeah, exactly. I think we have that in mind but we actually don’t think about it and we don’t…it’s too hard for us to make something towards it.

I: And where...you said you know about Primark. Where do you get this information?
P4: On the Internet. On the news.

I: On the news? Like watching the news? Do you actually Google this stuff or is it something that just pops up? You see it or you hear about it?
P4: It pops up a lot of times on the news. You find some….even on Facebook sometimes. You’re scrolling around and you find some news about someone finding a note asking for help in a product from Zara or the other woman who found a mouse…that kind of stuff that also come on the TV news. I actually never look for it, but even when you talk with people, people who actually know that or look for it you that kind of stuff.

I: Is there a reason why you don’t actually look for it?
P4: Yeah, I’m afraid of what I’m going to see. It’s like what I told you before; it’s easier to not put too much thought into it. It easy, you know. You can buy, you can purchase it and if you look for it, I know this is hypocritical or stupid to say but that’s how most people behave. They just don’t look for it because they know they are going to have to think about it and they will not feel good about it. It also goes against the concept of fast fashion when you go in and usually people buy that kind of stuff to feel better about themselves.

I: Would you consider yourself, now that you’ve said this, to be a good citizen in this context?
P4: No. I’m not, but I don’t consume a lot. I’m not that kind of person who has to buy it because she has to buy it and spend tons of money. Usually, I just buy it when I think that I actually can and that I really need.

I: So now talking about ethics, what does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you talking about clothes in fast fashion. What do you think about when you think about ethics and ethical fashion?
P4: I don’t know. You just got me there. Are we talking about competing prices?

I: What do you think of first, I should say?
P4: The first thing that pops into my mind is that I don’t think there is any discussion because in the other brands usually…that’s not actually true, now that I’m thinking. But in the other brands, you actually pay a little bit more but you have more quality although we have been seeing that the quality of high fashionable brands like those big names, the quality is decreasing a lot. Maybe the handwork is good because they hire the best
but the quality of the materials is not that good at all. In fast fashion, you actually pay. You don’t have any kind of quality. It’s true. Unless it’s in the accessories, you don’t have quality. You see the lines all tearing up, everything fall apart so easily. But you know, you already know what you’re buying because you spend not that much money on it.

I: So can you tell me what else you know about ethical issues related to fashion fashion? Do you know about specific issues?

P4: I don’t know. Can you elucidate me maybe?

I: Sure, I’m talking about children, unethical labor conditions, the environmental impact in terms of waste. The product cycle is very fast, waste. In fast fashion, you don’t keep it for more than a year and then you waste it.

P4: That’s true. I am aware but I don’t think like that because I’m not that kind of person.

I: It doesn’t apply to you?

P4: It doesn’t apply to me. It’s awful. I have clothes, my mom is always beating my head about it because I have clothes that have been there for years. I have a pair of boots from Timberland. I’ve had them since 11th grade. I’m 24 years old, so it’s seven/eight years and I still wear them. We have a shoe place here but I put all my shoes with me because I’m attached to my stuff but I do know persons who actually dispose of things like that and actually thinking about, these are the kinds of stuff that you cannot recycle and give it to other people because they get torn apart so easily. But yeah, that’s an issue that we talked about.

I: I think you said this earlier but how do you consider any ethical issues when you purchase clothes. I think you said you usually don’t, right? You don’t think about it but you know they exist?

P4: I do know, but we don’t look for it. It’s like human behavior. We’re just like, “Okay, let’s go buy some stuff and feel happy about it and don’t think about anything else.”

I: I think you talked about this already but tell me about any other ethical or unethical behavior by fast fashion brands? Any scandals? Or do you know any good initiatives that, for example, Zara, has?

P4: About H&M, I often see, because I do a lot of online shopping sometimes, I prefer it. I see less people, and I see some of the products they put but are environmentally friendly even the bags become paper instead of plastic and I think the fabrics they are using in the clothes are becoming more environmentally friendly.

I: And how does this change or influence your attitudes toward these brands?

P4: You usually have to pay a little bit more for it but you make an effort.

I: So for you, you would pay more for it if you now?

P4: Exactly. I actually do it.

I: What in general are the obstacles preventing the industry from becoming more ethical?
Consumerism, capitalism all of the isms of the world. People don’t want to think about it and these companies want to make money so they do exactly what they have to do. They have to make people feel happy about buying stuff and of course, people…you know, we don’t want to feel bad about ourselves so we will believe in those advertisements making us feel so healthy and so good about ourselves and we will not think about it. And besides, we all know that everything that is not so good about the fashion industry is minimized. It’s like a scandal but it’s gone fast.

So who, you kind of mentioned this, who do you hold responsible for fixing these ethical problems…governments, companies, consumers? Who would you place responsibility on?

I mean, everyone is guilty because the companies we cannot blame them because they are making money and consumers are just trying to be happy so everyone has to change a little bit. Governments, because they are the mid-layer between citizens and the companies, kind of have a little bit more power to put a stop to it.

So you would say governments have more power? The interesting thing about fast fashion is that it’s fast because it tries to satisfy consumer demand so Zara, for example, they produce small quantities of different styles and then they see what sells more and then they place orders. So then what usually happens is that there is a pair of jeans that sell well and so they place a big order for them and then the factories cannot respond so fast so then they subcontract and Zara may not know what’s happening so they don’t know who they’re subcontracting their work to. They cannot ensure that the labor conditions…

Oh, but there’s not a way to…

I mean, they try their best in that they have auditing quality management but maybe they subcontract subcontract subcontract to like little factories. How can you really make sure in a little village?

Exactly, so much demand…

So what’s special about fast fashion is that consumers themselves have a more direct role in making the supply chain, maybe unethical?

But how are consumers going to guess okay, “We are ordering too much of this.” Oh yes, because of the trends….not following the trends. Okay, that’s an issue you are never going to solve because that’s what fashion is about. Someone gives a trend. Even the companies pay someone a lot to advertise their product. Of course, if people see someone who is really known using that item, of course they are going to pursue and purchase that item more.

So they won’t even think about those issues?

Exactly, so the companies actually have a little bit more because come on, Zara and not only Zara but all of those companies, pay these people. And these people, I’m talking about Kendall Jenner, Cara Delevigne and some other Instagrammers. They are responsible for that and they are being paid by these brands.
I: So knowing this, you know, special characteristic of fast fashion and the supply chain, you would still place responsibility on companies and governments.

P4: No, I don’t place responsibility on anyone. It’s everyone’s responsibility. I just say that governments might have a little bit more space to act on it and prevent this from happening. Everyone is responsible, I think.

I: So do you think, now that we’ve kind of talked about this, your future behavior will change? Talking about being a good citizen?

P4: I don’t know…

I: Do you intend to change? Would you like to change?

P4: I mean, I’ve been raised by my mom to have few clothes of good quality but still, we can never control that you know where does it come from. Maybe if we opt for traditional markets, I don’t know if it’s better but, there are no traditional markets. There are no small stores because they have been turned upon by the high brands, high companies.

I: I was walking around in Baixa and there are these sustainable brands, green brands like smaller, little boutiques…I don’t know if they are more expensive…they are. But would you be willing to pay more?

P4: Yes and shoes. I don’t actually buy shoes at Zara or H&M. I usually go to the traditional market because I like good shoes and like my Mom says, “Your feet need good shoes to be healthy.” About shoes, sometimes I buy something that I like and its cheap but usually shoes, I prefer to invest and even jackets, the really warm jackets or the good stuff, I usually buy in traditional stores or my hometown or even here in Lisbon. I don’t go to those stores.

I: Would you be willing to limit your consumption in the future? I think you talked a little about price. So you think if your salary changed in the future, you would be willing to stop shopping fast fashion or limiting your consumption?

P4: Yes. I actually do. I do buy it now that I live by myself. When I’m with my Mom, we never go shopping at Zara. She never gets clothes from Zara or H&M or Mango. Sometimes when I oblige her to buy a lot of quantity because I really need…

I: But why?

P4: She doesn’t like it. She thinks its high prices, low quality and not sustainable. She doesn’t like the cuts and stuff. She likes more casual and elegant sort of style.

I: She thinks it’s more expensive because fast fashion is supposed to be cheaper?

P4: Comparing, it looks cheaper but if you take into account the quality, it’s not. She prefers to pay for good product with high quality like real leather or wool or cashmere or whatever and with a good…I don’t know how to say.

I: The sewing?

P4: We say the finishing in Portuguese….

I: Like the tailor?
P4: Yes, tailoring. She prefers to pay more for me to have a good piece of clothing that I can have for some good years.

I: So when you do have money, you would probably act this way as well?

P4: I would and if I had tons of money, I would buy a lot but this way as well. I would and if I had tons of money, I would buy a lot but this way as well.

I: Do you have any other questions, anything you want to add about ethics, being a good citizen?

P4: It’s going to be difficult to educate people because they’ve been educated otherwise.

I: But like you said, you don’t actually look, you don’t google what Zara…

P4: But it’s not just that…people need to be taught not to consume, not to be driven by what is trendy now. I think that you should, people should be taught to have their own style and of course, there will be people who consume more, who like to have more clothes or less clothes. I think that is something you should teach to the masses.

I: To not care so much about…

P4: Exactly. It’s a problem with education and it’s an issue because for the past few years, they have been taught otherwise. 10 years ago, this was not an issue.

I: You said like Cara Delevigne, Kendall Jenner

P4: Exactly

I: I mean, I also follow them.

P4: Yeah, I do on Instagram. It’s not for everyone. People get so…it messes with a lot of ethical or, I don’t know what to call it, it messes with a lot of issues like self-esteem…how people look at each other. Okay, they are like that but people have to create a notion that they are not the average woman. They are not reality and if they learn that, they will probably gain more conscious of how this consumerism is affecting our society.

I: So you think this is the deep, basic issue?

P4: A little bit because there will always be capitalism—people trying to make money out of it so we as a society have to create and have to work towards it to prevent this.

I: Thank you.

Participant 5

I: I’m going to start by asking what you know and what do you understand about the concept of fast fashion?

P5: What I know about fast fashion is that companies have a business model where they are constantly updating and changing their products based on very regular user feedback. They don’t work like most fashion stores who launch a collection for like a whole season and they don’t change. They are always iterating over thing they sell.

I: Perfect. So when you buy clothes, which fast fashion stores do you go to and do you have a preference and why?
P5: I think fast fashion, Zara is the most...because Springfield is not fast fashion.
I: No, I think Springfield is fast fashion.
P5: So Springfield is the store I use most but I also go to Zara and sometimes Primark.
I: So where do you go the most?
P5: Springfield, I think is the one I visit the most because I like their style.
I: So can you walk me through your thought process when you're in the store. When you're standing in the store looking at clothes, what are you thinking? What factors are you thinking about when you're looking at a shirt or a pair of jeans?
P5: I mostly...I don't actually try to look for what people are using. I just look and I imagine, “Would I like to use that? Would I like to watch me using that?” That's the only thing I
I: So style is what you consider the most.
P5: Yeah, style...but like personal style and comfortable, not just because everyone is using it. I like to choose something I like the most.
I: So not necessarily something that's like stylish or trendy?
P5: Definitely not trendy because I like...I follow zero trends. I might buy something that’s trendy but I don’t know it’s trendy. I just buy it because I like it.
I: In general, what is your motivation for purchasing clothes?
P5: Because I think it’s like related to your feeling well. I feel well when I am using new clothes and also comfort.
I: What kind of role, then, does clothing play in your life?
P5: I mean, I don’t shop a lot during the year. I think’s it’s mostly the need. I don’t go to a fashion store just because I feel like, “Oh, I want to buy something.” I go when I see I’m missing some things, some coats for winter so I should buy a new one. It’s not a necessity. In fact, it is a necessity but I don’t do it for the pleasure; at least with clothes.
I: I’m going to change the topic a little bit and ask you a general question. What does it mean to you to be a good citizen of the world and of the community and you can relate this to fast fashion and purchasing clothes?
P5: That’s a big change. I think it’s, I would say it’s mostly about being aware of the conditions that the world is in right now and asking yourself what you can do to help change that.
I: And in the context of fashion, how do you think a good citizen acts?
P5: I think, although I must admit I don’t do this, I think a good citizen should be interested in how those stores work to get those clothes in the shop, how the people of build those clothes, transport and work in the shop are treated, and you should change your buying habits. I actually heard, or I read an article with Primark a few days ago where a cashier wanted to go to the bathroom and it was like those times where there are lots of people in the store and the manager didn’t allow it and they had like 20 cashiers
and she didn’t let the girl go to the bathroom. I read the article that the lady who reporting wanted to leave the clothes in the store and not buy anything just because of seeing that attitude from the manager.

I: And how did you find this article? Did you look for it?

P5: It was in Público, the paper and I read it on Facebook. It said something bad about Primark and I got interested and I read the article. I actually never saw that behavior in the store but I believe that it happens.

I: And you said that you don’t actually do this but you think people should do it?

P5: Yeah, definitely. Not just about clothes…so I think the whole process should be like transparent to the end user but it’s not. It’s not easy to.

I: Do you consider yourself a good citizen in this context?

P5: I think I could be a better citizen. Definitely.

I: Do you feel like you should, though? How do you feel?

P5: Yeah, I feel but the thing is, since shopping I do when I need. It’s like investing time to research stuff that I don’t use that much is like hard. I don’t go to a store or Google a store and see immediately, “Oh they do this. They make these products like this, and they don’t exploit people.” That’s not easy information to obtain, so it’s hard for consumers to get information to make these decisions, I think. That’s why I don’t.

I: But for you, it’s different because you don’t shop just for leisure.

P5: But I help just the same. Every clothing I buy at the store, I’m helping that store in that way, good or bad.

I: So what does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you in relation to clothing? When you hear the term ‘ethical’ in relation to apparel and the clothes that you purchase, what do you think of?

P5: I think the main thing that comes to mind is about using animal stuff, that is the most ethical thing that comes to mind—like using crocodile skin, furs and that stuff.

I: Do you know specific examples from companies that have done that, fast fashion companies?

P5: No, I don’t and that I don’t endorse. I’ve never bought anything.

I: So that is the more important issue for you?

P5: Yeah, I think that’s pretty much it.

I: Tell me what else you know about any ethical issues related to the fashion industry. Is there anything else?

P5: Apart from that thing I told you. Actually, my sister worked at Calzedonia and it was a time that she stopped classes and she needed a part-time job and she got in that store. The overall experience wasn’t bad but there was something that I didn’t like. They had to do daily objectives for selling stuff to customers and the store actually counted every person that entered the store and left and they do an average of the amount of stuff they sold by the amount of people that went into the store that day and each employee has the responsibility to make a good average every day. I think that is kind of unethical to ask a person to meet that objective every day. I
think that’s kind of a bad work expectation for your employees. It’s like you are starting the day with pressure already just to make that much money. Of course, they also rewarded if you sold a lot of stuff. There is a good side, but I think it’s bad.

I: And you talked about Primark, how they treated their employees in the store. Would you say that is something that you’ve heard more about?

P5: No actually, apart from that article, I never met anyone who worked at the store, but I firmly believe that they do that with their employees.

I: When you say employees, you mean employees in the store?

P5: Cashiers are the easiest to observe because they are the people you are in contact with but I’m sure that along the production chain, there must be other examples of that.

I: When you purchase clothes, do you think about this? Do you think about their production chain and the possible unethical practices when you’re actually touching the clothes to buy in the store, are you considering it?

P5: Most of the time, no.

I: So sometimes you think about it?

P5: Most of the time I think, “I shouldn’t buy these socks, but I need socks for winter.” There is also the financial part. Fast stores like Primark are very cheap so even if what they do is bad, sometimes it’s hard to make a choice because it’s you can’t just go to a more expensive store if you don’t have the money.

I: You could also not buy it.

P5: Yes, but then you need something to wear in winter. That's the hard part of it. The socks are three or more times more expensive. How do you make that decision? Spending more money on socks and then you don’t have money for other stuff you need. It’s hard because it can’t be just one person’s effort. It should be everybody. Everybody should be aware of this stuff and behave accordingly.

I: How do you think people can become aware?

P5: Aware? I think that should be mostly an effort from the stores mainly—being transparent about how their process works, making that information available to the end consumer like, “Our clothes start being produced here through this process. Workers live like this…”

I: Do you know about, for example Zara and H&M, do you know about their processes? Have you read about it?

P5: I know Zara a bit because I studied it in college. What I know is what they taught us in class. I don’t know if there is actually dark stuff behind the scenes but I know how their process works a bit.

I: So you’ve never actually looked it up like Googled it intentionally like looked up ‘Primark supply chain’ or Primark’s ….

P5: No, no I never do that.
I: When you do hear stuff, like you said you heard about Primark, when you hear stuff about Calzedonia, how does this influence your attitude toward a brand?

P5: The thing is, I think you might start avoiding those stores more than you would if you didn’t know about that stuff. Even though sometimes, you need to go there and buy some stuff, there might be some times where I can think, “No, I would like to buy this but since I know they work this way, this is not essential for me, so I won’t buy it.”

I: So this is what has happened to you before? You actually think about that?

P5: No, I think that might be something you would think when buying stuff. Like someone else or in general?

P5: But since I don’t shop just for buying stuff, I don’t make that decision but I think that someone in general might think that like, “I want some shirts. I have 20 shirts and I would just like to buy a new one but I won’t buy here now because I don’t support this brand very much.” You might feel like that.

I: What do you think are some of the obstacles that prevent the fast fashion industry from becoming more ethical or sustainable?

P5: Money. Money is the root of all evil.

I: So can you explain more? How?

P5: The thing is, when you are making a lot of money with a business model, what are the main reasons for you to change the process, the production pipeline of your company to make less money even though you are doing it in a more ethical way? What are your incentives to do that when you are receiving less money and not making the most out of your company’s potential. I think money is the main thing, which is exactly why I think power is with the consumers because they give money to these companies. If our global conscience says that you shouldn’t do this, they will listen to you—only if everyone thinks and acts this way. But, I think money is the main obstacle.

I: So would you say the companies themselves are responsible for making sure that their supply chains are more ethical?

P5: Yeah, definitely because they are the ones profiting from those production pipelines.

I: What’s interesting about fast fashion is that like what you said in the beginning, it is about adapting to consumer taste very fast, adapting to trends, adapting to styles so if there is a pair of jeans at Zara that they see consumers are buying a lot of, some pair or trendy jeans, then they will place an order. Then, they will order this from their factories and they will place a big order under a tight deadline that those factories may subcontract. They will subcontract and subcontract that it is hard for Zara to trace what is going on. They could subcontract to a small village and Zara might not know.

P5: But since Zara is the one seeking a service, can’t they require to know that stuff?
I: They do and of course, the people that they purchase the clothes from, they have ways of going around it. They know what Zara wants to hear.
P5: So they trick Zara?
I: Zara will place an order and they will subcontract and find other people to make it.
P5: So Zara knows it comes from the company, but they don’t know where exactly it comes from?
I: In fast fashion, what I’m writing about, is that consumers have a more direct role in these unethical labor conditions because when they purchase a lot of a certain style, Zara will place a big order and this will put a lot of pressure on the subcontractors to produce.
P5: They will then exploit other people to produce those things, I see. But how do you control that? Don’t those countries know that stuff is going on?
I: Who do you think should be responsible for preventing this? What is the root of the problem?
P5: I think the person who contracts those people. Zara contracts and the company exploits a village, so the company exploiting the village is responsible here because if Zara made it explicitly clear how they want their stuff and they were tricked, we can’t blame them. But, we can require the people that exploit those activities, they are recorded, their financial activities. They can be supervised and analyzed and inspected so I think if there is goodwill, I think you can make sure the whole production process is ethical. Even from the government standpoint, like underdeveloped governments should check those activities in their countries, scan for those activities, check what’s going on because if it moves money, it can be traced.
I: So you would place responsibility on governments?
P5: Yeah, I think there are a lot of people responsible because it’s very complex process. It’s not like one person is doing everything.
I: So you said it’s about the companies, money, governments, consumers so do you think that your behavior will change in the future?
P5: It might now.
I: Knowing how consumers play a role in fast fashion?
P5: Yeah, after hearing your thoughts, it might.
I: But realistically?
P5: Although, I don’t think I contribute as much since I don’t shop as much. I don’t fast fashion.
I: You think for consumers that shop a lot, at Zara and H&M….
P5: Yeah, I think we should try to make those people understand what their actions do. That should be a group effort—Consumers, the store, governments, everyone should worry about that
I: And about being a good citizen, what do you think we as a society have a responsibility to do?
P5: Regarding fast fashion? I think we absolutely have the responsibility to not let those exploitations occur. I think that is a community responsibility. Responsibility
I: But how, that is the question?
P5: I think you could make it mandatory, for example, if a process, if a company has to be checked regularly. If you detect unethical activities, yeah you should force the closing of those companies. Maybe we need to shutdown a few of them to make the transition to make the workflow shift towards more ethical processes.
I: Where do you think people would shop if they started shutting down all these brands?
P5: I mean, people don’t stay without clothes from one day to another. So, even if we have a troubled year with those transitions, I think we could manage to survive. It’s not like the end of the world. I would survive if I didn’t buy any clothes in the next year. It’s not the most difficult thing to change. The only difficult thing here is when you have these big processes with lots of families with lots of kids depending on that, that is hard to manage. It might be hard to make that transition. It would have to be like very well-planned or incentivize companies that do it.
I: Anything else you want to add? About ethics, about any issues? Any ethical or unethical behavior about any fast fashion brands?
P5: Actually now that we are talking about this, I don’t think I’ve heard of any store like publicizing itself for being ethical.
I: Actually, Zara and H&M, have sustainability reports online where they basically say everything about their supply chain. They are super transparent. Their reports are hundreds of pages. It’s all on their websites. They say everything they are doing for communities, how they do inspections, how they audit. It’s actually online.
P5: Oh really, that is nice to know. I didn’t know about that.
I: A lot of people don’t know about that.
P5: Yeah that’s the thing as well. If you start doing that for fashion stores, you should do that for a lot of other sectors. How do people manage to control that, right? Because we have so many necessities today and we consume so much, how do we keep all those companies in check? Should someone have the responsibility to do that for the community? Maybe?
I: And if fashion plays a big role in your life, would you be willing to change?
P5: Yeah, exactly. If you live on fashion, would you be willing to change all of that? It’s a hard question, but I don’t have time, when I go to the supermarket at the end of the day, how those products got there. I can’t possibly know. And to lose one hour every time I go to a fashion store to know how…people just don’t have time.
I: They don’t have time and maybe they aren’t willing to change.
P5: Maybe there are some people who are aware and not willing to change.
I: I think that is it, thank you.
Participant 6

I: I’m going to start by asking what you know and what do you understand about the concept of fast fashion.

P6: To produce what is says, fashion fast…to produce a very short cycle of new collections so that people are incentivized to buy and to make that work, the prices kept low.

I: Perfect. So when you purchase clothes, which fast fashion stores do you normally visit?

P6: Usually, I go to H&M or Pull and Bear.

I: Why do you visit those stores? Is there a reason?

P6: Well money and usually there, you find everything you need and they are everywhere. It is a no brainer.

I: But why H&M instead of Zara, for example?

P6: Well I think here, it is a different story but I think in Germany we have way more H&Ms than Zara?

I: So convenience?

P6: Yeah.

I: Can you walk me through your thought processes when you’re standing at the store looking at clothing, which factors are you considering the most when you are making a purchase?

P6: Since I’m a student, the most important factor is probably the price. Even though I try to find the best balance between price and quality because I do not want to throw the stuff away half a year later.

I: You like to keep your clothes for a long time?

P6: For example, this….I think I bought it at H&M and I think I bought it four years ago.

I: In general, what is your motivation for purchasing clothes? What kind of role does it play in your life?

P6: I don’t want to walk around naked.

I: What kind of role does clothing play in your life?

P6: Not a big one. I actually try to purchase clothes as few times as possible.

I: So only when you need it?

P6: Usually, I go only two times a year….one time for the winter, and one time for the summer.

I: I’m going to change the topic a bit. What does it mean to you to be a good citizen of the world and of the global community within the context of fast fashion consumption?

P6: Well regarding consumption, I think that it is important that we don’t waste the resources that we have like we are out of our minds so I think it is important to be as sustainable as possible.
I: Would you consider yourself a good citizen in this context?
P6: I don't know. Let’s say an average one.
I: And in the context of fast fashion, what does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you?
P6: Well regarding fast fashion, it is probably how you use the resources.
I: Like in terms of wasting?
P6: Yeah, exactly. I don’t know much about the production processes in fast fashion but I know there is a lot of stuff thrown away because the quality isn’t good enough or the quality is bad or whatever and the other point is probably how you treat the people that are probably manufacturing the clothes.
I: Do you know any specific issues related to some brands about ethical or unethical behavior?
P6: Not any brand, in specific.
I: Do you actually consider these issues when you’re standing at the store purchasing clothes?
P6: No.
I: How do you perceive a good citizen to act or behave when they purchase clothes?
P6: I think, as opposed to me, they should take this into consideration.
I: Have you ever, for example, gone online and looked up H&M’s sustainability reports or educated yourself?
P6: No.
I: When you do hear news, is it unintentional?
P6: Well I think the best way is for those companies to directly tell it to me because I am not going to search for it.
I: Is there a reason why you don’t take the time…if you talked about being a good citizen?
P6: I don’t know. It is important to be a good citizen but if I would look up everything that I do everyday, I would be stuck looking up everything and wouldn’t do anything else. It starts with clothes, but we purchase a lot of stuff every day so I think it is impossible.
I: Who would you say you would hold responsible for fixing any ethical issues within the fast fashion industry?
P6: Probably in the end it would be the consumer, but I believe the consumer will mostly act like me. And consumers, if we don’t see any people suffering under the production processes and stuff like that. To change something, it should be either the company or the government that suggests some rules.
I: So what is interesting about fast fashion is that it doesn’t exactly work well with the idea of ethics and sustainability because it’s about adapting to consumer demand. So, if there is a style that is selling really well, Zara will place a big order and they will place an order with their contactors and those contactors subcontract and subcontract that Zara can’t really keep track of what’s happening.
Knowing and understanding this, does this change who you place responsibility on for preventing these kinds of problems?
P6: I think it wouldn’t change for me.
I: You talked about price earlier. Do you anticipate changing your consumption behavior if you made more money?
P6: Yeah.
I: You would stop shopping at Zara, for example, or limiting your consumption?
P6: Not stopping totally because they have some basic stuff that I need a lot of, but I think I would definitely consider not shopping fast fashion.
I: Is there anything else you want to add? Anything you have heard on the news?
P6: As I said, sometimes you hear something bad about a company but usually I forget that kind of stuff.
I: I’ve found out from these interviews that at Primark, somebody put SOS on the tag?
P6: Ah yeah, but was there actually any evidence? I think I heard about it as well. Primark, of course, it a big, bad leader of fast fashion, but I don’t know much about them. I don’t buy stuff there and I don’t know if they are as bad as people say.
I: Well thank you, that is it.

Participant 7

I: What do you know and what do you understand about the concept of fast fashion?
P7: Very little. I have an idea. Quick fashion purchases…

P7: I don’t purchase a lot of clothes, frankly, but when I do and I don’t typically buy a lot of fast fashion. Maybe I bought a shirt at Zara once.
I: When you are standing at the store, thinking about making a purchase, what factors are you considering?
P7: Price and quality and how good it looks.
I: But first of all, price?
P7: Yes, price then how good it looks and then the quality.
I: So is there a reason you don’t really shop at fast fashion places because they are cheaper?
P7: It is generally because of the quality because I would rather buy one shirt for 60 euros than three shirts for 20.
I: So where do you normally shop?
P7: Again, I have not shopped a lot but if I were to shop, I would say Scalpers. It is a Spanish brand but there is a store in Lisbon and it by no means high end, but it is a little better quality.
I: What does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you in relation to the apparel you buy?

P7: That it’s made by people who are paid well and who work in fair conditions. That’s another reason why I’m not averse to fast fashion but I’d rather buy a shirt that is made in Portugal or Spain than a shirt in China or India.

I: So you are pretty aware about those things? Can you name any other ethical issues related to the fashion industry or issues that are important to you?

P7: When I think of ethical issues in the fashion industry, I think of workers who make the clothing, the models who wear the clothing, just in most steps of the supply chain from the production to the distribution to make sure people are treated fairly and there are no shortcuts.

I: Could you name any specific ethical or unethical behavior of any fast fashion brands or any fashion brands.

P7: I just read an article in the paper two weeks ago that there was this woman in New York who found a rat leg in her Zara dress.

I: Where did you read this?

P7: It was in the New York Post. There was like a rat leg sewn into the hem of her dress, which some people were saying was an indication that people were working around rodents or a protest in the sense that this person sewed it in.

I: A lot of people that I’ve interviewed have said something about Primark—about there being an SOS sewed in the clothing.

P7: I don’t even know what Primark is, apart from being a brand.

I: It is super cheap. I would say it’s cheaper than Forever 21, and they have it in New York, actually. So, do you ever take time to inform yourself of a brand’s CSR/sustainability reports, their practices?

P7: The other day, actually, I read something about Patagonia because they just donated all of their Black Friday sales to some conservation effort, I think and I just got through reading their website about that but that’s the only time I’ve ever done it.

I: Is there a reason why you do not necessarily look it up?

P7: Because buying things is not a huge priority for me so therefore my doing research on that is not of particular interest unless I think well ahead of time that I want to buy something that I’m thinking as a gift, then yeah I would make sure to research.

I: So when you do hear about unethical behavior, does it change your consumption behavior and attitudes toward a brand?

P7: Yes and no. I think it depends on...because the unfortunate thing is that everyone is doing it so it is kind of hard to avoid but if I were to choose between brand A and brand B and I knew that brand A was blatantly unethical and they were very similar, I would choose brand B.
I: Despite price and style?
P7: Again, I think maybe I should change the order because I actually think that quality is important but not only quality but the ethics behind it as well.

I: Like sourcing? You talked about working conditions as one of the ethical issues. What do you think are some of the obstacles preventing this from changing?
P7: The costs are high, they being the fashion industry, and it’s a high cost to change how you do this and if all your competitors are not changing because there is no real incentive, then it is hard to get you to change that yourself.

I: So who would you hold responsible for fixing these issues?
P7: I think consumers should be more aware but not only be more aware but actually care because you can say a lot that you care about it but you still go buy the same stuff but I think companies because with the government, it is hard to coordinate if things are produced in one country and dissembled in another, it is hard to coordinate that.

I: That’s actually a point in my thesis this dichotomy between fast fashion and sustainability because fast fashion is about producing something quickly and based on consumer demand so its hard when there is a style that is selling well and they make a big order for it and they subcontract so its hard for Zara to manage the supply chain like the outer tiers so it’s really like consumers that play a major role.
P7: The other part of that equation is that Zara doesn’t necessarily want to change. I think realistically speaking it’s cheaper and Zara can make a lot more money if they continue with the same subcontractors so it’s not actually in their best interest to change.

I: And they actually have a very sophisticated CSR model and audit quality but the thing is, there are subcontractors that they cannot keep track of. So knowing this about fast fashion, would this change your attitudes toward a fast fashion brand?
P7: I think it already has.

I: Because you’ve thought about this because a lot of people haven’t.
P7: No, no definitely and I think if I learned more and more about it, I would avoid it even more

I: The thing is, a lot of people don’t take the time to actually look it up because it’s not a priority.
P7: I mean, don’t get me wrong. I’m not looking up Zara’s corporate thing but I like to be conscious of it.

I: So if you did hear about it….
P7: At this point, I’m not already anti-that but I’m already not going to do it so if you tell me something, then I’m definitely not going to do it. The thing with me is that I’ve been living abroad now for three years so everything that I bring over with me has to come
back in a suitcase so if I go to Zara and buy five shirts, ultimately, I’m going to leave them here. For me, I would rather not buy things or if I’m going to buy something, I’d rather spend more money on it. I’d rather bring back one nice sweater than five.

I: It’s good, I still need your opinion.

Participant 8

I: What do you know and what do you understand about fast fashion?

P8: I’m not really sure what it is. Can you define it for me?

I: Sure. It is basically this business model of producing stylish, trendy clothing that you see in fashion shows but they are produced at cheaper costs and right away so it is like trend-conscious clothing for the masses. Retailers like Zara, Primark, H&M, Forever 21, those are all fast fashion brands. So when you purchase clothing, which retailers do you normally visit and do you visit fast fashion stores?

P8: I normally visit American Eagle, Aeropostale, and I shop online a lot too.

I: Where online do you shop?

P8: Amazon.com and Asos

I: Can you walk me through your thought processes when you’re standing at the store about to make a purchase. What factors are you considering?

P8: I’m mostly considering how it will look, the comfort, if it looks like anything else I’ve purchased and the cost.

I: So in general, what’s your motivation for purchasing clothes? Do you go there just on your leisure time? Do you go there out of necessity?

P8: Well in my field, I have to look presentable and it’s very professional so I have to care what I look like so that what’s important.

I: So for your job basically?

P8: For my field, yes.

I: What other roles do you think clothing plays in your life?

P8: I think besides for professionalism I think buying new clothes makes me feel happy, makes me feel better and more confident about myself.

I: So I’m going to change the topic a bit and talk about how fashion consumption affects someone else other than yourself. To you, what does it mean to be a good citizen of the world and of the global community? What does it mean to you?
P8: Being thoughtful of other people, being mindful, contributing to the community, being a generally upstanding citizen.

I: Can you explain a little bit more about what you mean?

P8: Being altruistic, not just caring about yourself, caring about the well-being of other people.

I: So in the context of fashion consumption, what do you think it means to be a good citizen?

P8: I would say making sure that you aren’t exploiting people just for the benefit of profit. If I’m a company, I would want them to be mindful of their workers and employees and also maybe of the animals that they test their products on. That is the kind of thing I’d be interested.

I: What does being ‘ethical’ or the term ‘ethical’ mean to you in relation to the clothes you buy?

P8: As a person or for a company?

I: For you, when you’re buying something when I tell you ‘ethical’ consumption in fashion, what would you think of?

P8: Well there’s multiple things I would think of. In terms of the company, I would think of how they treat their employees, what kind of products they test, also what kind of things they support. If I know a company is against gay rights and they are spending money on supporting organizations that are working against gay rights, I won’t support them. So me as a person, I would feel unethical supporting a company like that.

I: Can you name specific ethical issues related to the fashion industry or specific brands that act ethically or unethically?

P8: I’m not sure about specific brands, but I know that companies that work in third-world countries are usually paying their employees much less than what the living wage is so that is an ethical issue that I would be concerned about.

I: Where do you get this information?

P8: Just general common knowledge. That is just what I grew up hearing that companies who are based in China or India don’t treat their employees well.

I: Would you say that you look up this information online voluntarily?

P8: No (uncomfortable laugh)

I: So where do you get your news concerning this subject?

P8: I would say in general where I get most of my news is online, Huffington Post or CNN.
I: So we talked about being a good citizen and being aware of other people, your community and being altruistic. Would you consider yourself a good citizen in the context of fashion consumption?

P8: In terms of rights organizations, I do because as a consumer I don’t support organizations who deny other people rights and support bigotry because that’s most important to me but as for companies that treat their employees badly, that isn’t something that is advertised so I don’t really know which companies do and don’t treat their employees well so that’s more difficult for me so I wouldn’t be completely ethical in that sense.

I: You said you don’t actually look up this information to find out?

P8: Not about the ethical treatment of employees and what kind of testing they do on animals but in terms of rights organizations, it is easier to find out. For example, it’s easier to find out if a company supports GMOs because it’s less controversial if they are considered pro-family and anti-gay rights that is less controversial than them saying that they mistreat their employees so that is easier for me to find out.

I: Do any of these ethical issues impact your actual purchasing behavior like you said it’s common knowledge that a lot of these companies mistreat their workers. Are you actually thinking about these ethical issues when you’re making purchases?

P8: I think it’s in the back of my mind but as I said, because the mistreatment of workers and these you know, hidden ethical issues…they are hidden so you don’t know which companies are doing it and which companies aren’t so for me as a consumer, it doesn’t really impact how I purchase things because I don’t know which companies are the ones doing it. If I did find out that a company was mistreating their workers or mistreating animals, I definitely would not purchase from them.

I: You should you shopped at Asos? They’ve actually been under investigation because they have been accused by their workers for not letting them take bathroom breaks. Is that something that would change your attitude toward Asos?

P8: I think it would be more impactful if I found out that they were actually found guilty of those actions. Coming from my family who have businesses, I know that accusations can come out of nowhere but if they were actually charged, then that really would impact my viewpoint.

I: We talked about the fast fashion business model a bit. Can you tell me what you perceive to be the social and environmental impact of fast fashion like in comparison to fashion in general? What do you think the implications are for fast fashion?

P8: Well if fast fashion is about making as much money as possible, I could see how they wouldn’t be concerned about the
environmental impact or how they treat the environment around them.

I: So you would say would think more about the environmental impact versus the social impact?

P8: I think they are tied. Do you mean the social like how people perceive the company?

I: I mean people like working for the company.

P8: I’m not sure, I don’t know.

I: Part of my thesis is kind of talking about the dichotomy between fast fashion and sustainability and ethics because it’s hard to maintain an ethical supply chain in an industry that is so sensitive to consumer demand and fast fashion is all about adapting to consumer demand, which styles are selling and producing them right away, hence the fast part...so it puts a lot of pressure on suppliers to deliver and what may happen is that a company may make an order and demand it under a tight deadline so suppliers start to subcontract so that the brand cannot necessarily trace if working conditions are ethical like they cannot trace it to a little village in Bangladesh or something. So basically, who would say or who would you hold responsible for fixing these ethical problems?

P8: I would say that the higher up you go, that the companies are monitoring the people they subcontract and they have to take responsibility for what their employees and the people that work for them do, so they are responsible for their actions. So I would say these companies need to crack down on subcontractors.

I: Are there any other groups that you would attribute responsibility to?

P8: The blame lies on everyone—from the consumers themselves to the companies to the people doing the subcontracting. The blame is mostly on the people subcontracting but the companies themselves are responsible for who they hire and for knowing what’s going on in their company, so you can’t just say that, “I didn’t know that these people were being subcontracted.” You have to be aware of what’s going on in your own company.

I: Would you change your consumption behavior based on this information?

P8: What information?

I: Based on the characteristic of fast fashion of being about consumer demand. What puts a lot of pressure on these suppliers is that they have to adapt to consumer demand right away. So would you place blame elsewhere?

P8: I guess I would be more aware of what companies are doing. I think consumers as a whole need to be more vigilant about the behavior of the companies they shop from.
I: Like you’ve said, you have never actually taken the time to look this up?

P8: I’ve never taken the time and that is something I do need to change.

I: What other obstacles do you see prevent the industry from becoming more ethical?

P8: I guess that there is really no real incentive for changing their habits which could potentially cost them lots of money for no reason. If there is no push from consumers to change their actions, then they are not going to want to change their actions.

I: So you’re saying because there is no incentive for companies and consumers to change…

P8: I’m saying because consumers don’t seem to care enough the companies don’t have incentives to change.

I: But you said earlier that you care about being a good citizen and being aware of others so what would it take you to change?

P8: I guess maybe being more informed about how exactly companies are acting because I don’t know what is going on. I don’t know what they mean by companies mistreating their employees. I don’t know which companies are mistreating their employees. I don’t really know anything so I guess more education would drive consumers to care more about this and that would drive companies to change their habits.

I: I mean, a lot of people that I’ve talked to have said that the price of fast fashion because it’s so low, even if they do care about ethics, the fact that clothing is so cheap makes them ignore this.

P8: I would agree up to a certain extent. I’m not going to continue supporting a company if I am very educated about their bad actions, no matter how much money I’m saving.

I: But I mean for example, if you heard that Asos was actually guilty of exploiting their workers, do you think you would feel an obligation to change?

P8: I would have to know exactly what they’re doing. There is a line for me. Obviously, exploiting their workers is bad but what do you mean exploiting their workers. Do you mean not paying them at all or slavery because if they were enslaving them then, yeah that would affect how I shop.

I: So it’s like the extent of exploitation.

P8: Obviously, none is good but if they are doing something that is obviously wrong and beyond normal practices, then I would definitely change my habits.

I: I think those are all my questions. Do you have anything else that you want to add? Anything about ethical issues?

P8: Not about fashion.

I: Well you can give me another example.
Participant 8

I: How did you educate yourself? How did you learn about this?

P8: Social media was a large part of this. Reading stuff off of Facebook, the Huffington Post or CNN. It was just a big thing that happened.

I: So you haven’t seen big issues related to fashion companies on the news or social media like this? Would you say you have had a lot of exposure?

P8: I wouldn’t say I’ve had a lot of exposure. I can only think of one that really struck me in my lifetime about ethical practices and this was in high school when I watched this video of how silk was made and the process involved taking silk worms while they were still alive and boiling them so I guess, myself, I never bought anything with silk after watching that video. That is the only instance I can think of.

I: You stopped buying silk after watching that video?

P8: Not that I actually bought that much silk anyway, but I wouldn’t consider buying silk after that video. Anything tied with silk, I wouldn’t buy. You could actually hear the silk worms screaming in the video. It was really bad.

I: So it’s really about your exposure. You think if you were more informed…

P8: If I was more informed about this, then I would definitely change my practices.

I: Well that is it. Those are all my questions, then. Thank you.

Participant 9

I: What do you know about the concept of fast fashion?

P9: Actually, I have to say I don’t know that much about fast fashion. I would say probably it’s about buying online applications so you have a lot of rigorous applications.

I: Basically it’s just the general model of producing stylish, trendy clothing like at Zara and H&M at cheap prices and styles you would see off the runway but instead of waiting an entire season,
they immediately produce it. So okay, when you purchase clothing, where do you normally go?

P9: I would say H&M, Zara, Levi’s sometimes some random online stores.

I: So you said Zara and H&M which are fast fashion stores. Do you have a preference? Why do you go there?

P9: I would say they have kind of broad product portfolio. It’s kind of cheap, of course and especially for a student, I would say that’s very important and they are kind of trendy I would say. They always somehow set new trends and you just go with the trend.

I: When you are standing in the store about to make a purchase, which factors are you considering the most?

P9: I would say for me most important is style. Secondly, I would say the price and then afterwards only it comes ethical production or stuff like this.

I: So in general, what’s your motivation for purchasing clothes?

P9: It’s mostly necessity for clothes. For shoes, I somehow have a fetish for shoes so for shoes I shop more and I buy them because I like them,

I: Where do you go to buy shoes, the same places?

P9: No, shoes is a little bit different. Shoes are usually online stores. German.

I: I’m going to change the topic a bit and talk about how fashion affects people other than yourself. What does it mean to you to be a good citizen of the world and of the global community?

P9: A good citizen is someone who, if he/she is able to afford it, incorporate in purchasing decisions the whole supply chain so for the production companies that human rights are respected and that the environment is protected, typical CSR topics. Besides that, I would say also consumers and responsible citizens should as a crowd take advantage of the power they have and use their power to somehow change the world into a better world and I think that’s important and I think I include myself there, that we don’t do that but of course, if you do that by yourself, it’s always hard. There is also the other factor that for many people that they can’t afford it because for some people of course financial aspects are the most concerned.

I: So you talked about the supply chain and human rights. When you hear the word ‘ethical’ in relation to the clothes that you buy, this is what you think about first?

P9: I think of course ethical, on the one hand, is about human rights, labor rights everything that is related to humans working or in touch with the supply chain. Then, it’s also about the environment but not only the natural environment but the whole community that they work in that they don’t abuse that they protect the
I think usually, in terms of fashion, are the labor rights and I think that a lot of people are abused in cheap, especially Asian countries but I also think about environmental concerns because I think in those countries there are not many sophisticated environmental laws and companies also take advantage of that and don’t care.

I: And actually fast fashion, you usually don’t keep these things for a long time the issue is waste and discarding these things. I usually keep them for years but I know a lot of girls keep them for months.

P9: I agree. When I was younger, when my parents paid for most of my clothes I would say, usually there I also had the benefit that they looked more after quality so I had clothes which I had for ages. For example, I mentioned Levi’s. The jeans I bought are like six or seven years old and they are still fine. So I also try with all my clothes to keep them for a long time. I don’t like the approach of buying or throwing away just for fashion reasons.

I: You still shop at H&M or Zara, the quality is still okay for you?

P9: It’s not that I buy everything there. I would say what I buy mostly are t-shirts and sometimes shirts, but it’s more simple stuff. Regarding for example, underwear. Jeans, for me usually often I don’t buy them there but it’s more often because they don’t fit me so well so that’s why I go somewhere else. If I look for professional clothes for a job like a suit or something, then I wouldn’t buy there.

I: How do you think these ethical issues impact your behavior?

P9: Sometimes, I make myself aware of it and think about why I shouldn’t go shopping. But on the other hand, I just have the need. As I said, right now as a student I have to look after my money. I feel somehow forced. I don’t have the chance to go to a more expensive store. For example, I bought a new pants for my suit and it cost me 180 euros from Hugo Boss and of course I can’t do that all the time because I just don’t have the money so I have to go then to the cheaper brands. I would love to not do it that often when I have the chance, when I have a job/when I have more money then I think my own consumer behavior would shift a little bit more towards fair trade or so.

I: You said you keep yourself aware. How do you do that?

P9: Well first of all, I am in the lucky position that I have some friends which are somehow into the topic so when we have discussions, I always end up somehow feeling bad. It’s also about meat consumption. Besides that, I did an internship and it was about B-
corps and B-corps somehow try to do good for not only employees but the environment and etc. By engaging such things and also of course, reading the news, reading the news about companies, bad habits sometimes. By doing this, I keep myself aware.

I: You actually go online and you intentionally look up information about companies?

P9: Not specifically about certain companies, but I am someone who follows many, many news (sources). In general if there is a scandal, I am usually aware. Of course, by reading such things it somehow stays in my mind and with companies like Nestle that somehow is in my mind, I consider it for shopping and when choosing a company to work with but I don’t look in particular for this information.

I: Do these scandals actually impact your attitude toward a brand?

P9: Partially. I think it depends really on the brand. There are some brands which are strongly represented in my mind so it’s harder in regards to such brands, that a scandal ruins the image and then there are some that I am more skeptical about which I didn’t develop such a close relationship so it’s maybe easier that a scandal somehow has a bad impact on the relationship.

I: So if it plays a bigger part in your consumption, like H&M. If you heard about a specific scandal, you think it would change your attitude or your consumption behavior?

P9: I think it could be because there are different brands, different stores which have similar product portfolio so for me the switching costs are kind of low so I would say if there is a huge scandal which I become aware of, which I think is really a no-go, I could imagine that it changes my behavior.

I: Can you tell me about any specific scandals or even ethical behavior or CSR initiatives for fast fashion brands that you know of?

P9: In general, Primark I avoid. I never bought anything there. I think it’s so cheap, it can’t be good in opinion. I’ve never bought anything there.

I: What do you mean it can’t be good?

P9: Considering where they produce and the prices. I don’t know, I’m not super aware because I don’t think I was ever there but I’ve heard that t-shirts are cheap, maybe even 5 euros or less. I don’t see how they can pay appropriate salaries to all the employees involved in the supply chain, respect environmental laws to a degree because in the end all the companies involved want to have a profit margin so I don’t see that it can be possible with their prices. I just can’t imagine myself. Besides that, I don’t have a precise scandal in my head but usually what you hear about is Adidas and Nike producing in Bangladesh and that they have some abuse of the workers there, working 12 hours without a break, such
things. I have to say still those brands dominating the market strongly that it’s hard to avoid them but in terms of H&M and Zara, I’m not aware.

I: You talked about being a good citizen, about consumers being aware. Would you consider yourself a good citizen?

P9: Partially, I mean I am not super satisfied with myself. I think I could do more. As I said, one thing is the monetary aspect where I view myself constrained whereas on the other hand, there is the lazy aspect. It’s easier to go to a mall and just go to the typical stores, Zara and H&M, to buy things. I think the first step is trying to make myself aware of things and to keep it in my head that it is important and somehow that we should use our power to change it and I think, once change is initiated, more and more people will also be involved. It will be more mainstream to consider that also. I think I am like medium satisfied with myself so I would consider me a medium global citizen.

I: How would you attribute responsibility for fixing these ethical issues? How would you place responsibility?

P9: I think it has to be shared among all. Of course, you need somehow the government and labels like fair trade to raise awareness. Then I would say, you need to have the consumers who use their purchasing power somehow to change because in the end, companies produce what the consumer wants so if the consumers are willing to pay more for such things, more and more companies are willing to implement good ethical behavior. On the other hand, there are companies like Patagonia, who is probably not fast fashion but they incorporated. I think there is at least a niche market of people. I think especially in the Western world people become aware then somehow the responsibility will be on the companies but I would say companies are somehow in a difficult situation because they are increasing the value of their shareholders. How do they do it? Producing in the cheapest way and selling for the highest price. On the other hand, they are responsible for the people, for the environment, so I think all the stakeholders have responsibility and everyone needs to contribute to that in order to make it work but I would say that companies are in the most difficult situation considering how the business world is built.

I: Talking about becoming aware, how do you think this could be possible in terms of fast fashion and the fact that it’s cheap?

P9: First of all, there could be campaigns in order just to make people aware of working standards in third world countries where those companies produce to show them also, to make them aware of buying and keeping the clothes only for a short period of time and throwing them away, that it’s of course bad for the environment. It can also be by introducing new laws. I’ve heard that in
Scandinavia, they’ve initiated a law that they reduce the tax for repairing things so that people would rather repair things instead of throwing them away and buying new. I think such things can help to raise awareness. It can also be with shoes, especially, often it is easier to just repair a shoe instead of throwing it away and buying a new one. If you have a hole in your t-shirt, it’s not always possible to fix it. I think such things could help. I think campaigns, TV advertisements during primetime. I think that is the best way to reach out to people.

I: Can you tell me what you perceive the specific ethical issues to be for fast fashion being that it’s cheap?

P9: Like I said, the ethical behavior towards the employees. I think they are not treated well. They are abused. They don’t have any rights. They don’t care about the human being, probably, so much as we are used to in our countries. Environmentally, I don’t know how clothes are produced but I imagine there are also a lot of chemicals involved and that they probably don’t care about having the waste water in the end, putting it just in the environment, I can imagine. Then of course, producing most things in Asia and then shipping them to the U.S. and Western Europe long distances, that is also something causing environmental damages. I think it’s more about the environmental aspect and the labor aspect.

I: Would you say the environmental issues are more on your mind when you are purchasing versus social issues?

P9: I would say it is more the social issues.

I: Is there a reason?

P9: I wouldn’t say there is a specific reason. It’s probably easier for me to, for example, empathize with the people working there because I’m also a human being. The environment, for me, is also important but I also think that is a little bit harder to change. There is also the ethical issue of like if you say, “Don’t produce anymore in these countries.” And then you produce based in the home country, like in Europe, would take away the job of most people so that is something to consider so it’s a more complex issue than the environmental issue but I would say it’s still an important issue because we only have one planet earth and if we aren’t careful then….

I: One of the things I’m mentioning in my thesis is this dichotomy between fast fashion and sustainability because fast fashion is about adapting to consumer demand so it’s about like Zara produces small quantities of diverse styles and they see which styles sell so what happens is that there is a certain style that sells well so then they put a lot of pressure on their suppliers to quickly produce a larger quantity under really tight deadlines so these suppliers end up subcontracting so even if Zara, for example, has a really sophisticated audit quality management team, it’s hard for
them to actually trace the outer tiers of the supply chain. Do you think this attributes how you attribute responsibility?

P9: I still think that it’s still the responsibility of the company to control their supply chain because it’s their suppliers so they have the power over their suppliers. Of course, like I also said before in the end, it’s the consumer who has the ultimate power and can decide which direction to go. Yeah, I would say the main responsibility is the consumer. If the consumer initiates change, companies have to adapt and will adapt. As we also said, it’s also related to consumer demand. Customers can’t go to these companies and check the supply chain so it’s still that the companies have the responsibility to check it because otherwise, it’s impossible. The consumer doesn’t have that reach.

I: Specific to fast fashion, we talked about price. Even though people may say that they care, they will consider price like you said, you are a student.

P9: On the other hand, it’s about the share of wallet. We also have then the relationship with becoming aware because many people aren’t aware so the more people you have aware, the more people will change their priority when they make their purchasing decision. Of course, it doesn’t work with every clothes then it would also depend on the price. Then, it would be interesting to know the price in order to have the ethical behavior. If it’s only 10/15 euros more, then I think the impact is not as big. For example, what I mentioned with Hugo Boss if you have 150 euros, so you have to see the gap and if the gap is not too big, I think in Europe, most or at least the majority of people would be able to afford it like on the moderate increase of price.

I: Do you perceive Hugo Boss and these more expensive retailers to have more ethical supply chains?

P9: Not necessarily.

I: Because we talked about if you had more money, you would spend your money elsewhere but then where would you spend your money?

P9: Good question. That is also difficult. If you are looking for it, then it is also hard to find something and even if you find something and they have like a certain certification then it’s not always that the certification is so strong, I mean there have been enough scandals as well. But I think that you are also somehow dependent and you can at least try. As I mentioned Patagonia, for example, I think there are other companies which take it seriously. I’m sure if you look at certain other organizations assessing companies for their impact, you can find companies which do maybe not perfectly but which do better. Of course I don’t think companies which are more expensive, Hugo Boss, Nike, Adidas, I don’t think they do better. Maybe to a certain degree they have better quality...
products but in terms of ethical behavior, not necessarily. I think they have higher profit margins.

I: Is there anything else you want to add? That was my last question. It is interesting because you are more aware, you keep yourself aware.

P9: I think it’s a very important topic and I think it’s very good that you analyze it because like you talk mainly to Germans right now?

I: Some of them, yes.

P9: We are one of the wealthiest countries so we are one country where you have to initiate the change, it’s an important topic. I’m wondering how it can be done, how to really initiate the change. I think it’s a societal problem. I think it is often that if you buy a dress for going out, you want to wear it once and not wear it again. If you want to go to a new party, you want a new one. That is something that is not necessary. You could wear the same dress a couple of times. I think it is more something that has to really change in the mind that ‘I don’t always need something new. I can always wear something I have.’ Because then you are also aware that if you buy less, you can spend more on another thing and then it’s easier to spend more on something that is ethically okay.

I: It’s also about priorities. You would say that you feel a stronger ethical obligation. Well awesome, thank you.

Participant 10

I: What do you know about fast fashion and the concept?

P10: Well I guess it is something like Zara which they change their clothes every season, new clothes every time you go to the store.

I: So yes, in general just producing stylish clothing from fashion shows but right away and at cheaper prices. So when you buy clothes, where do you normally go?

P10: I go to H&M, Zara. I don’t know like Pmk, New Yorker like sort of these cheap clothes.

I: So you usually shop at fast fashion places?

P10: Yes

I: Is there a reason you shop at Zara and H&M?

P10: Well their clothes are stylish and affordable.

I: So when you are about to make a purchase, what are you considering?

P10: Well it has to look good, I think that is the first thing which would catch my attention then after that I usually check the price. After that, I will try it on and see if it suits me and the quality has to be right as well.

I: In general, what is your motivation for buying clothes?
P10: Well, maybe the first motivation is that I need something—new pairs of shoes for winter or something. Second motivation is like an event where I want to look stylish like a gala or something or just a mood to shop.

I: What kind of role do you think clothing plays in your life?

P10: Well first of all you need it, being naked is not always an option. Second one is that it sort of represents your personality in some kind of way.

I: So you say you view fashion as like a form of self-expression?

P10: Yeah, I would say that.

I: I’m going to ask you a general question. What does it mean to you to be a good citizen of the world and the community, the global community?

P10: Well I think first of all, you have to adopt the rules, not killing people, being nice to people.

I: So you think of people?

P10: Yeah

I: And in the context of fashion consumption, what do you think it means to be a good citizen?

P10: Well it would mean not to buy at Zara and H&M and all those producers which produce in low cost countries.

I: Why, can you talk more about it?

P10: Well I am not too deep into the topic, but I know that a lot of those producers produce in countries like Bangladesh where conditions for countries are very bad.

I: How do you know about this? How do you know about Bangladesh?

P10: Well I don’t know when it started but I think it was one of my friends who did this trip in Bangladesh to look around those places and she told me about it and then the media who is reporting on those topics from time to time.

I: What does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you in relation to the clothing that you buy? What do you think of?

P10: That it should be produced under fair conditions.

I: Tell me about some ethical issues that you know about specific brands or maybe some scandals.

P10: I think it was Primark in Bangladesh where the female workers did a note on the tag like, “Help Me”

I: How did you hear about this?

P10: I think it was media. I think someone posted it on Facebook.

I: Do you get a lot of your news from Facebook?

P10: Yes, yes.
I: And in relation to fashion and fast fashion brands, do you ever go online and look up information about their CSR practices.

P10: Like for example on the H&M homepage or something?

I: Or Google anything in the news?

P10: I never Google anything precisely but when I see an online newspaper and I see an article on that, I would click on it.

I: Do you think that changes your attitude toward a brand, to see something positive or negative?

P10: I mean, sure it makes you feel uncomfortable if you buy super cheap stuff and you know that it is actually impossible. It’s hard because as a student you don’t have so much money and you still need clothes.

I: So we talked about being a good citizen, do you consider yourself a good citizen in this context?

P10: In this context, some improvements could be made.

I: How so?

P10: The thing is, if I would gain more money, more than I have now, I think I would change to other producers where I think they would be more ethical.

I: How would you decide where to purchase your clothes then, if you had more money?

P10: Well then I think I would Google and go to the homepage and check what is good and what isn’t.

I: Can you tell me what you perceive to be the specific ethical issues related to fast fashion in comparison to normal/traditional fashion stores? What do you think are the specific implications with fast fashion?

P10: That most of the brands are cheaper than normal brands, I would say.

I: How do you think the ethical issues differ for fast fashion or do you think there is a difference? Do you see fast fashion as being worse or better?

P10: I try to think about brands which are normal and there is nothing really coming into my mind.

I: Let’s say Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Polo, luxury brands but they aren’t fast fashion. So what do you think the ethical differences are?

P10: I’m not sure if there are so many ethical differences because I think, for example, Louis Vuitton I think they are claiming that they are producing in Italy or Paris, I’m not sure. In fact, the thing is that the very last step is produced there. Everything else is produced in low-income countries so I’m not sure if they are so much better.
I: Well you said if you made more money, you would shop somewhere else. So how would you make your decision then?

P10: Well it can be difficult, right? It would need a lot of research to find any brand which is ethical. I think there are not so many, not even the luxury brands.

I: Why do you say this? You think information is not accurate? Why would you have to do more research?

P10: I mean, I think they are stating that they are ethically correct but if you go deeper inside, like the Louis Vuitton example, everything is made in the low-income country and in the end, they just claim that they are better because the very last process is made in a high-income country.

I: What ethical issues are more important to you? Issues that impact your behavior or change your attitude toward a brand.

P10: I don’t know, I think it would be more social.

I: Like what kind?

P10: For example, I had this Nestle report this week and Nestle they are using child labor, which made me actually stop eating KitKat or something like this.

I: Zara last year in Brazil, they were found to be using suppliers which were using laborers in tiny houses and making them work 16 hours without letting them leave. Would this also make you stop shopping at Zara because you stopped eating KitKats?

P10: Now I have to stop Zara?

I: Do you feel like you have an obligation to?

P10: Well it’s hard because there is this conflict between cheap prices and ethical issues and shops like Zara and H&M are affordable.

I: Well, how do you think we can solve these issues in fast fashion? You said it is super cheap so what do you think it would take?

P10: I think it would take a lot but I think even though we are students, I think we can still afford a lot. Of course, we can afford super cheap things but a t-shirt which is 3 euros, like completely incorrect, I guess. Every student can maybe afford a t-shirt for 15 euros under fair or more fair conditions for workers in those countries.

I: You said people like us, so you think it is up to consumers to change their habits?

P10: No, I think it should also be the companies because they have high sales and their profits are huge and how they distribute these profits are not fair and I think they should change as well and give more to those people who are producing than taking so much margin.

I: So if they never change, would you stop shopping fast fashion? What would it take you to change?

P10: More money.

I: Then where would you shop, you know?
P10: Yeah, it’s difficult. I think what definitely would change me is if I would go to one of those countries and see the circumstances with my own eyes. I would need to have something which would impact me that much.

I: But you know it’s happening, right? So why doesn’t it change you know?

P10: I guess because it’s comfortable and it’s nice to have nice clothes for not that much money.

I: But you do feel an ethical obligation to be a good citizen?

P10: Yes, yes.

I: How do you decide how to apply this like should I apply this in my fashion consumption, my meat consumption?

P10: I think it’s easier in terms of food because there is a wider variety so you can stop eating from some brands but for fashion, I think the scope is too narrow to stop because they are all more or less equally bad so you cannot really tell. For example, with chocolate you have those fair trade brands and clothes doesn’t. At least, I don’t know any clothes that are fair trade.

I: There are a lot of ethical clothing brands but they are expensive, of course. One of the points about fast fashion to be ethical because it is all about consumer demand. What fast fashion brands do is they offer really diverse styles in small quantities and they see what sells and then they place orders with suppliers. So if a bunch of people start buying a blouse from Zara, they will place an order with suppliers and because it’s fast fashion, they have to produce and manufacture the clothes under really strict deadlines so then they subcontract to other suppliers so then it’s hard for Zara to…

P10: Transparency?

I: Yeah so does this change the responsibilities you place on companies to be more ethical?

P10: I think in that sense, regulations have to be improved as well like minimum wage and also to get some more transparency in their supply chain.

I: Have you every been on the company websites and read their reports?

P10: No.

I: Because they are pretty transparent. Zara and H&M are CSR reports of hundreds of pages long but of course, a lot of people don’t go online and read them. Why do you think people don’t make this effort?

P10: It’s also more comfortable to close your eyes to see the fact that you are living a very good life compared to people who live a very bad life and reading tons of paper and sites, people don’t have a lot of time and spending it on ethical issues is a big order.
Selective attention

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**Participant 10**

I: You said if you actually saw this stuff happening, if you were there in those countries and you saw these human rights violations happening, you think that would change you?

P10: I think it would, yes.

I: Well those are all my questions. Anything else you want to add? Any ethical issues? Have you heard about any CSR initiatives by any fast fashion brands? Any other scandals?

P10: No, nope. I just want to add, forget the part where I said my name.

I: Why? Do you feel bad?

P10: No I felt bad before, but now I feel worse. Why? You’ve never really thought about it or you’ve thought about it before?

P10: Yeah, a little.

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**Participant 11**

I: What do you know and understand about the concept of fast fashion?


I: Well, fast fashion is like stores like Zara, H&M, Primark basically it is a model of producing really trendy, stylish clothing but at cheap prices so it’s just the production of really stylish clothing produced for the masses right away.

P11: Okay

I: So when you do buy clothes, where do you normally go?

P11: I usually go to shops like the ones you said…Zara, Stradivarius, Bershka, Primark, Pull and Bear. Those are the ones I usually go to and I think they are a part of fast fashion.

I: So do you have a preference and why?

P11: I like Zara and Stradivarius. I also like Primark. When I was in college, I did a group work on Primark but I don’t think Primark has as good a quality as Zara, for example.

I: Is there a reason you like Zara more?

P11: Because, I don’t know, I trust Zara. I like the quality of the clothes and I think that it is all very trendy.

I: When you are about to buy clothes, which factors are most important to you: price, quality, style?

P11: All of the ones you said but probably price more.
When you enter the store, what do you first think, what do you first do?

If I look at the clothes or the price first?

Yeah

I like at the clothes but when I like a certain one, I always look at the price to decide. I don’t go shopping that often.

Why do you usually go shopping? What’s your motivation for going shopping?

It’s usually because I really need something or to offer something to someone. I don’t really do it like a free-time activity.

Is there a reason?

I don’t know. I just feel like if I’m not going to buy anything and I know that before, then I don’t feel the same enthusiasm.

You don’t go just for fun, just to buy clothes, just feel better?

I only like to go when I know I am going to buy something.

Do you ever go just to buy something you don’t really need?

Ahh, not really, no.

What kind of role do you think clothing plays in your life?

I think that when you meet someone, that is part of your first impression. So for example, if you go to a job interview, then you need to look serious and formal and I think clothes can help you build the image you want to show other people. It’s part of who you are.

I’m going to change the topic a bit, and I’m going to ask you a different question. What do you think means to be a good citizen of the world and of the global community?

Look, I think that’s a very deep question. I think being a good citizen doesn’t need to be much but to do what’s possible for you to help others especially at this time, Christmas when it seems like most people remember social causes. I guess it’s about not only thinking about yourself, but also who surrounds you.

In relation to the consumption of fashion and clothing, what do you think it means to be a good citizen?

I don’t know.

Whatever you think.

A good citizen in relation to fashion?

Let me ask you another question. What does the term ‘ethical’ mean to you in relation to the clothing you purchase?

I think it’s about how the clothes were produced. I heard some stories about people being treated improperly in other countries where they produce the clothes and I think ethics to me, at least the first thing that comes to mind, is how they get the whole thing done, the logistics, what people go through to produce the clothes.
I: So you’ve said you heard some stories, can you tell me about those stories that you’ve heard?

P11: I don’t remember them exactly but it’s those stories about someone buying a product and finding a message inside that product or someone in a different country complaining about the conditions that they have, asking for help, but I don’t remember any specific cases; I’ve only listened to some.

I: Do you remember which brands these were?

P11: No

I: Where did you hear about them? From other people or you read them in the news?

P11: On Facebook, I think.

I: What other ethical issues are related to the fashion industry?

P11: When they use animals in the clothes.

I: What else?

P11: I don’t remember.

I: Which issues or which ethical issues are most important to you?

P11: Can you give some examples of others?

I: It’s just whatever you know.

P11: What is more important?

I: You talked about people. You talked about the production process, logistics?

P11: Yeah

I: When you are buying clothes, do you ever consider these issues?

P11: For me, it is hard to know what is behind the clothes I’m buying, but I think both issues should be taken into consideration because we are talking about people, animals, basic rights so for me it’s hard to know the background of the workers.

I: You said human rights, basic rights….so that is something you consider to be important to you?

P11: Of course, yes.

I: It’s hard for you to know what’s behind the clothes you buy, so have you ever educated yourself. Have you ever gone online and done research about Zara, H&M, or Primark?

P11: To be honest, not in that way. I have done research on Primark because of the work I had to do but when I go online, it is mostly to look at the clothes. I haven’t haven’t really researched those issues.

I: But you said you know that they exist, that there are some problems with the production process?

P11: But I don’t know which companies were associated, you know?

I: So you don’t go online and look it up?

P11: No, not in that way.

I: When you are actually in the store buying clothes, you aren’t thinking about any of these issues?
I’m going to be honest, it hasn’t really come into my mind that often, but if you ask me, yes I think the issues are important but I don’t think I have much control over that and the only thing I can decide is not to go to that store.

I: So why don’t you not go to the store, then?
P11: It’s something that I think is important, but I’m pretty uneducated about which brands are more polemic.
I: Is there reason why you don’t research why brands are unethical or ethical?
P11: Because it just hasn’t happened, but I’m sure after this interview ends, I will look it up out of curiosity.
I: You said something about not having control, can you talk more about it?
P11: I guess that inside a company as big as Zara, the whole process from the very beginning until it comes to the stores, normal people outside the company, don’t really have any contact with the logistics, the producers, the manufacturers, so that’s why I said I don’t really have control over that.
I: So who would you hold responsible for fixing any ethical problems like child labor, fair wages. These are basic human rights.
P11: I think it should start with the own companies by not thinking so much about profit and considering that they are dealing with people and animals and to not make profit such a big priority that they do not respect basic rights.
I: So you think companies are mostly responsible? So let me ask you something. If you heard a new story, something bad about Zara or Pull and Bear, or Bershka, would that change your attitude toward the brand?
P11: Yes, in a certain way, yes. I can’t say that I’ll never go there again because I probably would. Because you know, I don’t have many brands here so if I would stop going to a certain one because of this or that…do you see what I mean? Maybe I wouldn’t go for awhile, but after some time I would go there. I am being honest.
I: One of the things my thesis is about is how the idea of fast fashion does not work well with sustainability and ethics because fast fashion means that products are being used produced quickly and are offered at cheap prices and usually, people don’t keep them for a long time. They dispose of them and it becomes waste and it isn’t sustainable. What is really interesting, I think, about fast fashion is that it is hard to maintain an ethical supply chain because it is so sensitive to consumer demand. For example, Zara, they produce really small quantities of super diverse products and they see what sells. So if there is a certain style that
sells really well, they will make a huge order and because it’s fast fashion, it will put a lot of pressure on their suppliers. So it’s really about consumer demand what is trendy and what consumers tend to buy. So the thing you were saying that it’s up to the companies, well the thing is that for Zara and H&M, they have very sophisticated CSR practices. If you go online and you look at their reports, they are doing a lot to make sure that rights for their workers and fair wages are there but the problem is when they make really big orders with suppliers, these suppliers will subcontract to someone else, so it makes it more difficult for the company to trace what’s going on. So even if the company makes a huge effort to audit and make sure that children aren’t being employed, it’s hard when they’re putting so much pressure because of consumer demand. So maybe fixing these ethical issues must come from other groups?

P11: Yes, in developing countries where child labor happens.
I: It’s your opinion. What do you think are the obstacles preventing the fast fashion industry from becoming more ethical?
P11: I think it’s what you said, since they don’t really control the beginning of the supply chain…
I: They do but it’s just that if there is a really large demand, it just creates an environment where maybe it can happen or is more likely to happen.

P11: I think it’s hard for them to change their strategy. There are three different strategies. One is what Zara uses, like producing a lot and selling it very cheap. There is the strategy of differentiation, like Rolex, which produces fewer products and sells it at a higher price, so what I’m trying to say is that I think it would be heard for those companies to change their strategy and I’m not really sure how they can change and act on those issues. I think it should be cooperation among the company and the entities at the other places where the production, I don’t know….I think it’s something hard to solve.

I: For example, if you could place blame on someone, would you place blame on the companies, governments, consumers?
P11: I think I would still put blame on companies.
I: Can you elaborate why?

P11: Because since it’s the company that offers the clothes to the client, I think most people would associate it with the company maybe unfairly, but I think there is always something they can do. They can invest in making sure that all human rights are being respected. I think there is something that the companies could perhaps do. Of course, the people that directly contribute like those subcontractors.
I: The thing is that since fast fashion is so cheap, some people might say what is the incentive for companies to change because
people are going to buy their clothes anyway. In this case, what do you think about that?

P11: I think that’s true that people would still buy clothes.
I: That’s like in your case. You said you know human rights are maybe being violated, but you aren’t going to stop shopping fast fashion.

P11: Yeah, because you know I’m not rich. I can’t afford to go to Gucci or Prada. I have to go to cheap brands.
I: So you feel like there aren’t a lot of choices for you?

P11: There are some choices, of course. I think that I’ll have to stick to fast fashion. Maybe I won’t go too much to Zara and instead go to Stradivarius more, but I would stick to fast fashion, yes.
I: You talked about money. Let’s say in 10 years when you’re making more money. Would you still be shopping at fast fashion?

P11: Oh, I would try not to. That would be a very good sign that I am a very successful person.
I: So you would change your behavior in the future?

P11: Oh, yes.
I: I’ve already changed it when I got my salary now that I started working and I think that I’m rich.

P11: Well I started offering better gifts to my parents. I know it sounds really superficial, my mom offered me a Michael Kors watch and I was super, super happy so if I could, then I would go shopping at better brands so the thing is, I’m not rich so I have to, most of the time, stick to the cheap brands.
I: I’m going to go back to the question I asked you earlier. What do you think it means to be a good citizen now in the context of fast fashion consumption?

P11: I think that taking into consideration our conversation, now I would say that a good citizen would be the one who would never go back to a certain brand or clothing company if they knew something bad was happening or making sure that the person will only go back if the human rights start being inspected.
I: Do you consider yourself a good citizen?

P11: Back in the interview, I said I wouldn’t cut out a certain store because of that for a while and that I would prefer other options but the thing is I wouldn’t cut it all completely but maybe I should.
I: Why do you say this?

P11: Because of the issues we spoke about that as a citizen, as a client, that should be my way of complaining.
I: Did you ever really think about this before the interview?

P11: Honestly, it is something that I never really put that much thought into.
I: Is there a reason?
P11: Even in other subjects like politics, I know the basics but I’m not really... I should be more interested than what I am. It is probably, I know this is something that I should put some thought into but you know, it’s not something that comes into my mind very often, to be honest.
I: No, that’s perfectly fair. Those are all my questions.
APPENDIX C

Axial Coding by Applicable Category

**Personal Identity**
- Price
- Level of Interaction
- "New"
- Necessity vs. utility
- Image
- Identity

**Ethical Obligation**
- Perceptions of good citizenship
- Source of info
- Unintentional vs. intentional Exposure
- Ethical issues
- Awareness of CSR initiatives
- Visibility
- Emotional Impact (Negative Vs. Positive)

**Personal Action**
- Societal Values
- Consumer responsibility
- Retailer Responsibility
- Other Responsibility
- State of fashion industry

**PERCEIVED OBSTACLE OF MONETARY CONSTRAINT**

**SELECTIVE EXPOSURE**

**MINIMIZED POWER**