RELATIONSHIP MARKETING REGARDING THE FASHION INDUSTRY

Trust, Commitment and Communication

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Abstract

Title
Relationship marketing regarding the Fashion industry; Trust, Commitment and Communication

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Problem to investigate
This thesis acknowledge a lack of understanding when it comes to customers perception regarding the relationship with companies that exist when purchasing basic clothes online.

Purpose
To investigate relationship marketing online towards the fashion industry considering customers who purchase basic clothes online.

Literature review
The literature review act as a foundation and gives a deeper understanding in the area of relationship marketing and the key components (trust, commitment and communication) and its variables.

Methodology
This thesis took a deductive and quantitative research approach with a survey as the research strategy.

Conclusion
This thesis has provided a clarification regarding relationship marketing when it comes to purchasing basic clothes online. The research contributed to a deeper knowledge of repeat customers perception regarding which are the most important key component and variables that a company should aim for when purchasing basic clothes online. The investigation provided information that further could be spread to companies in the fashion industry who has curiosity of repeat customers.
Acknowledgements,

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Chapter I: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the background and the investigation of the problem will be presented, this to identify underlying characteristics for the purpose and research questions.

1.1 Background

“The easiest kind of relationships is with ten thousand people,

the hardest is with one.” – Joan Baez (Blomqvist, Dahl and Haeger, 2004, Pp. 5).

To build strong and long-term relationships, companies’ today fight through many different barriers to achieve competitive advantages and make the customer stay within the business (Blomqvist, Dahl and Haeger, 2004). Blomqvist et al. (2004) furthermore claim that with today’s modern electronic technology, like the Internet, it is easy to build a relationship with ten thousand people but the difficulties is to reach the individual customer. The traditional relationship marketing as a concept can in general be defined as activities that attract, maintain and develop customer relationships (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991; Grönroos, 1994; Berry, 1995).

According to Harker and Egan (2006) it is essential to discuss the term transactional marketing before relationship marketing can be fully comprehended. Initially the concept ‘marketing mix’ was introduced with several variables, which later on became the 4 P’s (product, price, promotion and place). This new way of thinking became the modern transactional marketing. The origin of transactional marketing was about how marketing should be in theory and practice. The ‘new modern’ marketing was a form that was concentrated on individual transactions, it tried to get the customer fit the product, which required theory and practice to successfully shape the product to the customer. Transactional marketing was more a product-related philosophy and was questioned while relationship marketing began to be discussed and when they understood that the philosophy should be customer-related and regarding the long-term relationships (Harker and Egan, 2006). Modern relationship marketing nowadays depends upon the technology driven society and it is important for companies to keep up with the market in change to build relationships with customers (Brown and Muchira, 2004). It is about generating value and interaction with its customers to build and create a long-term relationship. Relationship
marketing creates customer centricity in the spotlight and makes the philosophy customer-related by satisfying the customers’ needs and wants (Harker and Egan, 2006).

Internet continues to grow at exponential rates all over the world and the first Internet revolution is characterized by rapid growth and new way of relationships in the areas around business-to-consumer markets (Richardson, 2001). The development on the online market has according to different prognosis a brilliant future and will continue to develop (Swedish Retail Institute). This has open up for opportunities and companies have discovered new capabilities to reach their customers. This have made them sustainable on the market and better to create competitive advantage compared to the conventional retail environment (Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2001).

The Internet's evolution in the electronic purchase area has developed since its beginning and been taken to another level that made it easier to put the customer in central focus (Molenaar, 2010). According to Molenaar (2010) the sale process online has shifted its focus over to the customer’s perspective. The relevance for maintaining successful relationships with customers has been discussed widely in relation to the offline environment, however there is less research considering the online context, which is going to be the thesis focus (Walsh, Henning-Thurau, Sassenberg, and Bornemann, 2010). Liang and Chen (2009) believe that the Internet is a key for relationship building (Liang and Chen, 2009) and further online companies must think of how their customers buying behaviour can be turn into an advantage for them and what underlying reasons the customers have for shopping through different electronic websites (Molenaar, 2010).

1.2 Problem to investigate

Researchers in the area of relationship marketing argue that there is no difference between online and offline retailing considering the fact that the service provider and the customers do not meet face-to-face (Liang, Chen and Wang, 2008 and Kumi, 2010). From an online company perspective there is a frequently number of aspects to consider regarding relationships with customers such as different key components1 to focus on for a successful relationship. The three different key components are trust, commitment and communication (Jevons and Gabott, 2000; Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2002; San Martín, Gutiérrez and

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1 Key components – relationship marketing divided into three parts; trust, commitment and communication.
It is constantly an on-going discussion between different researchers whether which trust, commitment or communication are the most important to focus on while having a customer relationship online. The researchers agree with each other about which are the three key components but they define the components differently and the connection between them, if there exist any at all. Largely the researchers discuss the issue from a company perspective in the matter of what a company should focus on to maintain a relationship with their customers and therefore it is a lack of understanding considering the customer perspective regarding relationships online (Jevons and Gabott, 2000; Rangananthan and Ganapathy, 2002; San Martín, Gutiérrez and Camarero, 2004; Sun and Lin, 2010).

Chang and Chou (2011) argue that an important factor for a company is to understand the customers’ requirements to begin the process of a customer relationship online, therefore it is important to identify which customers the company should focus on. There are according to Griffin and Herres (2002) two types of customers; first-time customers and repeat customers. If a company choose to focus on first-time customers or repeat customers the company needs to consider that the purchase decision from a customer’s perspective will be based on different buying-factors. Repeat customers have purchased more than once and have better understanding of purchasing online since they have experienced it before and are familiar with the phenomenon (Griffin and Herres, 2002).

The three key components in relationship marketing online, trust, commitment and communication can also be explained by underlying variables. These variables depend on which industry and which type of product to focus on, since different industries and products differs from each other. The fashion industry online offers types of products that have a lack of physical understanding and evaluation since it is accessible online and therefore intangible. It is important that the company consider the whole experience the websites are giving the customers and what the customers are prioritizing within a relationship with a company online (Davis et al., 1999). Clothes are one type of product in the fashion industry and can be divided into many different categories, based on what type of clothes the customer is aiming for. Depending on which category of product the customer is aiming to purchase there are different prioritizing variables the customer is looking for in a relationship with a company online. However, the prioritizing variables are the same in the particularly category, since the evaluation is based out of the same factors.

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2 Variables - the underlying explanation of the key components.
(Frankel, 2007). One category, where the customers are prioritizing the same variables in a relationship with a company online, is basic-clothes. This thesis defines basic-clothes as tops and bottoms that are used in the everyday life (e.g. shirts, trousers, skirts, tops, cardigans, jeans etc.). Even though there are different important variables within different categories to consider in a relationship with the customers, an identification of the variables are unclear when it comes to shopping basic clothes in an online environment (Frankel, 2007).

Frankel (2007) argues that for a company to succeed with the online distribution it is necessary to focus on right variables in order to attract the customers and understand what the customers prioritize in an online relationship with a company. Harker and Egan (2006) claim that it is of big relevance for companies to understand the underlying factors in what the costumers think is significant in a relationship, this to be able to further build strong long-term relationships online and create competitive advantage. According to Chang and Chou (2011) there is a lack of information available in the area of customers’ perception regarding what variables in a relationship that is most relevant while having a relationship online with a specific company. Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) agree and highlight that there still are very few empirical studies that examine this issue from a customer perspective.

In the literature about relationship marketing this thesis has acknowledged a lack of understanding about the customers’ perception, regarding which are the most important variables that a company should aim for when customers shop basic clothes online.
1.3 Purpose

To investigate relationship marketing online towards the fashion industry considering customers who purchase basic clothes online.

1.4 Research questions

To accomplish the purpose the following research questions has to be answered:

- To which degree are the key components trust, commitment and communication important, from a customer perspective, in a relationship with an online shopping company concerning the purchase of basic clothes?

- To which degree are the variables in its key components trust, commitment and communication important, from a customer perspective, in a relationship with an online shopping company concerning the purchase of basic clothes?
Chapter 2: THEORY/LITERATURE REVIEW

To investigate the purpose and to answer the research questions the following theory was adapted. This thesis will investigate relationship marketing, the three key components trust, commitment and communication and their variables.

2.1 Relationship marketing in an online context

Relationship marketing online can be defined as activities that attract, maintain and develop customer relationships (Chen and Wang, 2008), which are the same definition as Berry and Parasuraman (1991); Grönroos (1994); Berry (1995) argue for, however they argue regarding relationship marketing in general. Chen and Wang (2008) claim that this definition is the same in an online context but that relationship marketing online is more about long-term relationships and retain existing customers compared to relationship marketing in general. Further, relationship marketing is all about keeping existing customers satisfied rather than focusing on attracting new customers. It is more likely that a customer that already is familiar with a specific website returns rather than choosing a new one, this if the customer is pleased with the value that a company provides them with (Chen and Wang, 2008).

It is important to determine the possibility of relationship marketing online even though the interaction among customers and online service providers do not meet face-to-face (Liang et al., 2008; Kumi, 2010). Therefore Geissler (2001) discusses that to build a successful relationship with customers they never meet face-to-face the company needs to, in a proper way, satisfy their customers by understanding the customers’ experiences and interactions with the Internet. There is plenty aspects to consider when it comes to customer relationships online and for a company to succeed creating it, they need to identify customers expectations when visiting an online website and collect data about how to best satisfy their customers needs and wants (Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2002).

According to the literature of relationship marketing in an online context, components as trust, commitment and communication are frequently mentioned and recurring. According to Jevons and Gabott (2000); Rangananathan and Ganapathy (2002); San Martín, Gutiérrez and Camarero (2004); San and Lin (2010) trust, commitment and communication are seen as the three most important key components for a successful relationship on Internet.
2.2 Trust

Trust online can be defined as willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence (Brown and Muchira, 2004). Morgan and Hunt (1994) have the same definition, however they aim to relationship in general. Jevons and Gabott (2000) argue that trust is the main component to build a successful relationship over the Internet. Other authors like San Martin, Gutiérrez and Camarero (2004) agree with Jevons and Gabott (2000) although they believe that trust is one of several components in order to gain a good relationship. San and Lin (2010) also see trust as an ingredient to build relationship online and Wang and Head (2007) agree with San and Lin (2010) and add that trust is an important component in decision making when purchasing products online and therefore trust plays an important role in gaining a good relationship.

Schoenbachler and Gordon (2002) claim that trust is one component proposed as a potential driver of database-driven relationship marketing. They say that customers must have feelings of trust toward the marketer before revealing information. Trust, however, may be a function of several related antecedent constructs online (Schoenbachler and Gordon, 2002). Trust can be explained into different variables, which can bee seen as the different factors that contribute to trust. The most frequently occurred variables in trust according to the literature of relationship marketing in an online context are shared value, promises and credibility. (Davis et al., 1999; Elliot and Fowell, 2000; Szymanski and Hise, 2000; Bauer, Grether and Leach, 2002; Schoenbachler and Gordon, 2002; Park and Kim, 2003; Brown and Muchira, 2004; Mukherjee and Nath, 2007; Ndubisi, 2007; Wang and Head, 2007; Wang, 2009).

Shared value is one of the emphasized variables in trust according to Mukherjee and Nath (2007) and Ndubisi (2007). Ndubisi (2007) further argues that shared value can be defined in items3 as mutual goals and Brown and Muchira (2004) add that it can also be defined as fair. Bauer, Grether and Leach (2002) argue that past experience is the foundation of trust online which can be seen as a further definition of shared value. According to Morgan and Hunt (1994) shared value in relationship marketing seen in general, are opinions that an individual has about behaviour, goals and the perception of what is right and wrong, this

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3 Item – which the variables has been operationalized to.

*Promise* is further one emphasized variable in the key component trust (Davis et al., 1999; Ndubisi, 2007). Ndubisi (2007) argues that promises are both about making and keeping and that a betrayal of promises by the supplier or the service provider could lead to defection. Davis et al. (1999) agree with Ndubisi (2007) and add that if the company cannot keep their promises to their customers no relationship will occur. Brown and Muchira (2004) and Wang (2009) claim that honesty is an important item of the key component trust, which can be associated to making and keeping honest promises. Further Brown and Muchira (2004) also argue for the company to be responsible for their actions and Schoenbachler and Gordon (2002) agree by also adding that the companies must radiate dependability.

*Credibility* is one important variable in trust according to Schoenbachler and Gordon (2002). Credibility has no clear definition, rather the overarching view is that it can be defined through the item believability of a source or message (Flanagin and Metzger, 2008). Credibility can therefore further be associated and defined as competent (Brown and Muchira, 2004), reputation (Schoenbachler and Gordon, 2002), security (Park and Kim, 2003; Mukherjee and Nath, 2007) and benevolent (Brown and Muchira, 2004; Wang, 2009).

### 2.3 Commitment

Commitment online can be defined as the central in relationship marketing in the way the companies and the customers’ engagement in a relationship (San Martin et al., 2004). Morgan and Hunt (1994) have the same definition of commitment, however they aim to relationship in general and further discuss that commitment in a relationship only exist when the relationship is considered important from the both parties. They want the relationship to endure indefinitely and are willing to work at maintaining it, however San Martin et al. (2004) agree and apply it in an online context. Wetzels, De Ruyter and Van Birgelsen (1998) write that commitment is seen as an emotion that is critically important in the development of long-term relationships and that commitment plays a central role in relationship marketing. Further Wetzels et al. (1998) argue that commitment refers to an implicit or explicit pledge of continuity of a relationship between exchange partners and
that commitment is the most important component in the development of an ongoing relationship between a buyer and a seller. If the parties are not committed to their relationship, it will end rapidly (Wetzels et al., 1998).

Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos (2005) overall discuss that commitment captures the strength of the relationship and that it pushes it forward. Verhoef (2003) strengthens Gustafsson et al. (2005) argument and adds that the definition of commitment also focuses on the psychological attachment. Further, Verhoef (2003) claims that commitment is shown in the effect of customers’ maintenance, such as purchase intentions. Commitment often affects loyal customer positively and makes customers become repeat customer. In the effect on customers’ development it is shown that committed customers believe they are related to the company and they display positive behaviour towards the company (Verhoef, 2003; Ndubisi, 2007).

San Martin et al. (2004) argue that commitment is the key within online shopping and add that commitment is the main ingredient in relationships online. Jevons and Gabott (2000) agree with commitment being a major component in a relationship. Commitment can be operationalized into different variables, which can bee seen as the different factors that contribute to commitment in relationship marketing (Wetzels et al., 1998; Verhoef, 2003; Gustafsson et al., 2005; Ndubisi, 2007). The most frequently occurred variables in commitment according to the literature of relationship marketing in an online context are satisfaction and personal interaction.

Satisfaction is one of the most frequently occurred characteristics in the key component commitment according to Wetzels et al. (1998). Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006) argue that satisfaction is of big relevance for companies in the context of building relationships with its customers, since customers’ satisfaction can be seen as a variable in commitment. Wetzels et al. (1998) further argue that satisfaction regarding commitment can be defined through the item quality that the company offers the customers (service quality, product quality, support quality and engagement quality). Satisfaction can also be described as a company’s loyalty towards the customer (Tsiotsou, 2005).

Personal interaction is the other variable that is a part of commitment according to Gustafsson et al. (2005). Verhoef (2003) agrees with Gustafsson et al. (2005) that personal
interaction is an important variable in commitment and defines personal interaction as the connection the customer feel to the company. It is not possible to have personal interaction such as body language, the ability to feel, touch and inspect products over the Internet (Siau and Shen, 2003), however, personal interaction is still important for a successful relationship with an online company. Personal interaction can in an online context be defined as the items requirements and expectations the customer have of the company and to get personal contact (Turnbull, Ford and Cunningham, 1996). Further, Keeney (1999) explain personal interaction in an online context such as interaction with the employee and personal information.

2.4 Communication

Communication can be defined as the spread of information around a purchase situation and when the customers, according to Jin and Lingjing (2011), communicate and review products and services that they have explored. This is a great source of information for both the producers and the customers. Communication in a business-to-customer relationship has always, according to Dunkan and Moriorty (1998), been a part of attracting and maintaining the customers, hence they also mention that with the new technology it has never been of more importance when building marketing relationships. Park and Kim (2003) argue that customers want a careful, continuous and useful communication with the company when purchasing online (Park and Kim, 2003). Another important aspect that Bauer et al. (2002) claim is that with help from technology like the Internet the communication between companies and its customers have developed into a more individual communication. Damanpour (2001) and Bauer et al. (2002) mention that a more individual communication gives the customers opportunity to design and get the companies attention when it comes to products and services that the companies offer. It also gives quality for the customers since their own conditions and expectations will be implement during the purchase.

According to Bauer et al. (2002); Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002); Park and Kim (2003) communication is information. Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) argue that companies should offer the customers easy access to information. Further they see it as a key component in relationships online but also as a good way to build communication on (Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2002). The constant ability of information on the Internet gets according to Bauer et al. (2002) an efficient opportunity for companies on the Internet to storage information that they can send to customers directly or keep to themselves.
Communication can be explained into different variables, which can be seen as the different factors that contribute to a successful communication in relationship marketing in an online context. Park and Kim (2003) argue that one variable is *product information* (Park and Kim, 2003). However Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) say that online shopping websites with a communication section of *FAQ* gets more customers to their websites, than those without it. The variables in communication are *product information* and *FAQ* and those are the most regular occurred variables in the literature of relationship marketing in an online context (Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2002; Park and Kim, 2003).

*Product information* is according to Park and Kim (2003) one important variable in communication. It can further be described as product attribute information and to which it is important for the customers to get detailed information about products before a purchase. Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) strengthen Park and Kim (2003) in the discussion of easy access to information for the customers. Further, Park and Kim (2003) define consumer recommendation as an item of *product information* and relevant for the company while communicating with their customers. According to Jin and Lingjing (2011) consumer recommendation could be the spread of information to customers and each other around a purchase situation. Further Jin and Lingjing (2011) claim that if customers give recommendations and reviews about products and services that they have explored it could be a great source for both the producers and the customers. Park and Kim (2003) strengthen that consumer recommendations is an item of *product information*. Sriram and Kingshuk (2011) argue that order tracking and product price are of relevance in a purchase online. Another important item is product description (Chen and Xie, 2005).

*FAQ* includes numbers of questions that customers have asked the company in the area of shipping, service, payment and product return policies. Despite this, many online shopping websites are still not offering a section of *FAQ*. Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) argue that an online shopping website should offer access to information about the company to gain understanding of what kind of company the customers are dealing with (contact information). Another important objective is according to Sriram and Kingshuk (2011) that the online shopping website offers customer support.

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4 FAQ – Frequently Asked Question
Chapter 3: CONCEPTUALIZATION AND VISUALIZED MODEL

In the previous chapter of literature review it was revealed that relationship marketing and the three key components consists of important variables in order to maintain good relationships with customer online. Further, authors in the literature review discuss the three components and how they could be explained in variables. This chapter explains the research questions more deeply and show a comprehensive visualized model and the structure of the thesis topic.

3.1 Establishment of visualize model

By the observation in the literature review it could be determined that the research questions with this thesis was to investigate customers perception of the different key components and its variables. To be able to answer the purpose and the research questions a model was constructed representing the key components and its variables. This visualized model work as a guideline for this thesis and is illustrated in Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Visualized model](image)

3.2 Unit of analysis

In the literature concerning relationship marketing in an online context it is large focus on what online companies should have in mind when interact with their customers. However,
Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) argue and highlight the issue that it does not exist many empirical investigations concerning repeat customers’ perceptions of what is most important while having a relationship with an online shopping website. Frankel (2007) adds that the same issue is unclear when it comes to shopping basic clothes online. With this in mind, the unit of analysis in this thesis is customers and their perceptions regarding the importance of the key components and its variables in relationship marketing in an online shopping context when shopping basic clothes online.

3.3 The conceptual framework

The main intention with conceptual framework is that it benefits to explain, either graphically or in a narrative form the primary objects that are going to be studied (Miles and Huberman, 1994). A model has been developed to see the connection between the components and its variables. This section in the thesis determines a summarize and a construct of the conceptual and operational definitions. The model is illustrated in Table 1.

### Table 1: The conceptual framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Constructs and their Definitions</th>
<th>Conceptual Definition</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust</strong></td>
<td>Trust can be defined as willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom has confidence (Brown and Muchira, 2004; Morgan and Hunt, 1994).</td>
<td>Trust is a key component regarding relationship marketing in an online context, which can be explained in the variables; shared values, promises and credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commitment</strong></td>
<td>Commitment can be defined as the central to relationship marketing in the way of the companies and the customers' engagement in a relationship (San Martin et al., 2004; Morgan and Hunt, 1994).</td>
<td>Commitment is a key component regarding relationship marketing in an online context, which can be explained in the variables; satisfaction and personal interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Communication can be defined as the spread of information around a purchase situation and when the customers communicate and review products and service that they have explored (Jin and Lingjing, 2011).</td>
<td>Communication is a key component regarding relationship marketing in an online context, which can be defined in the variables; product information and frequently asked questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will in a systematic and descriptive way show how the gathering process of relevant information and models will be collected, used and analysed. The aim with the methodology chapter is according to Hart (1998) to create deep knowledge and trustworthiness of the thesis. This methodology involves different sections where the framework of the thesis is described and motivated.

4.1 Research approach

There are many ways of constructing a methodology the research approach is a very important decision in the first step of the methodology. It is important to be critical in the decision-making and every decision is going to be the foundation of the next one. A discussion will be presented in the next section regarding the different choices of inductive versus deductive and qualitative versus quantitative research approach (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

4.1.1 Deductive versus Inductive research

The regular research approach is deductive and it signifies the relationship between theory and practice when it comes to methodology. Deductive analysis focuses from the general to the more specific. Researchers collect information about a theory regarding the topic of interest to narrow it down (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Further they argue that it is important for the researcher to know how the information could be specified and collected (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

The inductive method is a process to use observations to develop general principles to a certain subject. The process for inductive theory is when the researchers begin with the
specific observations and measures, to end up in developing conclusions or theories. The process for the inductive theory is to generalize conclusions from the observations researchers are making. Researchers prefer to perceive the connection between theory and science as inductive, which means that the theory is the result of a research effort (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Based on previous discussion, the deductive approach is the most suitable framework for this thesis. It is the most common approach among researchers and most suitable for this thesis since the theories material and the foundation for the investigation is based out of previous research (Bryman and Bell, 2005). A discussion regarding qualitative versus quantitative research will further be explained in the next section.

4.1.2 Quantitative versus Qualitative research

After the previous choice, the second step in the research approach is to identify the most suitable method to get the best outcome of the investigation. The two main types are whether the thesis should be designed out of a qualitative or a quantitative research characteristic, this to make a frame for how to collect and analyze the relevant outcome of the research (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Quantitative research indicates to a systematic empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques (Hunter and Leahey, 2008) or as Bryman and Bell (2005) state it, as a method to collect information where the result is assumed to have a outcome and presented in a numerical or statistic form. The purpose of a quantitative research method is to develop mathematical models and theories about phenomena that the research is investigating (Hunter and Leahey, 2008). According to Bryman and Bell (2005) an advantage with a quantitative research is that it is more formalized, structured which makes the research easier to control and present in an informative perspective. If the investigation contains few measurable variables the quantitative research gives opportunity to review them with a large number of components (Hunter and Leahey, 2008).
Bryman and Bell (2005) claim, that the contrast to quantitative research method is the qualitative research. This method is a deeper form of research strategy that can be good to use if the research is reviewed out of complication context in different situations. It can also highlight the quality in the targeted investigation. Qualitative research is less formalized (Bryman and Bell, 2005) and the aim with the qualitative research is to create a deeper knowledge and to be able to search for the underlying reasons that can occur behind an applicable phenomena or situation. The conclusion from the research is characterized and based on attitudes and beliefs that not have been quantified (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010).

The clearest difference between qualitative and quantitative research is that a qualitative method is often used to be more focused on words than numbers as it is in a quantitative method (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010).

The aim with both quantitative and qualitative research according, to Bryman and Bell (2005) and Hunter and Leahey (2008), are to create a better understanding and perception about the investigated phenomena or problem and is build upon a data collection frame. Moreover, based on previous discussion, a quantitative research is most suitable for this thesis in the extent of the nature of purpose that is going to be investigated and the fact that this thesis aims to create better knowledge rather than compare different variables. Another characteristic that is of relevance for the research is to be able to measure and present the research in forms of numbers and statistics, which the quantitative research method allows to. Therefore the investigation will follow a deductive and quantitative approach, this also since the research questions of this thesis aim to generalize the result. This will further be discussed and developed in the next section in the chapter.

4.2 Research design
To find, collect and to be able to analyse the relevant outcome a research design is of importance for the thesis, to even more clarify how the work further will be continued and developed (Bryman and Bell, 2005). There are according to Bryman and Bell (2005) three classified research design methods, they are explorative, descriptive and/ or causal design.
4.2.1 Explorative, Descriptive- and/or Causal design

Exploratory design

Exploratory research is conducted for a problem that has not been clearly defined (e.g. what is the problem?). Wallén (1996) describes exploratory design that is used as a pre-study in gaining more knowledge of the topic. Further, Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong (2002); Bryman and Bell (2005) argue that it often relies on secondary research, such as reviewing available literature and data, but also qualitative approaches such as informal discussion with customers, employees, management and more formal approaches. Exploratory research helps the researcher to determine the most suitable design for the project, which data collection method to use and the selection of subject. The results of an exploratory research are not frequently useful for decision-making by themselves, however they can provide an important insight into a given situation (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Descriptive design

Descriptive research design can also be related to statistical research, which means that it describes data and different characteristics about a specific population and/ or phenomenon (Wallén, 1996). It is used to understand frequencies, averages and statistical calculations. More clearly, descriptive research answers questions like who, what, when, where and how. Even if descriptive design can answer this kind of questions it cannot describe what caused a situation. The best way to use descriptive research design is to conduct a survey investigation. Overall descriptive design handles everything that can be counted and studied (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Causal design

Causal research design refers to the relationship between two different variables that could be called ‘the cause’ and ‘the effect’. With causal design the research depends upon different variables where the second variable is understood as a consequence of the first one. ‘The second’ variable is the effect of the first variable which is ‘the cause’. In short causal research design can be defined as variables that determines the value of another variable and it is related to processes, properties, variables, facts, characterizing etc. (Wallén, 1996; Bryman and Bell, 2005).
In deciding the most suitable design for this investigation all three of the designs were carefully evaluated. The importance of choice in choosing the design for the research is to evaluate them in order to find the design that suits the thesis in regard to the relevance, usefulness of the results. The causal design was not a choice, this since the thesis does not investigate if it exist any relationship between different variables or the fact that they depend on one another. The fact that a descriptive and an explorative research design are two possible designs to use, a decision was made after a comparison and review between the two designs. Exploratory design was excluded since the research problem and direction had already been determined for this thesis. Further this thesis used a descriptive design with the background of the subject and the problem discussion, this since the subject contains a lot of available information. In order to solve the problem that is going to be investigated, descriptive design was the most suitable because of its comparison between different variables. In the next section a clearer explanation will be made about the content in a descriptive design and how it further will be narrowed to make the method process more specific.

4.2.2 Cross-sectional design versus Longitudinal design

When using a descriptive research design it can be divided into two different forms, cross-sectional and longitudinal design (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Cross-sectional studies involve observations of entire population or a representative subset at one specific point in time. A cross-sectional study aims to provide data on the entire population using a sample. Cross-sectional studies are descriptive in the extent of that they describe some feature (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra, 2010).

Longitudinal however is a correlation research that involves repeated observations of the same variables over long periods of time (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Longitudinal design can investigate the same people more than once, be able to see differences and similarities across generations (Malhotra, 2010).

The decision of choosing descriptive design led further on to another decision about making a choice between cross-sectional design or longitudinal design. The longitudinal design is not an alternative based on the time limits and its long research observations on
the same variables over long periods of time. For this thesis a cross-sectional design was adapted since the cross-sectional design covers a measurement of a specific sample out of a population at a single point in time (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The cross-sectional design can be divided into two different forms, single cross-sectional and multiple cross-sectional design and a more broad discussion about these two can be seen in the next section.

4.2.3 Single cross-sectional design versus Multiple cross-sectional design

Single cross-sectional design is when a survey is handed out at one time in one place and the answers will be compiled. However, multiple cross-sectional design is when the survey is handed out to different groups to see a distinct difference between different respondent groups (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra, 2010).

The compiled data, for this thesis, will be done one time in one place based on the time limit, therefore single cross-sectional design has been chosen for this thesis. The next step in the methodology process will be a clarification over how the data sources were collected.
4.3 Methodology map - Part I

In this section a descriptive explanation has been developed over the methodology performance Part I. The figure below shows a summarized picture over this thesis way of choices (Figure 2).

![Methodology map – Part I](image)

4.4 Data sources

The process with collecting reliable sources for the empirical data can be divided into two different categories, primary or secondary sources. These categories can also be used together in an investigation, though with the aim to complement one another, or just increase the level of trustworthiness in the source (Bryman and Bell, 2005). A further discussion will be presented in the next section.

4.4.1 Primary data versus Secondary data

Primary data is information that is collected in first-hand and also called tailor-made information because of its up-to-date and specific information, which is an advantage for
the research. However primary data can result in high costs and it can also be very time-consuming (Bryman & Bell, 2005).

Secondary data, in the other hand, is the data that has been collected for some other aims than the problem at hand (Kotler et al., 2002). Secondary data can be divided into internal secondary data and external secondary data. Internal secondary data can be such as, value documents that exist inside a specific company like annual reports and personal diaries from a consumer perspective. External secondary data is material that is available for everyone such as, what customers are writing in forums like twitter etc. (Malhotra, 2010). The advantages are what may provide a solution or provide alternative for primary research methods. It might alert potential problems or difficulties and it will provide necessary background information. However, it might be a lack of availabilities and relevance. It could also be inaccuracy and insufficiency (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Another advantage with secondary data is that it is more cost efficient and can be collected more rapidly than primary data (Kotler et al., 2002; Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Based on the previous decision, discussion and the fact that when writing the thesis Bryman and Bell (2005) state that if no pre-data exist on the researched area, the use of primary sources is of relevance to collect the empirical material since it provides more specific data. Primary data will be the useful source for solving the research problem.

4.5 Research strategy

There are five different research strategies, which are experiment, survey, archival analysis, history documents and case study (Yin, 2007). To know which one of the five strategies that is the most suitable for the investigation the researchers have taken the different strategies in consideration with the aim to find the appropriate research strategy (Yin, 2007). The research strategy is the core of research design and this choice is the most critical in the methodology chapter (WHO, 2001).

Experiment

This research strategy is used when the goal is to verify, falsify or establish the validity of a hypothesis and it is answering research questions such as how and why. Experiment aims to look over and focuses on behavioural and contemporary events (Yin, 2007).
Survey
Survey as a research strategy is used when gathering information from a specific population and makes it into statistically conclusions (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010). It is answering questions such as who, what, where, how many how much and focuses on contemporary events. The result from a survey will be measured to find a connection or pattern from the variables (Yin, 2007).

Archival analysis
Archival analysis is an observational method and it is used to identify changes. A sampling or a unit will be observed and then the same sampling will be observed at least one more time at another occasion until a connection will be proved. This research strategy answers research questions such as who, what, where, how many, how much and focuses on both contemporary and past events (Yin, 2007).

Historical document
Historical document is the collection and analysis of information that comes from documents presented in the past. Based on the information from the history the analysis can be made out of the secondary information (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Historical document answers questions such as how and why and do not focus on contemporary events (Yin, 2007).

Case study
This strategy is based on an intensive analysis of a detailed individual unit, which can be a person, organization or an event (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010). Case study is used to investigate to finding underlying principles, instead of using a rigid schedule to investigate numbers of variables. Case study is a strategy, which involves an examination over a long period of time of a single occasion. It is a systematic way of keeping collected data, analysed information and reported results while the result will give the researcher deeper knowledge of why the occasion happened as it did and what could be relevant for future research. Case studies provide themselves in both producing and testing hypotheses. Case study as a research strategy answers questions such as how and why and focus on contemporary events (Yin, 2007).
Table 2: Research strategies based on Yin (2007, Pp. 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research strategy</th>
<th>Form of research question</th>
<th>Requires control over behavioural events</th>
<th>Focuses on contemporary events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>How, why</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Who, what, where, how many/much</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival analysis</td>
<td>Who, what, where, how many/much</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes/no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>How, why</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>How, why</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When taken the different research strategies in considerations each one of them have different features, both advantages and disadvantages but there is only one that was matching the criteria’s for this thesis specific research questions. However, based on the previous choice of quantitative research method, survey is most suitable for this research, this since the nature of the research is based on a deductive procedure with a test and evaluation on existing scientific theories. Other strategies can be rejected since the research cannot be based on the research strategy experiment considering the purpose of the thesis, archival analysis cannot be used because of its way of analyze accumulate documents, which is not of relevance for the research and since this thesis only uses primary data. Historical documents as a research strategy cannot be used considering the foundation of old document, which is not of importance since the thesis is based on contemporary events. Case study will not be used since the result from the investigation will be generalized and therefor case study is not suitable. More information about the survey strategy and the different methods to take in considerations when collecting data through a survey will be present during the next section.
4.6 Data collection method

There are many criteria’s that has to be pleased when using a specific data collection method. These have to match the purpose and fulfil the specific requirements for the research (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The most common data collection methods according to Bryman and Bell (2005) are interviews, focus groups, survey and content analysis.

**Interview**

The most common form of interview is the depth-interview, which consist of a respondent and an interviewer (Christensen et al., 2001). A depth-interview aims to get the respondent talk and express their beliefs and attitudes toward the specific topic (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010). Interviews can last between 30 and 90 minutes and give advantages such as, control over the respondent and can pick different aspects to talk more or less about which leads to a more flexible and comprehensive information. Further advantages are that uncovering hidden issues might be appearing (Bryman and Bell, 2005). However, interview is time consuming and expensive, it requires skilled interviewers because it can lead to interviewer bias (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010).

**Focus group**

A focus group is a compound group of people that discuss and emphasise themselves about a predetermined topic. The respondents in a focus group are hand picked and often have something in common, they can be seen as a representative for a specific population (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010). The focus group and its discussion are led by an interviewer/ moderator and the respondents express their individual behaviour, beliefs and attitudes toward a certain product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging. The advantages with focus groups are that they are lasting longer than interviews and the interviewer records them so no information will be default. A disadvantage is the probability of interviewer bias, which can make the result hard to analyse (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

**Survey**

Survey is a compiling instrument where the respondents by themselves answer certain numbers of questions either by giving own constructed answers or choosing the already given answers. A survey can be used to gather data where the respondent cannot be affected by each other, however a survey can never give a deep answer to an asked
question. According to Watson (2010) surveys are a non-expensive way to collect information from many respondents quickly and a tool to use when the respondent are spread geographical. The design of a survey requires much time and effort from the researchers and it is also important for the survey to be well constructed and the respondent must understand each question. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) there are two kinds of surveys, census surveys and sample survey. Census survey refers to when the researcher is going to study every element in the population however the sample survey refers to when the researcher are going to study a representative proportion of the population. The most common ways of collecting data based on the research strategy are questionnaires constructed of pen-and-paper, telephone, online, in person, e-mail etc. (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

**Content analysis**

Content analysis is when the researcher is going to study the content of one form of communication. It is a technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of any form of communication. Such communication can be books, websites and laws (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Based on the previous choice of quantitative research the most suitable data collection method for this thesis is the survey research. The choice is based out of the specific research purpose and the way it is going to be developed during the limit of time. The motivation for this method is based out of the advantages and the relevant research tools within the collection process. The survey has high responds rates, it is timely and cost effective and there is no variation when it comes to the answers from the participants within the sample group and it is clearer to analyse the data. Survey also creates opportunity to adapt the questions after need for the investigation. Since the outcome of the data collection will be present in form of numbers and statistics this will be a valid method that will generate in a good information base for the analysis of the research (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

**4.7 Data collection instrument**

When the survey strategy and data collection method were decided, the next step was to narrow the key components variables into more measurable terms that are able to use in a
questionnaire. To be able to do this in an appropriate way it first must be an operationalization and a more detailed questionnaire design.

4.7.1 Operationalization and measurement of variables

Operationalization is according to Ruane (2005) and Svensson (2005) a link between the theoretical and the measurable definition of the variable. A more descriptive definition can be what will be measured and how the variables will be measured? At last, in which form are the measurable values going to be useful? The operationalization table should present the conceptual framework where it moves from abstract to measurement, in other words it moves to the real world (Shields and Tajalli, 2006). Svensson (2005) agrees and claims that operationalization makes something abstract observable and measurable. To make the research questions more observable and measurable, a model was constructed to explain how they have put the link between theoretical and measurable definitions that are included in the thesis (Table 4.7.1). The observable and measurable variables are based on the literature review and a description of them.
4.7.2 Questionnaire design

According to Bryman and Bell (2005) there is different data collection methods based on the research strategy survey. The most common data collection methods are pen-and-paper, telephone, in person (offline survey) and online and email (online survey). Regarding the choice of offline- or online survey different considerations need to be taking in mind. Payne and Wansink (2011) argue that a survey constructed online must be easy to navigate. If the questions are difficult for the respondents to understand they will simply not answer and complete it. However they claim that an online survey provides relatively quick answers. Another important aspect in the survey is the characteristics of the questions, there are two different kinds, opened- and closed. Based on Bryman and Bell (2005) discussion of the differences, a model was developed to make it more distinctly (Table 4).
According to Patterson, Kalucy and Hordacre (2008) the main factors for developing an online questionnaire is its user-friendly approach and the high level of security and access. They also motivate to use the online survey format because of the new intuitive system that allows and make it easier to compile. When analytically use the numeric data that the questionnaire gives a high level of validity can often be presented. Disadvantages with an online questionnaire is the feature to identify the questions that the respondents find hard to answer or do not understand, this since no dialogue is possible between the researcher and the respondents (Patterson et al., 2008).

Regarding the discussion by Bryman and Bell (2005); and Patterson et al., (2008); Payne and Wansink (2011) an online questionnaire was adapted for answering and collecting the empirical material to be able to answer the research questions. The choice can also be motivated by this thesis limitation of time and economical resources. Considering the population, which are repeat customers who shops basic clothes online. The researchers of this thesis found online survey most suitable to reach the respondents and Google documents (docs.google.com) was the online survey that was used. The main reasons for using Google documents questionnaire service is based on its user-friendly approach and that it is free, no matter how many answers that were compiled.
Questionnaire design

According to Bryman and Bell (2005) it is important to take the questionnaire design in consideration before constructing it. Without a convenience design, as discussed before, the questionnaire could result in fallouts of respondents and a lack of understanding.

Bryman and Bell (2005) argue that first and foremost it is of high relevance to describe for the respondents why it is of importance that they participate in the questionnaire, that they will be anonymous and that the questionnaire will be handled with confidentiality. If this is not presented for the respondents it could appear fallouts, which means that some respondent will not answer the questionnaire (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Further, Bryman and Bell (2005) argue of how the questionnaire questions are designed. According to Malhotra (2010) one way is by using the so-called Likert scale. The Likert scale is when the questions are designed for the respondents to rate the answers in a degree of often five different answers. The Likert scale can for example be constructed of a scale from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ or in a rate of numbers 1-5. The advantages of that a questionnaire conducted of a Likert scale is relatively simple to understand by the respondents (Malhotra, 2010).

![Likert Scale Diagram](image)

The Likert scale was adapted to this thesis based on the advantage that it is easy for the respondents to understand the questions and the fact that the previous choice of an online questionnaire where the research will have no personal interactions with the respondents if hidden issues and complications will occur. Another important aspect to mention is that in this thesis the original survey was designed in an English version, but to ensure that everyone with Swedish as native can answer the questions and to avoid complications like different level of English skills, the questionnaire was translated from English to Swedish (See Appendix I and II).
The questionnaire was designed with a pre-presentation of the topic, but also a clarification of which respondents that were relevant for the research, this to ensure that the participants were a part of the population. Bryman and Bell (2005) further highlight that it is essential to have information regarding the respondents who participate, this to be able to see differences and similarities. Two questions about gender and age were placed in the end of the questionnaire, this to make it more confidential.

4.7.3 Pretesting

Bryman and Bell (2005) argue that before collecting the main data a pre-test should be constructed. A pre-test of the survey was performed by letting individuals from a target group answers the questions and also by letting experts on the theoretical field have a look at the questionnaire, this helps the researcher to find hidden issues and information about things the researchers did not thought about while constructing the survey. A pre-test will give the researcher the opportunity to develop, fill up something that is missing and make unclear questions understandable for the respondents (Eliasson, 2010). The pre-test is according to Christensen et al. (2001) enough to test on five to ten respondents from the prospective population. It is of relevance that those are excluded from the original sample size when the final test is completed (Christensen, 2001).

If data were going to be collected and analysed from the whole population the thesis would be based on a census survey. This thesis, in other hand, is based on a sample survey, which means that to answer the purpose and research questions a sampling frame and sample size needs to be decided (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra, 2010). According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2002) a well-planned sample survey can contribute the same useful result than a census survey that investigates the whole population. The phenomenon population is defined as; all the individuals that belong to the same group or/ and exist in the same geographical area (WHO, 2001; Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Due to the limited time and resources of this thesis a sample of the research is going to be used instead of the whole population. Further, the population in this bachelor thesis and which the purpose is developed to investigate relationships with an online shopping company concerning the purchase of basic clothes. The pre-test in this thesis were performed on ten respondents were three of them have expertise in the theoretical field. The
questionnaire was also English to Swedish controlled by experts before they were handed out, so the questions were in coherence with the original English version.

4.8 Sampling frame

Sampling frame is a list of elements of the population from which the sample is drawn (Bryman and Bell, 2005). It is important to have in mind that when selecting the sampling frame it should be representative of the population (WHO, 2001; Malhotra, 2010). For this thesis a sampling frame were developed to investigate and answer the purpose and research questions but also to guide the research and its conceptual framework. With these considerations in mind, the thesis sample frame is based on the element and phenomenon social media.

Social media is web-based and mobile techniques for communication. This decision is based on that many people today use social media networks (Li and Bernoff, 2011). Katona, Zубcsek and Sarvary (2011) state that this modern technology is changing the way people communicate and interact socially. This technology is becoming global and providing information of how their users are communicating. Concerning the previous choice of online survey and the purpose of this thesis, the sample frame was suitable to reach the respondents.

Since the range of social media delimitations were necessary for the thesis. This was made through a choice of forums that the researchers of the thesis was familiar with, the chosen social medias were Facebook and Twitter. Another aspect that was necessary for the research was to narrow and find Swedish online web shops that could give access to their repeat customers. This was made through selecting three large online web shops of basic clothes in Sweden. Nelly, Bubbelroom and Ellos were contacted on their fan pages on Facebook and Twitter. This gave the researchers access to the company’s repeat customers and the opportunity to ask them if they would mind to participate in the online questionnaire.

4.8.1 Sample size and data collection procedure

One of the primary concerns with deciding the sample size is how large the sample should be (WHO, 2001; Malhotra, 2010). The sample size represents how many respondents that are going to participate in the research. There are several available methods to use as a foundation for the sample size, one of those are rule of thumb (Bryman and Bell, 2005).
Since the population of this thesis is estimated to be very large and hard to define exactly how many individuals the population regards, the sample size is based on the rules of thumb. The rules of thumb define the sample size by making three observations per survey item and it is the absolute minimum for an investigation (35 x 3 = 105). Based on the previous choice of online survey, which according to Bryman and Bell (2005), can result in more respondents than offline surveys, this because of the unexpected respondent who participate, this thesis will strive to gain a larger sample size than the rule of thumb (105) contribute to. Considerations that were taking in mind when choosing the sample size were the time limit and precision.

4.9 Data analysis method

According to Yin (2007) the data analysis structure is implemented in the methodology chapter since it helps categorizing, measure and presents the collected data in a clear and structured way. The structure will be helpful when making the analysis of the investigation (Yin, 2007). Since the research is based on a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design and a survey research strategy, the researchers of this thesis decided to use the statistic analysis computer program SPSS software. This to measure and get the relevant information that makes the empirical material measurable in forms of numbers and statistic. The different analysis tools that were used through SPSS software in this section were descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

Descriptive statistic

To analyze the collected data, descriptive statistics was applied. The aim with descriptive statistics is to summarize the data material in a perspicuous way and to characteristic the empirical material (Saunders et al., 2009). This can be done through describing the data material capacity when it comes to the presentation of statistic material in forms of different charts, diagrams, graphs and other means for presenting the data. There are two aspects of the descriptive statistics that are in focus, the central tendency and the dispersion. The dispersion is used most common when it comes to outliers. The other aspect, the central tendency includes different parameters, median, mode and mean (Saunders et al., 2009). Central tendency is used to calculate the central data in advantages since it is not affected by extreme values as outliers. The median pinpoints the middle value after the data have been collected. The mode presents the most frequently occurred value when the mean
calculates the average of the values, which is most suitable for this thesis (Saunders et al., 2009). Descriptive statistics are distinguished from inductive statistics in that descriptive statistics aim is to summarize a data set, rather than use the data to learn about the population that the data is representing (Johansson, Olsson and Stensby, 1979).

**Correlation analysis**

Correlation analysis is a statistical measurement, which is used to evaluate the strength and the relationship between two variables in other words the correlation coefficient. Without managing to establish a cause-and-effect relationship the correlation analysis defines the variation in one variable by the variation of the other variable. Correlation analysis consists of two input columns and each column contain with values for one of the attributes of interest. The two input columns can be calculated in various measures and the line, which is drawn through, defines the correlations algebraically. The strength in the correlation will be greater if the points around the line have great density (Zikmund et al., 2010). The accepted correlation value is 0,9 or below, which means that the variables do not measure the same thing (Farrar and Glauber, 1967). When it comes to correlation analysis it is important to consider the variation between variables but correlation analysis cannot assess how they are causally related. The size of the coefficient and the amount of observations will determine if the correlation coefficient is significant or not (Naresh, 2011).

**Regression analysis**

Regression analysis is a statistic method for modeling and analyzing several variables and it focuses on the relationship between a dependent and independent variables. This measures the linear relationship between the two variables (Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin, 2010). The analysis is a tool of understanding how the typical value of the dependent variable converts when any one of the independent variables are assorted, whereas the other independent variables are held fixed (Zikmund et al., 2010). The technique is based on whether one movement of a dependent variable is caused of some sort of independent variable. In all regression analysis the target is a function of the independent variables which is called the regression function, it is also of interest to show the variation of the dependent variable when it comes to the result of the regression function, this can be present with help by a probability distribution (Andersson, Jorner and Ågren, 1994).
This thesis will focus on to measure the descriptive statistics by using mean of the components and variables, this decision had to be made because of the thesis purpose and research questions, which indicates to identify the degree of importance. Therefore the mean is the most important aspect for this thesis when ranking the values and further the median and mode will not be considered as relevant, based on the fact that it will not give a valid result. Further the variables of the thesis indicate to measure different values and therefore this thesis will strive to gain validity between the variables. This means that the correlation should be of a value 0.9 or below to be reliable. It is of high importance that the correlation analysis in this thesis do not get higher values than 0.9, if so, the value indicated that the variables measure same things and then the validity will be low. If a value is over 0.9 it will be disregarded in the analysis.

The research questions aim to rank the key components trust, commitment and communication and its variables, this by looking at them as independent. A regression analysis needs to have independent and dependent variables and it measures the coherence between dependent and independent variables. Therefore regression analysis cannot be used for this research since the thesis only provides independent variables. In clarification, this thesis will focus upon descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

4.10 Quality criteria

The importance of using good measurements determines the standard of quality and it can be measured in terms of validity and reliability. The quality criteria are defined as the strength and how high the trustworthiness is of the chosen research (Yin, 2007). Bryman and Bell (2005) further argue that validity is an indicator of that the research or the certain concept actually measures what it should measure. This research has a quantitative approach and because of the approach, validity consists of three important forms, content validity, construct validity, criterion validity and reliability (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Content validity

Content validity is the verification that the method of measurement actually measures what it is expected to measure. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) it can also be called the face validity, since it shows how clear and structured a research measurement reflects to the stated concept and its questions. Content validity measures how well a measurement
actually represents the construct components. Using pretesting and allowing experts and potential respondents judge the measurement before the main data will be collected (WHO, 2001; Bryman and Bell, 2005).

To maximize the frame validity of the content of the questionnaire experts have tested and reviewed the validity before handed them out. This was an important step in the process in the questionnaire design, this based on the previous choice of online survey. With an online survey no interaction with the respondents will occur and therefore content validity was used, this to ensure that the questionnaire was of high validity.

**Construct validity**

Construct validity is to see the validity of a test or an extent that is recognized by demonstrating its ability to identify or measure the variables that it intends to do. It can be done by using statistically assessing, in other words if the extent of what was to be measured was actually measured, this can be made through a correlation test (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

A correlation analysis was made in SPSS software to identify that the questions measure what it intends to measure (See Table 10). A correlation analysis is important for this thesis since the research questions aim to rank the mean values of the key components and their variables. If it intends to measure the same items the validity will be low and therefore it needs to be considered before making an analysis.

**Criterion validity**

Criterion validity is to see in which extent one variable or a set of variables measures the outcome based on the information and by developing a hypothesis test (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The criterion validity can be described as a reflection over whether if the expected variables in relation to other variables have been selected on the right ground (Malhotra, 2010).

Based on the nature of this thesis no hypothesis has been used based on the fact that this thesis consists of two research questions. Therefore criterion validity has not been assessed because hypothesis testing is not suitable in this research.
Reliability

Reliability is referring to the consistency of the measure, for a test to be considered reliable the result has to be consistent when repeated (WHO, 2001; Yin, 2007). The reliability can be calculated and reported in Cronbach’s Alpha, which is a calculation where the average of all the possible reliability criteria’s are shown, this can be described as if the questions are randomly divided and later compared with each other (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The measure of Cronbach’s Alpha can be evaluated out of a measure value of 0,6, the higher value that will be given the more accepted the components and/or the variables can be and it will show the reliability of the research (Hair, Money, Samouel, 2003)

Cronbach’s Alpha is the reliability test chosen for this thesis. Cronbach’s Alpha is the most suitable test to determine the reliability, this since it will find out if the results will be the same in other occasions and if the result will be the same as this thesis provides (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002). It is important with an accepted reliability since it will make the thesis trustworthy.
4.11 Methodology map – Part II

In this section a descriptive explanation has been developed over the methodology performance Part II. The figure below shows a summarized picture over this thesis way of choices (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Methodology map – Part II
Chapter 5: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This chapter presents statistical measurements and the result from the questionnaire that first will be presented in an overview of the participated respondents. Second the data from the different questions that was included in the questionnaire was presented according to their relevance for the research questions.

5.1 Descriptive statistics

Members at the fan pages at Facebook and Twitter, Nelly, Bubbleroom and Ellos, had access to the questionnaire, which was uploaded for one week and responses were received from 140 persons. The design of the questionnaire was based out of 35 questions, where the participants answered on a Likert scale within a rate of numbers 1-5, two more questions were adapted to find out the respondents gender and age, this to make it more confidential. The response rate was 17 % of 787 persons that had access to the questionnaire. The numbers of responses were rather low, however it was acceptable based on the large population that was hard to estimate and determine and based on the method rule of thumb (Bryman and Bell, 2005). To ensure that it was a significant variation between the responses a question regarding male/female was adapted. The statistics explained that 50 persons of the participants were male, which represents 35,7%, and the female participants were 64,3%, which represents 90 participants (See appendix C). Further, the bar chart below clarifies the participants’ different ages. The majority of the respondents were under 24 years old (66%), but it was also many participants in the age of 25-30 years old (31%) (See appendix D).

![Figure 4: Bar chart of respondents by age](image-url)
Table 5 illustrates an overview of the key component trust, which includes the variables shared value, promises and credibility and has a total mean of 4.2619.

Table 5: Descriptive statistic Total Trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key component</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.2619</td>
<td>.45255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 indicates the key component commitment, which includes satisfaction and personal interaction and has a total mean of 3.8921.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics Total Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key component</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8921</td>
<td>.49994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows the total mean of communication (4.4736), which includes product information and FAQ.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics Total Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key component</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.4736</td>
<td>.47005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 indicates the variables used while measuring the key component trust, commitment and communication. The table explains the variables total mean based on the statistical data from the questionnaire. The variable with the highest mean of 4.50 is FAQ, which is a variable of the key component communication. The variable with the lowest mean of 3.52 is personal interaction and is included in the key component commitment. The variables mean are based on the items from the questionnaire (See appendix E).
5.2 Reliability and Validity tests

Through SPSS software, Cronbach’s Alpha and correlation were conducted to test the reliability and validity of the topic that has been measured. In the correlation test the variables should be measured under the value of 0.9 (Farrar and Glauber, 1967) otherwise it is a lack of validity and the variable will be disregarded. The level of reliability was measured with a level of 0.6 a lower test value will not be accepted and will therefore be disregarded from the research (Hair et al., 2003).

5.2.1 Reliability

Shared value

Cronbach’s Alpha of the variable shared value has a value of 0.573. This value represents the reliability of the variable. The acceptable Alpha is 0.6 and therefore the value of shared value (0.573) was rejected. However, to make the Alpha reliable the test ‘Scale if item deleted’ was used. This test indicates that if the item past experience was deleted when measuring shared value, the new Alpha (0.633) was more reliable and accepted. Therefore the item past experience with its low value were disregarded from the research.

Promises

When measuring the variable promises the Cronbach’s Alpha was 0.498 and therefore it was rejected. The test of ‘Scale if item deleted’ showed that if items were deleted the Alpha
still not would be accepted. Therefore the variable *promises* will be disregarded since it has a low value.

**Credibility**
The Cronbach’s Alpha of the variable *credibility* shows a value of 0,603, which is over the acceptable value 0,6. Even if the Alpha of 0,603 is rather closed to the acceptable Alpha the test of ‘Scale if item deleted’ did not show any differences if removing items.

**Satisfaction**
Table 9 show that the Cronbach’s Alpha of the variable *satisfaction* is of the value 0,607. The value is accepted and the test of ‘Scale if item deleted’ did not show any differences on the Alpha, therefore the value will not be higher than 0,607.

**Personal interaction**
*Personal interactions* Alpha was from the beginning 0,521 and therefore not acceptable. To make it acceptable and increase the Alpha the test ‘Scale if item deleted’ were applied and it showed that if the item requirements were disregarded, the Alpha would increase to 0,548. However, the new value is still not accepted and therefore another item was deleted. With the two items requirements and expectations removed the Alpha increased to 0,615 and the Alpha was accepted.

**Product information**
Cronbach’s Alpha in the variable *product information* gives the value of 0,632. This is acceptable because of the higher value than 0,6. ‘Scale if item deleted’ showed that if one or several items were removed the Alpha was still the same.

**FAQ**
The variable *FAQ* has a value of 0,717 regarding the Cronbach’s Alpha and is therefore accepted.
Table 9: Cronbach’s Alpha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared value</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promises</td>
<td>0.478</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>0.603</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal interaction</td>
<td>0.615</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal information</td>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAQ</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.2 Correlation analysis

The correlation analysis indicates on the correlation between the different variables. The correlation should be under the value 0.9 otherwise it is a lack of validity (Farrar and Glauber, 1967). This thesis strives to gain validity between the variables because of that the variables indicates to measure different items. Table 10 show that all the values of correlation are under 0.9, which mean that there is validity between the variables and the correlation is significant since the sig. (2-tailed) shows 0.000.

Table 10: Correlation analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Promises</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>FAQ</th>
<th>Product information</th>
<th>Personal interaction</th>
<th>Shared values</th>
<th>Credibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promises</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>.548**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAQ</td>
<td>.566**</td>
<td>.595**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product information</td>
<td>.428**</td>
<td>.479**</td>
<td>.647**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal interaction</td>
<td>.524**</td>
<td>.551**</td>
<td>.452**</td>
<td>.340**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared values</td>
<td>.697**</td>
<td>.652**</td>
<td>.545**</td>
<td>.418**</td>
<td>.513**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>.649**</td>
<td>.715**</td>
<td>.591**</td>
<td>.382**</td>
<td>.506**</td>
<td>.675**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Chapter 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Chapter six describes a broader discussion regarding the empirical findings. A discussion was developed concerning the measured key components and their underlying variables, this to be able to answer the research questions; ‘To which degree are the key components trust, commitment and communication important, from a customer perspective, in a relationship with an online shopping company concerning the purchase of basic clothes?’ and ‘To which degree are the variables in its key components trust, commitment and communication important, from a customer perspective, in a relationship with an online shopping company concerning the purchase of basic clothes?’ Finally it will present the conclusion and how implications on the subject area will be conducted.

6.1 Discussion

In this section the result from the empirical findings will be discussed.

6.1.1 The key components Trust, Commitment and Communication

Dunkan and Moriorty (1998) discuss communication as the most important component when building marketing relationships referring to the new technology, like online purchases. The respondents agree with Dunkan and Moriorty (1998), which is shown in the empirical findings where communication has the mean of 4.4736. Respondents indicated that their individual communications to the company are highly prioritized when shopping basic clothes online in comparison with the other key components. This supports Bauer et al. (2002) theory that communication might have developed into a more important key component in relationships online because of the technologies development.

The empirical findings can indicate that communication is an important aspect for the customers when shopping basic clothes online. When scanning the literature review of communication, the foundation for online companies to create a good relationship with its customers is communication (Bauer et al., 2002). This indicates that communication as a key component in relationship marketing, when shopping basic clothes online, is both important for the customers and for the companies to get a relationship to gain interest in both parties. The result might depend upon the simplicity of access to information regarding the products and its availability in any point in time.
The key component that was ranked as the second most important component according to the respondents was trust, with the value of 4,2619. Jevons and Gabott (2000) discuss trust as the most important component while having a relationship with customers online. Schoenbachler and Gordon (2002) add that trust is one driver component to a relationship online. However, the respondents do not completely agree since the results pointed out that trust is seen as the second important component compared to the other two components, even though its high value. Wang and Head (2007) and Sun and Lin (2010) discuss trust as an important key component in the decision-making phase and as discussed before the respondents found communication as the main important component even if trust did not have the highest mean it is still an important factor in gaining good relationships online. The respondents’ belief could depend on that trust is not as important when shopping online and not meeting face-to-face.

According to the respondents the key component commitment was ranked as the least important component with the mean of 3,8921. San Martin et al. (2004) argue that commitment online can be defined as the central in relationship marketing. This is partly unsupported by the respondents as they considered commitment not being as relevant as the other key components when shopping basic clothes online. This may indicate that commitment is not important when shopping online because the customers may not be interested in gaining a relationship, instead the customers might be interested in finding clothes quickly and with a broad collection. Therefore Morgan and Hunts (1994) theory about commitment being the most important and the central key component can partial be discarded, this since the respondents had other opinions.

Wetzels et al. (1998) write that commitment is seen as an emotion that is important in a long-term relationship. The respondents and the empirical findings show that commitment is not seen as the most central aspect to consider in a relationship in purchasing basic clothes. However, the theory by Wetzels et al. (1998) may not be supported because of the respondent non-willingness to develop a long-term relationship online. This can indicate that when shopping basic clothes online the customers are not looking for a relationship that will benefit them, instead the customers are looking for a broader supply of basic clothes and that is the reason why they shop online.
In clarification, the most important key component when shopping basic clothes online is communication (4,4736). Even if the key component, trust (4,2619) has a high degree of value, it is still not as high as communication and is ranked as the second component according to the respondents. Commitment (3,8921) is the key component with the lowest degree of importance and therefore it is ranked as the least important component according to repeat customers, despite the high value.

6.1.2 Variables of Communication

The variables of the key component commitment are product information and FAQ. The empirical findings show that FAQ has the highest mean of 4,50. Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) indicate that all online shopping websites should offer a section of FAQ and access to information about the company to gain understanding of what kind of company the customers are buying from. The empirical findings show that the respondents’ perception of FAQ is equal to Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002). This emphasize that customers who are shopping basic clothes online want the company to offer a section of FAQ and such information to make them more pleased with their relationship towards the online company. FAQ and its items (shipping, service, payment, products return policies and customer support) (see appendix E, for all the items of the variables) are therefore highly important regarding the key component communication and are prioritized according to customers.

Close to FAQ is the variable product information with a mean of 4,44. The variable and its items (product attribute, consumer recommendations, product description, order tracking and product price) are according to Park and Kim (2003) one important variable in communication. The respondents in the research agree with Park and Kim (2003) and emphasize its importance while having a relationship online regarding the fashion industry. The difference between the variables FAQ and product information is insignificant, however this can depend on the similarities between the variables, such as they both possesses facts regarding the product. The both variables highlight the importance of the key component communication this by its items that all are connected to some sort of information.
In clarification, the variables of communication are highly important for the respondents when shopping basic clothes online. The variables mean indicates that companies need to consider the level of communication that they are offering their customer, this to create and to maintain a relationship. Even if FAQ (4,50) has the highest mean the variables are similar to each other and since the mean of product information (4,44) is also very high, they together represents a high degree of importance regarding the relationship with customers.

6.1.3 Variables of Trust

The variables of the key component trust are shared value, promises and credibility. The empirical findings show that the variable promises has the highest mean of 4,48, which strengthen Ndubisi (2007) and Davis et al. (1999) theory, that indicates that no purchase will occur without promises. The high mean of promises can depend upon its items (making- and keeping promises, honesty, responsible and dependability), which were of high relevance in a relationship online regarding the purchase of basic clothes, according to the respondents. The empirical findings show that the respondents of the questionnaire agree with Davis et al. (1999) and Ndubisi (2007) when it comes to the relevance of the items and its importance in a relationship while shopping basic clothes online. This indicates that the theory about promises and how it is included in the key component trust is acceptable. However, even if the respondents answered the questionnaire and prioritized the variable promises as one of the most important variable in the key component trust, the test of Cronbach’s Alpha showed that promises as a variable is not reliable and therefore it was rejected while testing it. Since promises were rejected by the Cronbach’s Alpha the variable has to be disregarded when presenting the result from the research.

Subsequently promises was rejected and the variable with the highest mean of the key component trust is instead credibility with a mean of 4,33. According to Schoenbachler and Gordon (2002) credibility is one important variable in the key component trust. This theory was shared with the respondents answer in the research where they emphasized credibility as one important variable in trust. The high mean of credibility specifies its items (believability, competent, reputation, security and benevolent) importance in a relationship online regarding the purchase of basic clothes. Credibility can be defined through its items and it is clear that customers that shops basic clothes online share the same thoughts as Schoenbachler and Gordon (2002).
Further, *shared value* is the variable regarding the key components trust with the lowest mean of 3.98. Mukherjee and Nath (2007) and Ndubisi (2007) highlight that *shared value* is one of the emphasized variables in trust. However, the empirical findings show that customers that shops basic clothes online do not agree that *shared value* is one of the most important variables and nor its items (mutual goals, fairness, behavior and perception of right and wrong). Even if the mean is of a high value, it is in comparison with the mean of *credibility* lower. *Shared value* could have the lower mean value since it might not be of high importance to share the same values as the company, instead it may be of higher importance to feel the companies *credibility* when shopping basic clothes online. When shopping basic clothes online it is valuable to feel confident and have a good attitude towards the company, according to the participants of the questionnaire.

*In clarification*, all the variables in trust are of high importance in a relationship when shopping basic clothes online, this since the mean of the top variable and the bottom variable are close to each other (*credibility* 4.33 and *shared value* 3.98). However, the respondents emphasize the variable *credibility* and its degree of high mean as the most important regarding the key component trust. The degree of *shared value* was ranked as the second most important variable.

### 6.1.4 Variables of Commitment

The variables of the key component commitment are *satisfaction* and *personal interaction*. The empirical findings show that *satisfaction* is the variable with the highest mean of 4.26, regarding the key component commitment. According to Blackwell et al. (2006) *satisfaction* is one big factor in a relationship online. The respondents of the research found *satisfaction* and its items (service quality, product quality, support quality, engagement quality and loyalty) as the most important variable in the key component commitment, which strengthen Blackwell et al. (2006) theory of the variable *satisfaction* and its high importance while having a relationship online regarding shopping basic clothes. The high mean of *satisfaction* shows that people that purchase basic clothes online appreciate when the company has a high level of *satisfaction*. The result might reflect that people who purchase basic clothes online have expectations of the products and they want the product to reach the expectation-level, this since the lack of physical understanding before receiving the products.
The variable *personal interaction* has the mean of 3.52, which is lower and ranked as the least important variable in the key component commitment. Gustafsson et al. (2005) and Verhoef (2003) claim that *personal interaction* is an essential variable in the key component commitment and highlight the connection the customer feel to the company as important. Further, Siau and Shen (2003) discuss that even though it is hard to develop *personal interaction* over the Internet it is still a relevant factor for a successful relationship online. However, the respondents of the research do not fully agree with Siau and Shen (2003); Verhoef (2003) and Gustafsson et al. (2005) theory of *personal interaction*. This indicates that the respondents that represents customers who purchase basic clothes online does not emphasize why *personal interaction* should be most important and nor its items (personal contact, interaction with employee and personal information) in comparison with the variable *satisfaction*. The value of *personal interaction* reflects that fact that when shopping online it is a high level of simplicity and therefore the customers may chose to purchase clothes online and do not prioritize *personal interaction* as a contributing factor to a relationship online.

*In clarification*, the variables in commitment are important when shopping basic clothes online, even though it was the key component that was ranked as with the lowest mean. However, the variable *personal interaction* (3.52) indicated that the theory and the respondents’ perception of its relevance were not equal. The variable *satisfaction* (4.26), however, did show that the theory and the respondents given answers were in coherence. Therefore the degree of importance regarding the variables shows that the variable *satisfaction* has a higher degree than *personal interaction* in its key component commitment.
6.2 Conclusion

**Final ranking**

To make it more distinguish a final ranking was developed (see Table 11) to emphasize the result from the research questions. The table verifies the degree of importance in relation to the research questions and act as a foundation to complete the purpose.

**Table 11: Final ranking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key component</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Variables compared with each other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust (2)</td>
<td>Shared values (2)</td>
<td>Shared values (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Credibility (1)</td>
<td>Credibility (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment (3)</td>
<td>Satisfaction (1)</td>
<td>Satisfaction (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal interaction (2)</td>
<td>Personal interaction (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (1)</td>
<td>Product information (2)</td>
<td>Product information (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FAQ (1)</td>
<td>FAQ (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In conclusion, the purpose of this thesis was ‘to investigate relationship marketing online towards the fashion industry considering customers who purchase basic clothes online’. This thesis has provided a clarification regarding relationship marketing when it comes to purchasing basic clothes online. The research contributed to a deeper knowledge of customers’ perception regarding which are the most important key component and variables that a company should aim for when their customers purchase basic clothes online. The investigation provided information that further could be spread to companies in the fashion industry who has curiosity of their customers’ perspectives.

6.3 Implication

This section is divided into four parts where implications for academics and managerial, limitations of the thesis and future research will be presented. The implications are foundations of different aspects that have emerged during the process.

**Implications for academics**

Online shopping is an approximately new phenomenon and therefore it was more available theories and academic material in the area of relationship marketing in an offline perspective. This contributed to a reduced access of information in the field of relationship
marketing online and therefore it was hard to determine the area of investigation. Although it was hard to find information a literature review could be developed after scanning academic materials in the area of relationship marketing. This research has enlarged an understanding for companies to maintain a relationship with their customers through use the key components trust, commitment and communication and their variables that are the most important to focus on in the area of customer relationship online when shopping basic clothes. This thesis has also provided a unique ranking-table to make it easy for companies to understand customers and their perception of how a relationship online should be maintained. The ranking-table work as a foundation and a summary for the empirical findings and therefore shows to which degree different aspects are important.

Further, this thesis took a perspective from the customers’ point of view to make it possible to give companies implications on how to develop a relationship with their online customers. The choice of a customer perspective is based out of the lack of empirical information from a customer point of view when shopping basic clothes online. This thesis have made it possible to determine that the theory of relationship marketing online and the empirical findings did to some extent have a coherence, but they did also differ from each other in the extent of which key component and variable that is the most important. However, this thesis have made it possible for companies to see exactly what their customers prioritize in a relationship online regarding the purchase of basic clothes.

The theory can also be used to investigate the area from a company’s point of view instead, this since the literature review concerns relationship marketing online in a broad perspective. However, if the theory will be used to investigate the are from a company’s point of view it need to be taking in mind that the theory is developed towards the retail industry.

_in clarification_, this thesis has contributed to a way for companies to reach their customers and build a relationship online by understanding the customers’ point of view in an online shopping perspective. The new information this thesis provides relationship marketing with is how companies can use the important key components and their variables to maintain a relationship with their customers.
Implications for managerial

This research has presented a ranking based on three key components with their variables and an evaluation in which degree they are important in a relationship online from customers’ perspective. For online companies, with the supply of basic clothes, to have in mind are those key components discussed and measured in the research. The mean of the key components were very close to each other, but distinguished in some aspects which made it possible for them to be ranked. However, to strengthen a relationship between a company and its repeat customers a recommendation to take in consideration is to focus on the three key components, trust, commitment and communication. To be more comprehensive the main implications recommend for online shopping companies are;

First and foremost, the most important aspect for a company to take in consideration is the communication with its customers. The thesis result indicated that communication, as a key component, is the main contributing factor to a relationship online, regarding the purchase of basic clothes. By focusing and to maintain a good communication between the company and its customers hopefully a successful and long-term relationship can be established.

Second, for a company to have an effective communication with its customers the variables of the key component communication need to be considered. The variables FAQ and product information were emphasized and explained by the participants from the questionnaire, as contributing factor to a successful communication between the company and its repeat customers. Therefore those variables are highly important for a company to take in considerations while developing a communication with customers who purchasing basic clothes online.

Third, when created a good communication through FAQ and product information, the other key components trust and commitment and its variables need to be taking in mind. Since the value of the mean between the key components were similar the third recommendation for a company is to develop a relationship by applying trust and commitment using its variables (shared values, credibility, satisfaction and personal interaction) as a foundation, this to strengthen the relationship between the company and repeat customers.
6.4 Limitations of the thesis

This research had restricted time and economical resources and therefore the investigation were focused on Swedish repeat customers to make it able to reach the result in time. The result might not have been different even if the research would have been tested in a country with equal standards compared to Sweden. However, if the research was made in a country with lower standards or other conditions the result might reflect different findings.

A further limitation that needs to be considered is that some variables generated in difficulties when operationalize them into items. The variable promises were the one variable that did not have an acceptable Cronbach’s Alpha and therefore it was also rejected. This need to be taken in mind if a similar or extent of this research will be made in the future. Even if the literature indicated that promises should be operationalized with the chosen items, they might have been too similar and had characteristics of measuring the same, therefore the participants of the questionnaire may did get confused. However, even if promises were rejected by the Cronbach’s Alpha this thesis saw the challenge as an opportunity to contribute with a good and reliable result.

Response bias

This thesis investigated repeat customers that shops basic clothes online, since the population was hard to define it was hard to reach participants. The response rate of the research was 17% of 787 asked. The small response rate can be based on the limitation to Facebook and Twitter, from where the sample was drawn. If the sampling frame were drawn differently and from further places than the social media webpages Facebook and Twitter it might have attract more people to participate. Even though the thesis did reach the sample size and the response rate is accepted and trustworthy, another sampling frame might have contributed to a different result since it may have reached a broader part of the population. However the sampling frame was motivated by time and economical resources and therefore it was not possible for the thesis to have a broader sampling frame.

Based on gender the respondents were 35,7% male and 64,3% female. The females were the most common respondents, which may indicate that the fan pages on Facebook and Twitter consists of more females than males. However, the result may also reflect that females shop more basic clothes online than males when it comes to the shopping sites Nelly, Bubbleroom and Ellos and its assortment. Another perspective of the empirical
findings might indicate that females could have a tendency to participate in questionnaires compared with males. This perspective and the previous discussion of the fan pages assortment could be contributing factors to the findings. If the choice of fan pages were made differently the result, based on gender, may have generated in another effect. The fan pages that were chosen for the research may have offered additional numbers of female clothes and might have had a more female approach. If the questionnaire related in more answers from males the result might have indicated more on the importance of, for instant, satisfaction since they might tend to analyze the purchase more deeply before the decision-phase. A further consideration could be the difference between female and male when it comes to the frequency of shopping online and that females might shop more clothes and more frequently than males.

The majority of the respondents were under 30 years old. This may reflect that younger people use the phenomena Internet more frequently compared to those in the ages over 30. However, even if the respondents over 30 years only were five participants, this thesis cannot make a general conclusion for those five, therefore the thesis result is based out of the majority. One reason that might affect the low response rate from participants over 30 could be the choice of sampling frame. The sampling frame (Facebook and Twitter) may attract younger Internet users and therefore the lack of participants over 30. Another reason may be that people over 30 may not shop basic clothes online in the extent that people under 30 years might do. However, the result also might depend upon that people over 30 that had access to the questionnaire did not answer since the pre-text of the questionnaire aimed to repeat customers and those who had knowledge of the topic. The reason of the low response from people over 30 could be that they prioritize to have interaction with companies and therefore chose to shop basic clothes offline. If the questionnaire would have investigated and focused more on an older generation the answers might have been different compared with the answers that the thesis actually did provided. A result based on an older generation might have highlighted another component and other variables as more important than the younger generation. An underlying reason could be the younger generations familiarity and knowledge of the online shopping phenomena compared with to the older generation, which is an important aspect for consideration.
In clarification, based on the previous discussion this thesis emphasizes the impossibility for the investigation to make a generalization over the whole population. Instead the result covers the perspective of customers who are under 30 years old and belongs to the majority of the response rate.

6.5 Future research

During the process of the thesis different aspects that aroused can be developed and further implicated in a later research. One aspect to take in consideration in future research is the sampling frame. Since the population of the thesis was hard to estimate and the limitation of time and economical resources, the result might have been affected. In future research the implications for sampling frame is to have a broader sampling who represents a larger sample from the population. If the research will be considered in a later point in time, the sampling frame need to be taken in mind if the aim with the research is to make a general conclusion for the entire population that shops basic clothes online.

Further, the choice of Facebook and Twitter might have effect the result, and the fact that the majority of the participants’ ages were under 30 years old and therefore did not cover and contributed to a general conclusion. This implication also emphasizes a future research to ensure that all the ages are covered and investigated. Further, the choice of the social medias Facebook and Twitter and the fan pages Nelly, Bubblerom and Ellos were made because of their high popularity. However, the choice might have affected the result when it comes to the gender issue. This is something to take in consideration if future research will be conducted, in a perspective where the fan pages are equally divided between male and female.

Furthermore it would be of interest to develop this already existing research and different perspectives to make a comparison between online and offline customers while shopping basic clothes, this to get a broader research and another point of view on the topic of relationship marketing and to create an understanding way customers are buying and what might affect their buying behavior. The research can also be interesting in a perspective of young versus older generations and their perceptions regarding the contributing factors when shopping basic clothes online.
REFERENCE LIST


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# Appendix A: Questionnaire in English

## YOUR OPINION OF SHOPPING ONLINE

We are three students from the marketing programme at Linnaeus University and this questionnaire concerns our bachelor thesis. In the questionnaire you will find a number of questions related to Your relationship with an online shopping website. The questionnaire aims to investigate Swedish retention customers’ perception of different variables regarding the relationship with an online shopping company concerning the purchase of basic clothes (such as; shirts, trousers, skirts, tops, cardigans, jeans, etc.).

We would be grateful if you would participate and therefore asks you to please read the questions carefully and respond by marking the appropriate option that represents your opinion. There are no wrong or right answers, so answer as honestly as you can. You will stay anonymous and the questionnaire will be handled confidentially.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please read each statement carefully and circle the number between 1-5 that best reflects the extent to which you disagree or agree with what is stated (1 = Strongly disagree, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Strongly agree)</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall, I feel that it is of big relevance that the company and I have mutual values while I am purchasing basic clothes online.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that a company take responsibility for their commitments.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My past experiences regarding purchases online affects my buying behaviour.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be satisfied if the quality of the support is of high standard.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A company’s reputation is important for me while purchasing basic clothes online.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The importance with an online company is their capability to make promises.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interaction I feel with the employee at the company regarding a purchase is important.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For me to shop online the company need to have a good behaviour level.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for me that the company live up to my expectations.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A company should be honest in all situations against me as a customer.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The service a company offers should be of high relevance.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For me, the availability of personal contact with the company is a central aspect, because of the fact that I can’t meet them face-to-face.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The security of the transaction in a purchase is relevant.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The company's perception of what is right and wrong regarding a purchase affects my decision. 1 2 3 4 5

The engagement I feel from the company towards me is significant. 1 2 3 4 5

A company should be able to keep their promises. 1 2 3 4 5

My impression of the company's believability is of high relevance while shopping basic clothes. 1 2 3 4 5

I appreciate when the company give me personal information considered my interest. 1 2 3 4 5

If a company act benevolent against me it will affect my purchase positively. 1 2 3 4 5

The company's act of loyalty will have a positive impact on me. 1 2 3 4 5

A company should make everything possible to fulfil the customers' requirement in the purchase. 1 2 3 4 5

The competence of a company should be reflected in the shopping website. 1 2 3 4 5

Online shopping websites should act fair and equal against Me as a customer. 1 2 3 4 5

Regarding my purchase of basic clothes I prioritize the company's shipping. 1 2 3 4 5

The characteristics of a product should be describe on the website. 1 2 3 4 5

---

Circle the number to which degree You perceive the statement important for a company to consider on an online shopping website, regarding Your purchase of basic clothes (1 = Strongly disagree, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Strongly agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Products return policies</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service quality</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product price</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product quality</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order tracking</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer support</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product description</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer recommendations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gender**
- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female

**Age**
- [ ] > 24
- [ ] 25 - 30
- [ ] 31 - 35
- [ ] 36 - 40
- [ ] 41 - 45
- [ ] 46 - 50
- [ ] 51 <

Thank you for your participation!

*Best regards/*
Jessica Frendberg, Karin Cademan & Natalia Savic
Appendix B: Questionnaire in Swedish

**DIN ÅSIKT BERÖRANDE SHOPPINGSIDOR ONLINE**

Vi är tre studenter från marknadsföringsprogrammet vid Linnéuniversitetet och denna enkät berör vår kandidatuppsats. I enkäten finner du ett antal frågor som rör Din relation med en shopingsida online. Enkäten syftar till att undersöka Svenska återkommande kunders uppfattning om olika variabler gällande relationen med en shopingsida online vid köp av baskläder (såsom; skjortor, byxor, kjolar, toppar, koftor, jeans, etc.).


Läs noggrant varje påstående och ränga in de nummer mellan 1-5 som bäst reflekterar Din åsikt i frågan (1 = Instämmer inte, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Instämmer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Påstående</th>
<th>Instämmer inte</th>
<th>Instämmer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jag tycker att det är av stor betydelse att företaget och jag har</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gemensamma värderingar när jag handlar baskläder online.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Det är viktigt att företag tar ansvar för sina åtaganden.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidigare erfarenhet angående köp online påverkar mitt köpbehov.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jag blir tillfredsställd om kvalitén på supporten är av hög standard.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Att företaget besitter ett bra rykte är viktigt för mig när jag</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handlar baskläder online.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Det är av stor betydelse att ett online-företag besitter förmågan</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>att ge köften.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaktionen jag känner med de anställda på företaget vid ett köp online är</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viktigt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>När jag handlar online måste företag ha ett bra bemöte.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Det är viktigt att företaget lever upp till mina förväntningar.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Företaget bör vara årliga i alla situationer mot mig som konsument.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servicen ett företag erbjuder ska vara av hög relevans.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>För mig är tillgången av personlig kontakt med företag en</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>central aspekt, baserad på att jag inte möter dem ansikte-motansikt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Säkerheten i en transaktion vid ett köp är relevant.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Företagets uppfattning om vad som är rätt och fel angående ett köp påverkar mitt beslut.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagemanget och intresset jag upplever från företaget mot mig som kund är betydande vid köp av baskläder.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ett företag ska kunna hålla sina löften.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitt intycke av företagets trovärdighet är av hög relevans vid köp av baskläder.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jag uppskattar när företaget ger mig personlig information berörande mitt köpbehov.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Om ett företag agerar välvilligt mot mig kommer det att påverka mitt köp positivt.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ett företagets lojalitet kommer att ha en positiv inverkan på mig.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ett företag bör göra alt för att uppfylla kundernas krav angående ett köp.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ett företags kompetens bör återspeglas i shoppersidan.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En shoppersida online bör agera rättvist och jämlikt mot mig som kund.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>När jag handlar baskläder via en shoppersida online prioriterar jag företagets frakt.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En produkts egenskaper bör beskrivas på shoppersidan.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Ringa in de nummer till vilket grad Du upplever påståendet viktigt för ett företag att överväga gällande en shoppersida online när Du handlar baskläder (1 = Instämmer inte, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Instämmer). | Instämmer inte | Instämmer |
| Returhantering | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Service kvalité | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Pälilité | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Produktpris | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Produkt kvalité | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Order status | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Kundtjänst | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Produktbeskrivning | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Betalning | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Kundrekommendationer | 1 2 3 4 5 |
Kön

☐ Man
☐ Kvinna

Ålder

☐ > 24
☐ 25 - 30
☐ 31 - 35
☐ 36 - 40
☐ 41 - 45
☐ 46 - 50
☐ 51 <

Tack för din medverkan!

Bästa hälsningar/
Jessica Frendberg, Karin Cademan & Natalia Savic
Appendix C: Clarification of respondents by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D: Clarification of respondents by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;24</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51&lt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making promises</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1,00</td>
<td>5,00</td>
<td>3.7714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping promises</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.8571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.8214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.2786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.6571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service quality</td>
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<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product quality</td>
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<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.6714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support quality</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.5286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement quality</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.5714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.1571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.7357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product return policies</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.5500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer support</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product attribute</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.8286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer recommendation</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.0429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product description</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.5500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order tracking</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product price</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.4929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.6357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal contact</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.7286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with employee</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.6357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal information</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.2643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual goals</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.5500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past experience</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of right and wrong</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.1357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believability</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.0714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
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Linnaeus University — a firm focus on quality and competence

On 1 January 2010 Växjö University and the University of Kalmar merged to form Linnaeus University. This new university is the product of a will to improve the quality, enhance the appeal and boost the development potential of teaching and research, at the same time as it plays a prominent role in working closely together with local society. Linnaeus University offers an attractive knowledge environment characterised by high quality and a competitive portfolio of skills.

Linnaeus University is a modern, international university with the emphasis on the desire for knowledge, creative thinking and practical innovations. For us, the focus is on proximity to our students, but also on the world around us and the future ahead.