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**BRAND PERCEPTION OF SCANDINAVIAN CLOTHING BRANDS IN SPAIN**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Fashion is a key component of human behaviour and form of self-expression; due to the adoption of new technologies and social media, an individual's appearance has never been put under the spotlight as it has in recent times. It is common for people to judge and categorize a person based on what they look like and more importantly what they are wearing, research by the Association of Psychological Science (2006) suggests that as little as a tenth of a second is required in order to create a conception of a person. This makes the fashion industry have a huge potential for growth in the future despite already having an enormous size, it is fair to assume the unlikeliness of people to stop wearing clothes in the future.

My passion for this field has its origins in the years 2018 and 2019, where I decided to work as a client advisor for one of the oldest firms in Icelandic fashion retail. Through that time, I was able to delve deep into the current fashion movement of Scandinavian fashion and develop a great admiration for what I believe is the future of the industry. As the quotes from Lang and Johansson suggest, the originality of this sort of fashion comes from the purest form of design. It is very common for brands to adopt the proven success of fast fashion, which unquestionably serves its purpose as a functional business model. However, the public seems to slowly realize that these practices are supported by questionable business practices such as sweatshops, slavery, and a vastly negative impact on the environment. For this reason, the emergence of alternative brands supported by social and environmental conscious practices, as some of the Scandinavian fashion firms proudly exhibit, holds the key to bring a fight to the unnecessary suffering and malpractices commonly displayed by this industry, hopefully leading the direction for a greener and just future for this planet.

Spain is home to the 7<sup>th</sup> most valuable fashion brand in the world between the years 2021 and 2022 by annual revenue Statista (2023). Zara along with the various brands owned by the conglomerate Inditex supports the idea that this country is a key location of the fashion market worldwide. The citizens of this country have an internationally renowned reputation for having a great taste when it comes to fashion. Historically it is apparent that the internationalization of Spanish society is clearly more influenced from other Spanish-speaking countries rather than Anglo-Saxon and American cultures, where they are more prevalent in northern countries of Europe. This barrier I believe will slowly decay as new technologies

foment the creation of a new world-wide culture, the human culture. Almost anybody is able to share their opinions, ideas, and inspirations to the whole world with little effort, this creates the foundations of viral phenomenon, thus making a strong case for the new influences that will be and are currently being spread over Spain.

This study will provide relevant information regarding what perception do Spanish habitants hold over Scandinavian fashion brands. The opinion potential customers currently have is crucial in order to considerate a possible business expansion to this country as it could prove to be a deciding factor in the success or failure of the project.

Finally, I would like to share two insights revealing the mentality surrounding Scandinavian fashion designers as they portray the idea of innovation and originality of their designs. I believe this way of thinking is the differentiating factor to the success of both their brands.

*“I think that I was always armed with my own vision, and I’m prompted by the desire to find the true form for whatever I am working on” – Helmut Lang (Helmut Lang)*

*“If you ask me about the DNA of the brand I couldn't explain it, I want it to be a mystery to me as well. I always put design first, because that's what creates business in the end and that's why it has to be protected. That's what I've been doing for twenty-six years, protecting design.” – Jonny Johansson (Acne Studios)*

This end of degree project is organized into several chapters, each contributing to a comprehensive exploration of the topic.

The first chapter serves as the Introduction, which establishes the motivation behind the study. It sets the stage for the subsequent chapters, providing a context for understanding the significance of the research.

Chapter two focuses on outlining the objectives of the project, identifying the specific goals and outcomes to be achieved.

The third chapter delves into the methodology employed, detailing the research approach and data collection methods applied in the study.

Following the methodology, chapter four presents the theoretical framework. This section provides a thorough examination of the existing literature and theoretical concepts that underpin the research topic. It offers a comprehensive understanding of the subject area, highlighting relevant theories, models, and key concepts.

Chapter five delves into the heart of the research, exploring preferences and brand perception. This section presents the findings of the study, analysing and interpreting the data collected from the research participants. It sheds light on the perceptions and attitudes of the target audience towards the selected topic.

Chapter six marks the conclusion of the project, synthesizing the key findings and discussing their implications. It also offers recommendations for future research and identifies potential areas for further exploration.

Finally, chapter seven presents the references used throughout the project, ensuring academic integrity by citing the sources of information.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

The general objective of this research is to gain a comprehensive understanding of how young individuals in Spain perceive and interpret the concept of Scandinavian brands in the context of clothing brands. Moreover, the purpose is to understand consumers' perceptions and preferences, this research aims to provide valuable insights that can ultimately assist brands in effectively catering to the demands and expectations of their target audience.

The specific objectives of this research are:

- I. To explore and analyse the perception of young Spaniards towards Scandinavian clothing brands.
- II. To examine consumer behaviour and brand preferences on Scandinavian clothing companies.
- III. To evaluate the factors that contribute to the success and appeal of Scandinavian clothing brands in the Spanish market.
- IV. To provide insights for Scandinavian clothing brands to suggest some ideas and strategies for the Spanish market.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology employed in this project adopts a descriptive exploratory approach, aiming to delve into the perceptions of a specific group of young Spaniards. The main target population consists of individuals between the ages of 15 and 29, currently there are an estimated total of 10,094,500 young individuals residing in Spain that comply with this criterion. To gather the necessary data, a finite sample size of 46 random cases was selected using a non-statistical random sampling technique.

The data collection process involved administering a survey with a structured data collection instrument. The survey consisted of a combination of closed-ended dichotomous

questions, Likert scales, semantic scales, and multiple-choice options. These various question types allowed for comprehensive data collection and analysis, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perceptions and attitudes towards Scandinavian clothing brands. To ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data, the survey instrument included an initial section devoted to classifying the profile of the interviewees. This section aimed to gather essential demographic information, such as age, gender, and other relevant factors that may facilitate the distinction between profiles.

The fieldwork for data collection was conducted in June 2023. Google Forms was chosen as the data collection instrument due to its user-friendly interface and ease of administration. Once the data collection phase was completed, the collected data was processed and analysed using Microsoft Excel 03. By employing this comprehensive methodology, the project sought to capture the distinctive perspectives and insights of young Spaniards regarding Scandinavian minimalism in clothing brands.

#### **4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

To build up a solid ground for this project, I decided to perform a bibliographical review using the Web of Science database (WOS). WOS is a globally recognized online scientific information service that offers a vast collection of scholar resources and bibliographic documents covering a diverse range of research areas in all sorts of topics. It serves as a valuable source of reference for researchers and scholars worldwide.

I considered as a reference the criterion for systematic analysis set by Transfield, Denyer and Smart (2003). The review process consists of three steps: 1) planning the review, 2) conducting the review; and 3) reporting and dissemination. To perform the analysis, a chosen set of steps denoted by relevant keywords was employed as well as utilizing a selection of frequently utilized items within the specific database.

I accessed the WOS platform through the webpage of Universidad Rey Juan Carlos via “Portal de Servicios”, entering “electronic resources of the library” and filtering “WOS” to enter the database. In order to carry out my research I utilized a variety of filters and keywords to narrow down my findings. The following entries were selected to add to the search bar “influencing factors” “brand perception” and “clothing”. To narrow down results the following

filters were added to the search: “published in the last 5 years (2018 to 2022)”, “category: business and management” and finally, “type of document: article”.

Once the filters were applied, the search resulted in 7 articles, one of which would be discarded due to lack of relation to the topic of the research. The final outcome of the study would end in 6 articles. Results showed in the search criteria are displayed on Table 1.

Table 1: Search criteria

<i>Search criteria</i>	<i>WOS</i>
Objective	Obtain information regarding clothing brand reception
Keywords	“Influencing factors” “brand” “perception” “clothing”
Search field	Title
Search period	Last 5 years (2018 to 2022)
Categories	Business and management
Type of document	Article
Results	6 articles

Source: Web of Science 2023

The objective of this study is to analyse what influencing factors hold relevance when clothing brands are perceived by potential customers and how they can be exploited. I narrowed down my research to articles published between 2018 and 2022 to obtain the most recent data available. The categories chosen for this project were Business and Management as they hold great relevance in the subject of matter, other categories were discarded due to the lack of relation to the study. Finally, the type of document selected were articles as they hold the most developed content available for the study.

As a result of the criteria applied to the research process, 6 articles were obtained. The following table (*Table 2: Articles studied*) will dissect relevant information regarding these articles:

Table 2: Articles studied

<i>Authors/date</i>	<i>Publication Magazine</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Research Domain</i>	<i>Abstract</i>
Cham, T.H.; Ng, C.K.Y.; Lim, Y.M. & Cheng, B.L (2018)	THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF RETAIL, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMER RESEARCH	MALAYSIA	Social Sciences – Business & Economics	The purpose of this study is to examine the factors influencing clothing interest among Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. Brand image, word of mouth (WOM), self-concept, perceived quality, and need for uniqueness were hypothesized to be related with clothing interest, which in turn, was deemed to be related with purchase intention. The interaction effect of price consciousness on the relationship between clothing interest and purchase intention was also examined in this study.
Srivastava, P.R.; Sharma, D. & Kaur, I. (2022)	JOURNAL OF ENTERPRISE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	INDIA	Social Science – Computer Science; Business & Economics	Businesses need to make quick decisions and adjustments to fulfil the growing online demand. Previous studies examined various factors affecting the online sales performance of products such as books, electronics, and movies; however, they paid limited attention toward the local brand clothing products. The current study investigates the importance of different kinds of seller-generated and consumer-generated signals such as price, discount, product ratings, review volume, review sentiment, number of questions and interaction between some of these factors for predicting the sales performance of clothing products.
Jin, B.; Yang, H. & Kim, N. (2019)	MANAGEMENT DECISION	USA & SOUTH KOREA	Social Sciences – Business & Economics	To extend the understanding of country image to the country whose image is less distinctive, the purpose of this paper is to examine two salient factors: one country's prototypical brand and its cultural influence (i.e. Korean Wave) on shaping the country's image in the context of Korea and its subsequent impact on product evaluation and purchase intention. Built on the prototype and schema theories, a research framework is proposed and empirically tested on two product categories (cosmetics and tires).
Nilssen, R.; Bick, G. & Abratt, R. (2019)	JOURNAL OF BRAND MANAGEMENT	SOUTH AFRICA & USA	Social Sciences – Business & Economics	This paper aims to determine the relative importance of sustainability as a purchase criterion in South African retailing for food and clothing.
Stoian Bobalca, C.; Țugulea, O.; Ifrim, M. & Maha, L.G. (2021)	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RETAIL & DISTRIBUTION MANAGEMENT	ROMANIA	Social Sciences – Business & Economics	As satisfaction is one of the most important conditions for loyalty, this study aims to investigate the main factors affecting online satisfaction for buying clothes from the internet. In this research, the authors followed two main objectives: (1) to identify factors influencing online satisfaction and (2) to determine the importance of the main determinants that explain online satisfaction in the retailing clothing sector.
Jain, S. & Mishra, S. (2020)	JOURNAL OF GLOBAL FASHION MARKETING	INDIA	Social Sciences – Business & Economics	Recently, the trend of sharing economy has gained popularity in fashion, particularly among millennials. Few studies in the past have focused on sharing economy in the clothing industry, mainly in the US and European context. However, whether this global phenomenon of sharing economy will work in emerging markets for the luxury fashion industry is still unknown. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to understand the impact of the various key factors viz economic benefits, fashion involvement, self-pleasing experience, social projection, perceived risk, and past sustainable behaviour on luxury consumption behaviour in the sharing economy. Self-determination Theory (SDT) perspective was adopted to show what motivates Indian millennials to participate in luxury fashion rental consumption.

Source: own elaboration based on Web of Science 2023

Out of all the articles mentioned above, the article with the highest number of citations (41 cites in WOS) is by Jain, and Mishra, (2020). In this study a probability sampling technique was used to collect data from Indian millennials, followed by a confirmatory factor analysis, a multi-group analysis, and path estimates to test the hypothesized relationships. The results indicated “social projection value” as the most significant predictor of intention to consume luxury fashion on a sharing basis, additionally significant findings were also observed regarding the impact of perceived risk and the influence of prior sustainable behaviour on the consumption of luxury fashion rental amongst young consumers. These findings shed light on the factors that shape millennials' attitudes towards renting luxury fashion items, providing valuable insights for the understanding of consumer behaviour in the context of sharing economy and luxury consumption. The study emphasizes the importance of social projection in driving the desire for luxury fashion rental, while also highlighting the role of perceived risk and sustainability in influencing consumer choices. By acting as a medium for conveying brand values and meeting social expectations, clothing plays a pivotal role in shaping consumers' perception and intention to engage in luxury fashion rental. In other words, clothes act as a portal transferring the values and image of the brand to the user and matching social expectations.

The second most cited article (21 citations on WOS) is “Comparing the relative importance of sustainability as a consumer purchase criterion of food and clothing in the retail sector” by Nilssen; Bick, and Abratt, (2019). The aim of this study is to assess the comparative significance of sustainability as a purchasing factor in the South African retail sector, specifically in relation to food and clothing products. In order to carry out the study, a mixed method approach was used; To gather preliminary data, a focus group study was conducted, followed by a survey employing conjoint analysis, which involved 558 participants. The findings revealed that while sustainability-related aspects were considered in the purchase decision-making process, other factors for the clothing category such as fit or value for money emerged as more influential in shaping the final purchasing decisions. Current customers value the compromise of the company with a more sustainable environment, it looks like those companies that show compromise with the care of the natural environment are more favoured for customers nowadays. Furthermore, the survey revealed the prevalence of a cost-benefit analysis in the minds of consumers. While sustainability was valued, consumers also sought to strike a balance between the perceived benefits of sustainability and the associated costs. These findings underscore the importance of effective communication strategies employed by

retailers to highlight their sustainability initiatives. Transparent and compelling communication plays a vital role in building consumer trust and fostering long-term loyalty.

The third most cited article (16 citations in WOS) is “Factors influencing clothing interest and purchase intention: a study of Generation Y consumers in Malaysia” by Cham; Ng; Lim, and Cheng (2018). The research aims to examine factors that influence clothing interest among Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. To test the hypothesized relationships, data was collected from a sample of 300 respondents in Malaysia using self-administered questionnaires. The results indicated that factors such as need for uniqueness, self-concept, brand image, word-of-mouth (WOM), and perceived quality were significant predictors of clothing interest. Additionally, the relationship between clothing interests and purchase intention was moderated by price consciousness. According to this article and in line with the work of Nilssen et al. (2019), price is still a variable that affects the clothing decision making process. It is also relevant to say that some psychological aspects such as self-concept might affect the choice of the brand, besides the word mouth effect, providing the brand with a more perceptible value.

The article by Jin, Yang and Kim (2019) titled “Prototypical brands and cultural influences - Enhancing a country’s image via the marketing of its products” has 4 citations in WOS. This study examines the concept of a country’s image, more specifically the country of South Korea, the researchers investigate how this phenomenon influences the evaluation and perception of the products developed in said country. Employing a comprehensive model, the study examines the impact of prototypical brand image and cultural events on macro and micro country images, as well as their implications for product quality evaluation and purchase intentions. The findings reveal the significant and robust influence of prototypical brand image on both macro and micro country images. These findings underscore the critical role of representative corporate brands in shaping a country's image in the minds of consumers. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of cultural events, such as the Korean Wave, in contributing to the formation of a country's image. The study also emphasizes the varying influence of macro and micro country images on product evaluation. While the macro country image serves as a halo, influencing consumers' perception of product quality, the micro country image plays a more decisive role, especially for experiential goods. These insights hold implications for both practitioners and policymakers, particularly in countries with less distinctive images. It emphasizes the need for conscious efforts in managing prototypical brand

image to develop a robust country image. Moreover, leveraging influential cultural events can effectively promote a country's image and enhance the evaluation of its products.

Stoian Bobalca, Țugulea, Ifrim and Maha (2021) titled their article as “Analysing the predictors of the young buyers’ satisfaction in the e-retailing apparel sector”, it has 3 citations in WOS. The study aims to explore the main factors that impact online satisfaction among young consumers when purchasing apparel from e-retailers. To achieve this objective, a comprehensive research approach was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. The researchers conducted a survey among a sample of 800 young buyers, aged 18-39, who have made online apparel purchases in the past year. The survey questionnaire included various dimensions related to their online shopping experience, such as website usability, product variety, price competitiveness, delivery speed, and customer service quality. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with a subset of participants to gain deeper insights into their satisfaction drivers and expectations. The findings of the study shed light on the key predictors of young buyers' satisfaction and managerial implications in the e-retailing apparel sector, product expectations emerged as the most important factor, with buyers valuing products that correspond to the description provided on the website; other relevant factors include; pricing, the brand should consider customers' perception of a "good deal" and align with competitors' offerings, the creation of a positive website reputation through effective promotion and fulfilling promises, prioritizing customer service and personalization enhances the online shopping experience and finally, hassle-free post-sale services, especially a customer-friendly return policy, as this fosters loyalty and repeat purchases.

Finally, the article titled “Differential effects of online signals on sales performance of local brand clothing products” by Srivastava, Sharma and Kaur (2022). This article is based on a comparative analysis of predictor variables and their importance in predicting the sales performance of local brand clothing products. The study employs multiple regression and machine learning models, including multiple linear regression analysis, Random Forest (RF), Artificial Neural Network (ANN), and Support Vector Regression (SVR), to assess the significance of different variables. The research findings indicate that certain variables consistently emerge as important predictors across all the models. These variables include price, average rating, volume of reviews, and the number of consumer questions. The study emphasizes the significance of both consumer-generated and seller-generated signals in influencing the sales performance of local brand fashion products. The article highlights that

while the sentiment strength (positive and negative) of reviews was found to be non-significant, quantitative characteristics such as review volume and review valence significantly impact sales. This finding contradicts previous research on online book sales, where sentiment strength was identified as a significant predictor. Furthermore, the study reveals that discount rates, while important, have lower overall importance compared to variables such as average ratings and review volume. Theoretical contributions of the research include advancing the signalling theory literature in e-commerce. The study underscores the importance of both seller-generated and consumer-generated signals in reducing information asymmetry and improving sales performance. It also examines the interaction effects between different signalling factors, shedding light on significant interactions between price and discounts, sentiment and helpfulness rating, and discount and sentiment strength of reviews.

#### **4.1 Brand as a concept**

To begin with this section, it is important to understand the concept of a brand, a wide range of definitions have been proposed by various studies. The American Marketing Association (AMA, 2006) defines this concept as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” this is a commonly used description. It captures the essential elements of a brand, namely its identification and differentiation functions, also highlighting the purpose of a brand, which is to identify the goods and services of a particular seller or group of sellers. It emphasizes the importance of differentiation, indicating that a brand should set a seller apart from its competitors. This aspect of differentiation is crucial in the competitive marketplace, as brands strive to establish a unique position and appeal to their target audience. It is notable to mention that the emergence of branding in Europe emerged when companies started incorporating their trademarks on products as a means of safeguarding and differentiating against inferior quality goods Khan, Ahmed and Shigri (2016).

Kotler (2001) suggests a brand as “the name, associated with one or more items in the product line that is used to identify the source of character of the item”, this description focuses primarily on the name aspect of a brand and its role in identifying the source or character of a product. While this definition acknowledges the importance of the name as a brand identifier,

it overlooks other crucial components and dimensions of a brand including tangible and intangible aspects, the latter of which will be discussed further along in this paper.

Brand is the name in the mind of every consumer, as emphasized by Mooij (1998). It serves as a mental reference point that individuals associate with a specific product or company. However, it goes beyond mere identification. A brand also encompasses the mental image held by consumers, as noted by Aaker (1991). These elements collectively hold significant sway over consumer purchasing behaviour, with emotions playing a crucial role, as highlighted by Berry (2000). The emotional impact of a brand on consumers has been identified as the most influential factor, influencing their decision-making process, and shaping their buying behaviour. Therefore, human consumption behaviour can be characterized as having a deep influence by emotions triggered by brands. The emotional connection that consumers develop with a brand can drive their preferences, purchase decisions, and loyalty.

Brand and brand perception are loosely interrelated with each other Khan, Ahmed and Shigri (2016) as they mutually influence and shape each other. Brand perception refers to the way consumers perceive and interpret a brand based on their experiences and interactions. On the other hand, a brand encompasses the elements and attributes that contribute to creating those perceptions. A further analysis of brand perception will follow in the next section.

## **4.2 Brand Perception**

Brand perception holds immense significance in a brand Khan, Ahmed and Shigri (2016) as it directly influences customer buying behaviour Romaniuk and Sharp (2003) and decision-making processes. Customers make choices based on their perception of a brand, as it shapes their expectations, trust, and emotional connections. While brands can attempt to establish a desired perception through superior services and product quality, it is crucial to recognize that negative experiences can significantly impact customer mindset and brand recall. Once a negative perception takes root, it becomes difficult to erase it from customers' minds. Hence, building a positive brand image, rooted in exceptional qualities, is essential. When customers form emotional attachments to a brand, they become more loyal and invested, leading to long-term relationships and potential brand advocacy. Understanding and managing brand perception is crucial for brands seeking sustainable success and enduring customer loyalty.

The definition of brand perception provided by Kotler & Lane (2006) “Brand perception is an ability of consumer to recognize and identify the brand underneath different circumstances, as imitated by their brand identification or previous experience to evoked”, highlights the consumer's capability to recognize and identify a brand across various situations, driven by their brand identification or past experiences. This can be obtained by the means of brand association which is the connection or linkage between information and the brand that resides within the consumer's mind Aslam, Ham and Farhat (2018). Brand perception encompasses the cognitive and emotional aspects that consumers associate with a brand, including their ability to recall and differentiate it from competitors. It emphasizes the role of previous interactions and exposure in shaping perception. Furthermore, the concept of brand evoked pertains to the consumer's ability to retrieve or remember a specific brand from their memory or cognitive processes, which can be referred to as the "consumer black box" (Keller, 1993).

The importance of brand perception in consumers' brand selection, as previously discussed, cannot be overstated. In order to further develop this idea, the concept of “share of mind” will be introduced. This concept draws to the Associative Network Theories of Memory (ANT) Anderson and Bower (1979), it suggests that information stored in memory is organized as interconnected concepts within a network. When retrieving information, the activation of a specific concept acts as a stimulus and triggers the activation of connected nodes through a process known as "spreading activation." Collins and Loftus (1975). This phenomenon enhances the accessibility and influence of related brand associations, underscoring the crucial link between brand perception and consumers' cognitive processes in brand selection. Furthermore, the concept of "share of mind" expands upon the understanding of brand perception's significance in consumers' brand selection. Anchored in the Associative Network Theories of Memory (ANT) Anderson and Bower (1979), it emphasizes that the organization of information in memory occurs through interconnected concepts within a network. When consumers engage in information retrieval, the activation of a particular concept acts as a stimulus, triggering the activation of connected nodes in a phenomenon known as "spreading activation," Collins and Loftus (1975). This concept implies that brand perception, being an integral part of consumers' mental networks, influences the accessibility and salience of associated brand information. As consumers retrieve information about brands, the activation of specific brand-related concepts spreads to interconnected nodes, further shaping their overall

perception. The stronger and more positive the brand associations within the network, the higher the likelihood of the brand gaining prominence and consideration during the decision-making process. Therefore, understanding the mechanisms of brand perception within the context of associative networks provides valuable insights into how brands can strategically position themselves to achieve a favourable share of mind. By cultivating positive and distinctive brand associations, companies can enhance their brand's accessibility, recognition, and likelihood of being selected by consumers.

Empirical evidence has substantiated this theory, as several experiments have shown a positive correlation between the number of attributes linked to a brand and the subsequent likelihood of choosing that brand Alba and Marmorstein (1987). As recommended in the study by Romaniuk and Sharp (2003), marketers should focus on maintaining and enhancing the salience of their brands within the minds of customers. This involves actively developing and reinforcing the breadth of the network associated with the brand in consumers' memory. By doing so, marketers can ensure that their brand occupies a prominent and easily accessible position in the cognitive networks of consumers, increasing the likelihood of brand recall, consideration, and preference. This strategy aims to establish strong and enduring brand associations, allowing marketers to effectively influence consumer behaviour and foster long-term brand loyalty.

The retainment of existing customers can be significantly more cost-effective, with acquisition costs for new customers potentially being 6 to 7 times higher Shaw (2013). In addition to this as Williams (2014) suggests, returning customers have been observed to spend approximately 67% more compared to new customers, indicating a higher average transaction value. Additionally, returning customers also display a tendency to develop greater loyalty towards the brand. The concept of loyalty is defined by Oliver (1997) and Menidjel et al (2019) as “a long-term promise to buy the product again in the future, apart from situational influences and marketing efforts of competitors”. The combination of higher retention and increased spending by returning customers highlights the significant impact of customer loyalty on business success. By retaining existing customers, companies can capitalize on the cost-effectiveness of maintaining relationships compared to the expensive process of acquiring new customers Shaw (2013). Furthermore, the observation that returning customers tend to spend approximately 67% more than new customers Williams (2014), underscores the importance of fostering customer loyalty for maximizing average transaction value. This, in turn, contributes

to the overall profitability of the business. Additionally, returning customers exhibit a tendency to develop a stronger allegiance and attachment to the brand, as defined by Oliver (1997) and Menidjel et al. (2020), suggesting that customer loyalty extends beyond situational factors and withstands competitive marketing efforts. Thus, cultivating customer loyalty becomes a strategic imperative for businesses aiming to enhance customer lifetime value, drive sustainable growth, and maintain a competitive edge.

Brand loyalty can be evaluated by the repeat purchasing of the same brand Keller (1998). However, it is important to note that this measure may not always capture brand loyalty accurately, as effective marketing strategies such as strategic placement and appealing packaging can contribute to customer retention. Brand loyalty is akin to a valuable asset, as it enables cost reductions for a company. Having a substantial base of loyal customers can significantly decrease promotional expenses Aaker (1991). Thus, leading to the conclusion that brand loyalty holds great importance as brand equity.

To enhance brand awareness, various tools can be employed, including advertising and celebrity endorsement. These strategies serve as effective means to increase the visibility and recognition of a brand Khan, Ahmed and Shigri (2016).

The association of a well-known personality with a clothing brand can significantly elevate its visibility and recognition among the target audience. By leveraging the fame, influence, and credibility of celebrities, clothing brands can effectively capture consumer attention and generate positive brand associations. One of the key advantages of celebrity endorsement in the context of clothing brands is the ability to create a strong emotional connection with consumers McGuire et al. (1978). Celebrities often possess aspirational qualities and a desirable image that resonates with their fan base. When a celebrity is seen wearing or endorsing a particular clothing brand, it can evoke positive emotions, admiration, and a desire to emulate the celebrity's style and lifestyle. This form of marketing can also amplify brand exposure through extensive media coverage. News outlets, social media platforms, and advertising campaigns are likely to feature the celebrity and their association with the clothing brand, reaching a wider audience beyond the celebrity's fan base. This increased visibility enhances brand recall and helps to establish the brand's presence in the minds of consumers.

However, it is important for clothing brands to carefully select celebrities whose values, image, and target audience align with their brand identity. Authenticity and credibility are key factors for successful celebrity endorsements. Consumers are more likely to connect with a brand when the celebrity endorsement feels genuine and aligns with the brand's values and positioning. It is worth noting that while celebrity endorsement can be an effective strategy for boosting brand awareness, it should be part of a comprehensive marketing and branding approach. Clothing brands should also focus on delivering quality products, creating engaging content, and fostering meaningful connections with their target audience to ensure a holistic and sustainable brand awareness strategy.

Advertising plays a pivotal role in enhancing clothing brand awareness. It is widely recognized as a vital tool for reaching and engaging with target audiences on a large scale. Through strategic advertising efforts, clothing brands can effectively communicate their brand message, values, and unique selling propositions to potential customers. One of the primary advantages of advertising is its ability to create widespread brand exposure. By utilizing various media channels such as television, radio, print publications, online platforms, and social media, clothing brands can reach a broad audience, increasing their visibility and recognition. Advertising campaigns can employ visually captivating images, compelling storytelling, and persuasive messaging to capture the attention of consumers and leave a lasting impression. Furthermore, advertising enables clothing brands to position themselves within the competitive market. By carefully crafting their advertising campaigns, brands can highlight their distinctive features, design aesthetics, quality, and brand philosophy. This helps to differentiate them from competitors and create a unique brand image in the minds of consumers.

On the other hand, advertising also provides opportunities for clothing brands to engage with their target audience on an emotional level. Through evocative storytelling and creative visuals, brands can tap into consumers' aspirations, desires, and emotions, forging a strong connection with their target market. This emotional resonance can leave a lasting impression and enhance brand recall when consumers are making purchasing decisions. Advertising can reinforce brand consistency and build brand recognition over time. Consistent messaging, visual identity, and brand elements across different advertising platforms contribute to brand coherence and help consumers associate specific visuals or messages with the clothing brand. This consistency fosters familiarity and trust, making consumers more likely to consider and

choose the brand when making clothing-related decisions. However, it is important for clothing brands to carefully plan and execute their advertising strategies. A deep understanding of the target audience, their preferences, and media consumption habits is crucial for effective advertising. Brands should also consider the changing dynamics of the digital landscape and invest in digital advertising and social media marketing to reach and engage with a wider online audience.

Kim and Ko (2012) explored the effectiveness of social media marketing in elevating customer equity for high-end fashion brands. The study points out the extent to which high-end fashion brands have benefited from incorporating social media marketing strategies such as entertainment, interaction, and word-of-mouth tactics. The findings indicated a positive relationship between the utilization of social media marketing and subsequent purchase intentions and customer equity within the luxury fashion sector. However, despite the considerable volume of literature focused on enhancing our understanding of social media, limited research has been conducted to explore the specific impact of social media on the fashion industry.

The prevalence of technology in today's society has fostered a generation that heavily relies on social media platforms for regular communication and interaction Helal and Ozuem (2018). This is a great advantage for brands as it allows companies to leverage brand communities on social media platforms to gain a significant advantage in establishing and disseminating brand impressions across global networks. These online communities allow companies to cultivate a sense of belonging and engagement among their target audience, fostering a deeper connection with the brand. By actively participating in these communities, companies can not only shape brand perceptions but also tap into the power of user-generated content, word-of-mouth recommendations, and viral marketing. This enables them to extend their brand reach, amplify brand messages, and create a network effect where brand impressions are shared, discussed, and disseminated by community members, ultimately enhancing brand visibility and recognition on a global scale.

### **4.3 Scandinavian Fashion**

Drawing upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs Maslow (1987), clothing is classified within the realm of physiological needs, providing individuals with fundamental protection.

However, in today's modern world, clothing serves a dual purpose. Beyond fulfilling basic needs, it has assumed a symbolic role in individual self-expression and differentiation. Clothes have transformed into a powerful communication medium, allowing individuals to convey their identity, values, and personality to others. Through personal style choices, individuals can communicate their unique traits, affiliations, and aspirations, creating a visual representation of who they are. This facet of clothing highlights its transformative power as not just a functional garment but as a means of self-identity and self-presentation in the contemporary societal context.

Gurel (1974) defines clothing interest as “an individual’s attitude and beliefs about clothing, the knowledge of and attention paid to their clothing, and the concern and curiosity a person has about his/her clothing and that of others”. Individuals' interest in clothing can be evidenced through their engagement in various practices that demonstrate their experimental approach towards it. This includes the extent to which they are willing to invest energy, effort, time, and financial resources in their clothing choices, as well as their awareness of emerging fashion trends Gurel (1974), Kaiser (1997), Lukavsky, Butler, and Harden (1995). By actively exploring different styles, incorporating unique elements, and investing in their personal image, individuals showcase their dedication and enthusiasm for clothing as a means of self-expression. The degree of experimentation in clothing choices reflects an individual's willingness to step outside their comfort zone, try new trends, and push the boundaries of their personal style. This may involve experimenting with different colours, patterns, silhouettes, or even cultural and subcultural influences. By embracing sartorial experimentation, individuals express their desire to stand out, make a statement, and differentiate themselves from others. The commitment individuals demonstrate towards clothing is evident through the investment of resources such as time, effort, and money. This includes activities such as researching fashion trends, seeking inspiration from various sources, meticulously curating their wardrobe, and allocating a significant portion of their budget towards acquiring clothing items.

The willingness to devote substantial resources to clothing signifies the importance placed on personal style and the recognition of clothing as a powerful tool for self-presentation and self-identity. Additionally, individuals' awareness of new fashion trends reflects their active participation in the fashion landscape. The awareness of new fashion allows individuals to stay up to date, remain relevant, and align their style choices with the current fashion culture.

The uniqueness of an individual is a multifaceted and intrinsic quality that sets them apart from others. Each person possesses a distinctive combination of experiences, perspectives, talents, and characteristics that shape their individuality. This uniqueness manifests in various aspects of life, including personal style, interests, beliefs, and values. It is through this uniqueness that individuals can contribute their own perspectives and ideas to the world, fostering diversity and enriching collective experiences. Embracing one's uniqueness allows for the expression of authentic self, encouraging self-acceptance and self-confidence.

Social identity theory, proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), emphasizes the significance of identities derived from group membership, as being part of a group provides individuals with a sense of social identity, a feeling of belonging within the larger social context. Consumer social needs have been identified as influential factors shaping the use of high-end brands as an extension of their social identity Kauppinen-Räsänen, Björk, Lönnström, and Jauffret (2018). Hann (2011) highlighted the role of brands in serving as instruments for status signalling. Consumers seeking luxury goods are driven by a desire for products that symbolize status, leading them to invest in expensive items.

Country image is defined as the sum of associations and beliefs individuals have about a country Martin and Eroglu (1993). A prototypical brand can be described as a corporate brand that is widely recognized and strongly associated with a particular country Jin, Yang and Kim (2019). It serves as a representative symbol of the nation and embodies the values, culture, and identity associated with that country. A prototypical brand holds significant influence and impact on consumer perceptions, as it encapsulates the collective image and reputation of the country in the minds of consumers. This association can extend beyond product offerings, encompassing a wide range of industries and sectors, and plays a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchasing decisions.

Cue theory offers insight into the connection between a country's image and consumers' evaluation of product quality. When consumers encounter a product for the first time, they receive a range of informational cues that influence their perception Bilkey and Nes (1982). These cues encompass both extrinsic factors, such as taste, design, and fit, as well as intrinsic factors, such as price, brand name, and warranties. These cues play a significant role in shaping consumers' judgments about the quality of the product and can evoke certain expectations and associations. By considering the interplay of these cues, marketers can strategically leverage

them to enhance consumers' perceptions of product quality and establish a favourable image for products associated with a particular country. Understanding how consumers interpret and weigh these cues is crucial for effectively positioning and promoting products in the global marketplace.

In this study, the focus is directed towards exploring the unique characteristics of Scandinavian countries, with a specific emphasis on their design and business models. As highlighted by Gonzalez Rodriguez (2019), Scandinavia holds an implicit recognition within the circles of material production as a benchmark for stylish, trendsetting, and sophisticated items. The Nordic countries have consistently positioned themselves as global leaders in their commitment to creating a better world. Their exemplary efforts span across various realms, including promoting gender equality, advocating for social justice, and paving the way as role models for other nations. The influence of the Nordic lifestyle extends beyond mere objects and commodities. It symbolizes the embodiment of modernity, prominence, and highly regarded societies. The image of a Nordic citizen, characterized by an exceptional quality of life, utmost happiness, progressive attitudes towards gender diversity, and residing in some of the world's most esteemed cities, unequivocally shapes the perception of these nations on a global scale. These attributes characterize the image portrayed by Scandinavian countries.

Scandinavian fashion has gained significant recognition and admiration in the global fashion industry. Known for its minimalistic aesthetics, clean lines, and functional designs, Scandinavian fashion embraces simplicity and functionality while exuding a sense of effortless style. The region's fashion scene is characterized by a harmonious blend of timeless elegance and contemporary innovation. Scandinavian fashion brands prioritize quality craftsmanship, sustainable practices, and ethical production methods, which align with the values of conscious consumers seeking socially and environmentally responsible fashion choices Nilssen; Bick, and Abratt, (2019). These brands often incorporate organic and eco-friendly materials, prioritize fair labour practices, and emphasize transparency throughout their supply chains. The Scandinavian design character extends beyond clothing, encompassing a holistic approach that includes accessories, footwear, and even home decor. The attention to detail, refined simplicity, and use of natural materials are hallmarks of Scandinavian design that resonate with a global audience seeking well-crafted, functional, and aesthetically pleasing products. The region's fashion industry has fostered a strong sense of collaboration, with designers, manufacturers, and consumers actively engaging in a dialogue that nurtures creativity and innovation. Fashion

weeks, trade fairs, and design competitions provide platforms for emerging talents to showcase their unique perspectives and contribute to the ever-evolving Scandinavian fashion landscape. Scandinavian fashion is renowned for its versatility, allowing individuals to effortlessly transition from casual everyday wear to sophisticated, timeless ensembles. The ability to effortlessly combine comfort and style has made Scandinavian fashion highly sought after by individuals who appreciate both functionality and a refined aesthetic.

Scandinavian fashion has become synonymous with an inclusive and impartial approach, embracing gender-neutral designs and challenging traditional norms. This forward-thinking mindset has not only resonated with consumers but also influenced global fashion trends, leading to a more diverse and inclusive representation within the industry. As a result of its distinctive characteristics, Scandinavian fashion has established itself as a significant player in the international fashion scene. With its blend of minimalist sophistication, sustainable practices, and commitment to quality, Scandinavian fashion continues to captivate the fashion world and inspire individuals seeking refined yet accessible style choices.

## 5. CASE STUDY: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This section presents the findings and analysis derived from the data collected through a questionnaire survey conducted in June 2023. The objective of this survey was to gather the perception from respondents located across Spain of Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands. A total of 46 responses were obtained, providing a valuable dataset for examining perceptions, preferences, and opinions related to these brands. The reason for Spanish fashion brands to be included in this data collection exercise was to obtain a reference point to allow a comparison to be made between preconceived knowledge of products originating from said locations. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections.

The first section of the questionnaire aimed to collect comprehensive demographic information and profile data from the participants. This section played a crucial role in capturing essential characteristics that could potentially influence individuals' perceptions, preferences, and behaviours related to fashion brands. By delving into various demographic factors, including sex, age, level of education, and annual revenue, this study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the participants and the potential implications of these factors on their brand perceptions and preferences.

*Sex:* Participants were asked to indicate their gender by selecting either male or female. Gender is a fundamental demographic variable that plays a significant role in shaping individuals' fashion choices, style preferences, and brand affiliations. Understanding the gender composition of the respondents provides valuable insights into potential variations in brand perception and preferences between males and females. It enabled for the research to explore gender-related characteristics in the participants' perceptions towards Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands.

*Age:* Participants were required to select their age range from the provided options: 15 to 19, 20 to 25, 30 to 39, or 40+. Age is a crucial demographic factor that can significantly influence an individuals' opinion regarding fashion, most notably in the most recent trends. Different age groups often exhibit distinct preferences, styles, and consumption patterns. By categorizing participants into specific age brackets, this study aimed to identify potential variations in brand perception and preferences among different generations.

*Level of Education:* Participants were asked to indicate their highest level of education completed. The options provided included elementary, secondary, bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctorate. Education level is also an important socio-demographic factor that can influence individuals' exposure to different cultural influences, fashion trends, and aesthetic sensibilities. Higher levels of education are often associated with greater awareness and critical thinking possibly resulting in a broader understanding of fashion. Acknowledging participants' educational backgrounds facilitates the process of analysing the relationship between education and their perceptions and preferences towards Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands.

*Annual Revenue:* Participants were requested to select their annual revenue range from the provided options: unemployed, less or equal to 18,000 euros, less or equal to 25,000 euros, less or equal to 35,000 euros, or greater than 35,000 euros. Income is relevant in a socio-economic study of profile considering it affects an individuals' purchasing power, spending behaviour, and even brand preferences. Income levels can vastly influence the amount of disposable income invested into the wardrobe of the consumer, especially when it comes to high-end products like the ones we are discussing in this study. Through the process of analysing participants' annual revenue, it allowed the research to identify any potential correlations between income levels and their perceptions and preferences towards Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands.

The second section of the questionnaire delved into the opinions and perceptions of the respondents regarding Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands. This section included a combination of open-ended questions and linear scales to allow participants to express their thoughts, opinions, and preferences in a more distinctive manner. By utilizing open-ended questions, respondents had the opportunity to provide detailed insights and personal perspectives on the topic without the constraints of a multiple-choice question, allowing for valuable raw information of what comes to the mind of the respondent avoiding this way feeding preconceived information resulting on a completely unbiased response. The linear scales provided a quantitative measure of their opinions and preferences. Through the analysis of the gathered responses, this section aims to present a comprehensive overview of the perceptions and preferences of the respondents regarding Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands. It will delve into the themes, patterns, and trends that emerged from

the data, shedding light on the factors that influence consumer brand perceptions. This section consisted of eight questions.

*Have you ever purchased clothes from a Scandinavian fashion brand?* (Multiple-choice question: Yes or No). This question aimed to gather information about the participants' previous purchasing behaviour regarding Scandinavian fashion brands. The responses would help determine the level of familiarity and engagement of the participants with these brands. By comparing the responses of those who have purchased from Scandinavian brands and those who haven't, the research can therefore gain an insight into potential differences in perceptions and preferences.

*Complete the following sentence: Scandinavian products are...* (Short answer question). This open-ended question provided participants with the opportunity to express their perceptions and opinions about Scandinavian products in their own words. The responses would reveal the participants' associations, sentiments, and overall impressions of Scandinavian products. Analysing these qualitative responses would provide valuable insights into the preconceived notions and stereotypes of Scandinavian brands among the participants.

*Complete the following sentence: While using clothing from a Scandinavian brand, I feel...* (Short answer question). This question aimed to capture participants' subjective experiences and emotional responses when wearing clothing from Scandinavian brands. The qualitative responses would shed light on the perceived benefits, comfort, style, and overall satisfaction associated with using Scandinavian fashion brands. Analysing these responses would provide insights into the emotional connection and perceived value participants derive from using clothing from these brands.

*Complete the following sentence: While using clothing from a Spanish brand, I feel...* (Short answer question). Similar to the previous question, this item sought participants' responses regarding their emotions and experiences when using clothing from Spanish fashion brands. By comparing the qualitative responses from this question with the previous one, I am able to identify potential differences in emotional associations and satisfaction levels between Scandinavian and Spanish fashion brands.

*Complete the following sentence: Young people purchase Scandinavian clothing because...* (Short answer question). This open-ended question aimed to uncover the underlying reasons why young people in Spain are drawn to purchasing Scandinavian clothing. The qualitative responses would provide insights into the perceived motivations, factors, and attributes that influence young consumers' purchasing decisions when it comes to Scandinavian fashion brands. Analysing these responses would allow me to identify the key drivers behind the popularity of Scandinavian brands among this demographic.

*Differences between Scandinavian and Spanish fashion* (Short answer question). Participants were asked to outline the differences they perceived between Scandinavian fashion and Spanish fashion. This question aimed to gather qualitative insights into the distinctive characteristics, styles, design aesthetics, cultural influences, and overall perceptions of Scandinavian and Spanish fashion brands. Analysing these responses would provide a nuanced understanding of the participants' perceptions of the unique aspects that set these two fashion cultures apart.

*Rate from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest value) the following attributes of Scandinavian fashion: Design, Quality, Innovation, Colour variety, Size variety, Comfort, and Price.* (Linear scale question). This question aimed to gather quantitative data by having participants rate specific attributes of Scandinavian fashion brands on a scale from 1 to 5. The attributes included design, quality, innovation, colour variety, size variety, comfort, and price. Analysing the ratings would provide a numerical evaluation of participants' perceptions and preferences regarding these attributes, allowing the research to identify the strengths and weaknesses associated with Scandinavian fashion brands.

*Rate from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest value) the following attributes of Spanish fashion: Design, Quality, Innovation, Colour variety, Size variety, Comfort, and Price.* (Linear scale question) Similar to the previous question, this linear scale question aimed to gather quantitative data by having participants rate specific attributes of Spanish fashion brands. The ratings provided by participants on attributes such as design, quality, innovation, colour variety, size variety, comfort, and price would allow for a direct comparison between their perceptions of Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands. Analysing the ratings would provide insights into the perceived strengths and weaknesses of Spanish fashion brands as perceived by the participants.

## **6. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

This section of the research presents a comprehensive examination and interpretation of the findings obtained from the 46 participants who responded to the questionnaire. We will continue into an in-depth analysis of the collected data, which encompasses both qualitative responses and quantitative ratings provided by the participants. Through a meticulous examination of the data, this section aims to unveil significant patterns, trends, and correlations, shedding light on the factors that influence brand perceptions and consumer behaviour.

By analysing the qualitative responses, the research done can gain a deeper understanding of the participants' subjective impressions, emotional connections, and overall sentiments towards Scandinavian clothing brands. These insights can help uncover the underlying motivations associated with using clothing from Scandinavian brands versus Spanish brands. Moreover, the section incorporates a thorough analysis of the quantitative ratings provided by the participants.

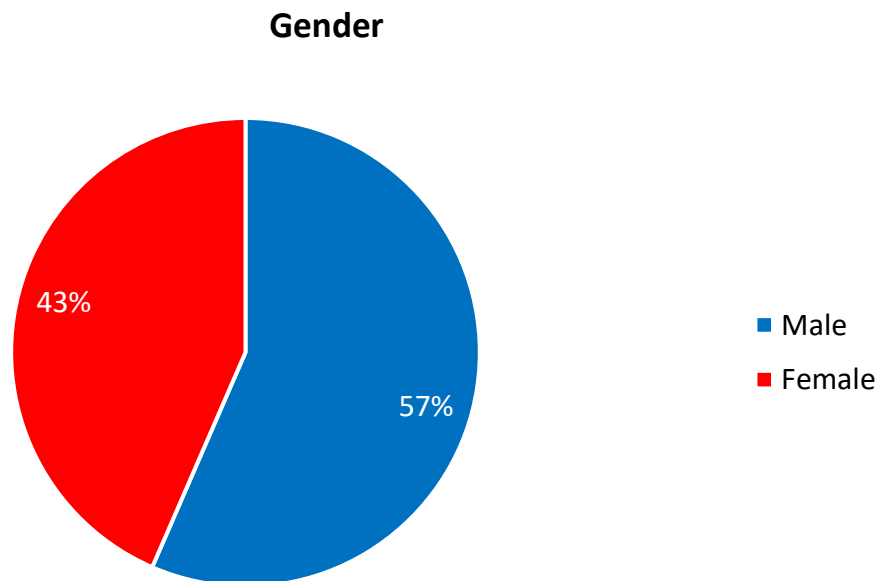
The ratings on attributes previously mentioned in the case of study section of this paper, provide a quantitative measure of participants' perceptions and preferences towards Scandinavian fashion brands and Spanish fashion brands. Analysing these ratings enables researchers to identify the perceived attributes of each brand category and discern which attributes are considered most important by the participants in their evaluation of the brands.

By synthesizing and interpreting the results, this section seeks to uncover meaningful insights and implications for the fashion industry, brand managers, marketers, and researchers. The analysis will shed light on the distinct characteristics, perceived differences, and preferences associated with Scandinavian minimalism in the Spanish fashion market. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer perceptions, facilitate effective brand positioning strategies, and provide valuable guidance for future marketing efforts within the realm of Scandinavian fashion brands. Additionally, this section will offer a foundation for further research and exploration of this fascinating topic in the dynamic field of fashion branding and consumer behaviour.

## 6.1 Results of the Questionnaire

After processing the answers gathered from the forty-six (46) participants of the questionnaire, the results are the following:

*Figure 1: Gender of the respondents.*

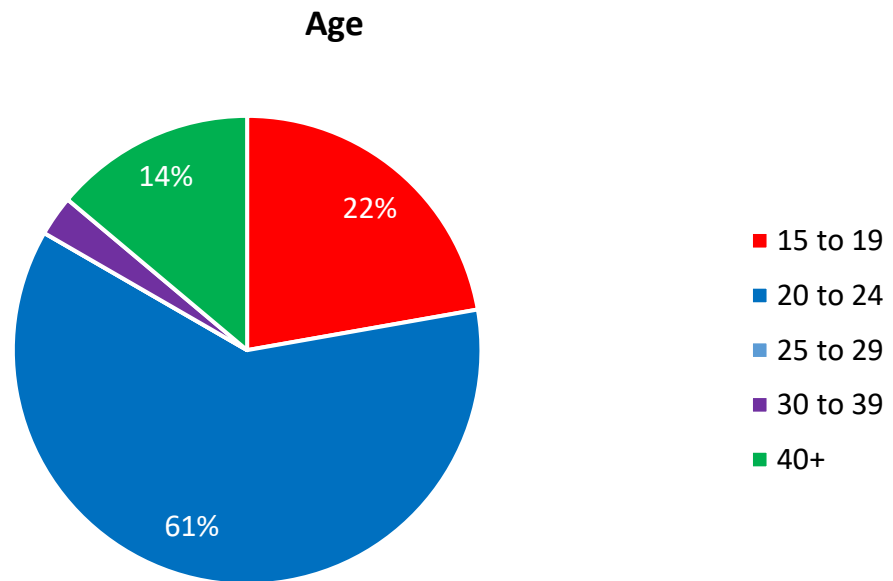


*Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023*

In response to the first question regarding the participants' sex, the results indicate that 43.5% (n=20) of the respondents identified as females, while 56.5% (n=26) identified as males. This distribution provides valuable insights into the gender composition of the participants who took part in the study. It is worth noting that the sample demonstrates a relatively balanced representation of both genders.

The gender breakdown reveals that a slightly higher number of males participated in the study compared to females. This finding suggests that the research findings may reflect a broader perspective from both genders, providing a more inclusive understanding of perceptions within the target audience. By including both male and female participants, the analysis can capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, offering a more robust foundation for drawing conclusions and making recommendations.

Figure 2: Age of the respondents.



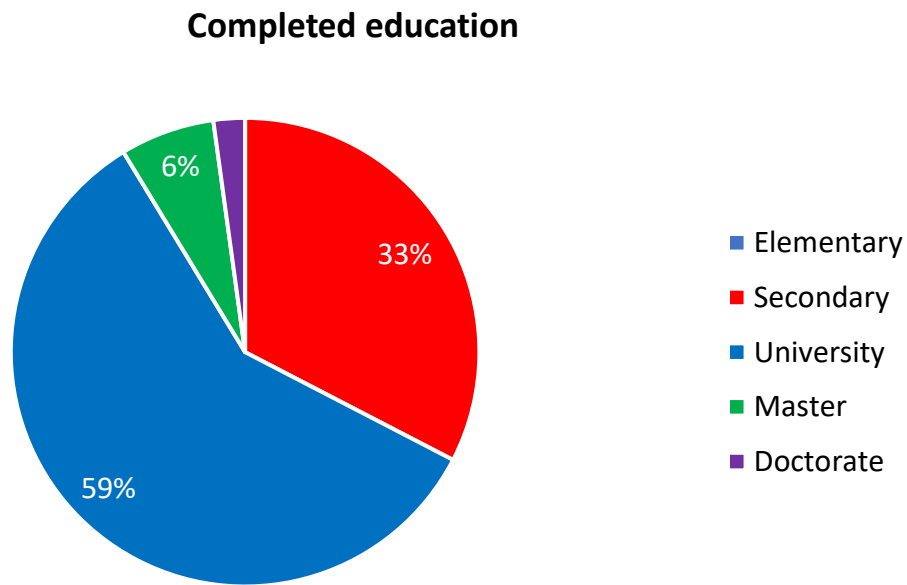
Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

Regarding the participants' age distribution, the results reveal that 8 individuals (17.4%) fell within the 15 to 19 age group, 22 individuals (47.8%) belonged to the 20 to 24 age group, no participants were in the 25 to 29 age group, 1 participant (2.2%) belonged to the 30 to 39 age group, and 5 participants (10.9%) were in the 40+ age group.

The distribution of participants across different age groups provides valuable insights into the generational representation within the study. The majority of respondents belong to the 20 to 24 age group, indicating a strong presence of young adults in the sample. This finding suggests that the perspectives and preferences of younger individuals in Spain regarding Scandinavian clothing brands will be well-represented in the analysis.

It is noteworthy that a smaller number of participants fall into the 15 to 19 age group, indicating a limited representation of teenagers in the study. The presence of individuals aged 30 and above is also relatively smaller, suggesting a potential variation in perceptions and attitudes between different age groups.

Figure 3: Completed education of the respondents.



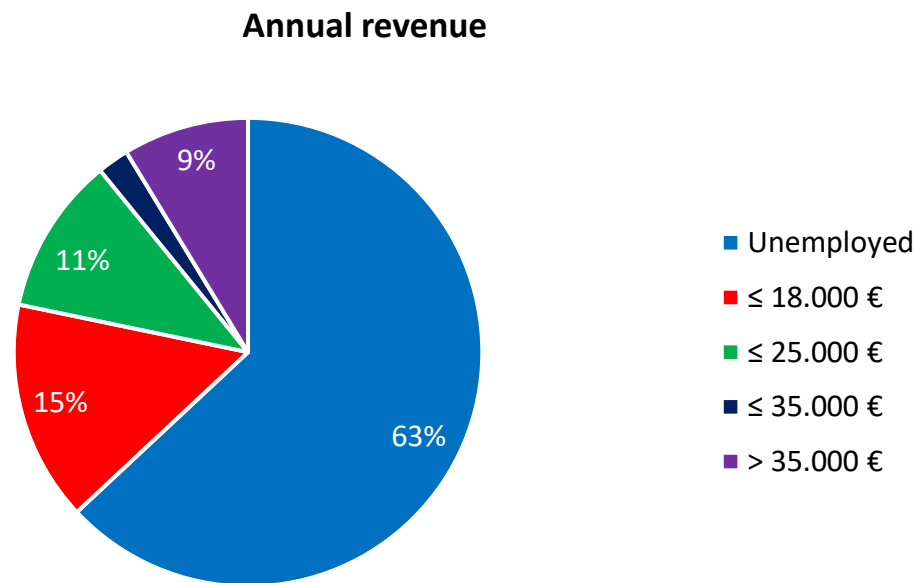
Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

Regarding the participants' level of education, the results indicate that none of the respondents had completed elementary as maximum level of education completed, 15 participants (32.6%) had completed secondary education, 27 participants (58.7%) had completed university education, 3 participants (6.5%) had obtained a master's degree, and 1 participant (2.2%) held a doctorate degree.

The distribution of participants across different levels of education provides insights into the educational background of the sample and the potential influence of education on perceptions of Scandinavian clothing brands. The majority of participants have completed university education, indicating a higher level of formal education among the respondents. This suggests that the analysis will be enriched by the perspectives and insights of individuals with higher educational qualifications.

The presence of participants with master's and doctoral degrees within the sample highlights the contribution of individuals with advanced education to the research findings. Their perspectives, informed by their higher level of academic achievement, may offer deeper insights into the perceptions and preferences related to Scandinavian clothing brands.

Figure 4: Annual revenue of the respondents.



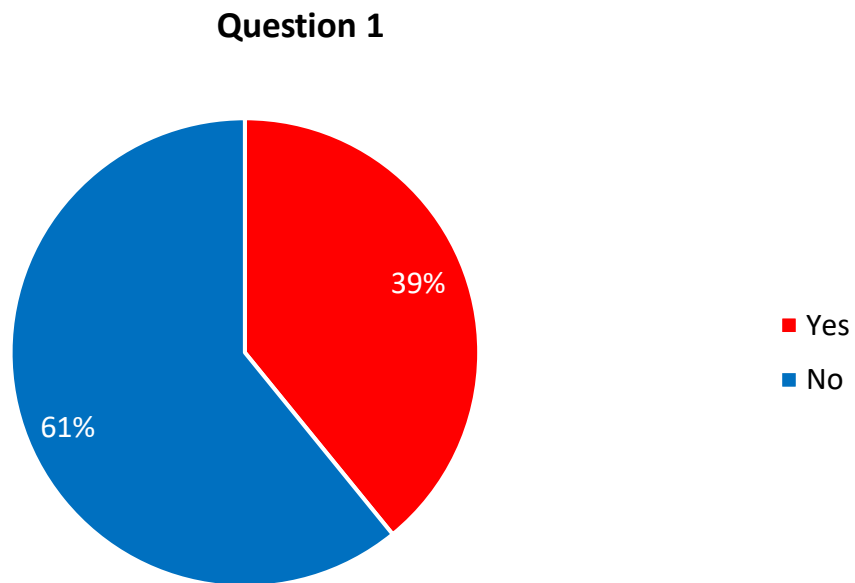
Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

Regarding the participants' annual revenue, the results indicate that 29 participants (63%) reported being unemployed. Additionally, 7 participants (15.2%) reported an annual revenue of  $\leq 18,000$  €, 5 participants (10.9%) reported an annual revenue of  $\leq 25,000$  €, 1 participant (2.2%) reported an annual revenue of  $\leq 35,000$  €, and 4 participants (8.7%) reported an annual revenue of  $> 35,000$  €.

The distribution of participants across different income levels provides insights into the economic diversity within the sample and its potential impact on perceptions of Scandinavian clothing brands. The high proportion of unemployed participants suggests a representation of individuals who may have different financial constraints and priorities when it comes to purchasing clothing.

The presence of participants across different income brackets allows for the examination of potential variations in perceptions and preferences based on financial circumstances, also contributing to a more comprehensive examination of how economic factors shape perceptions of Scandinavian brands in the context of the Spanish fashion market.

Figure 5: Have you ever purchased clothes from a Scandinavian fashion brand?



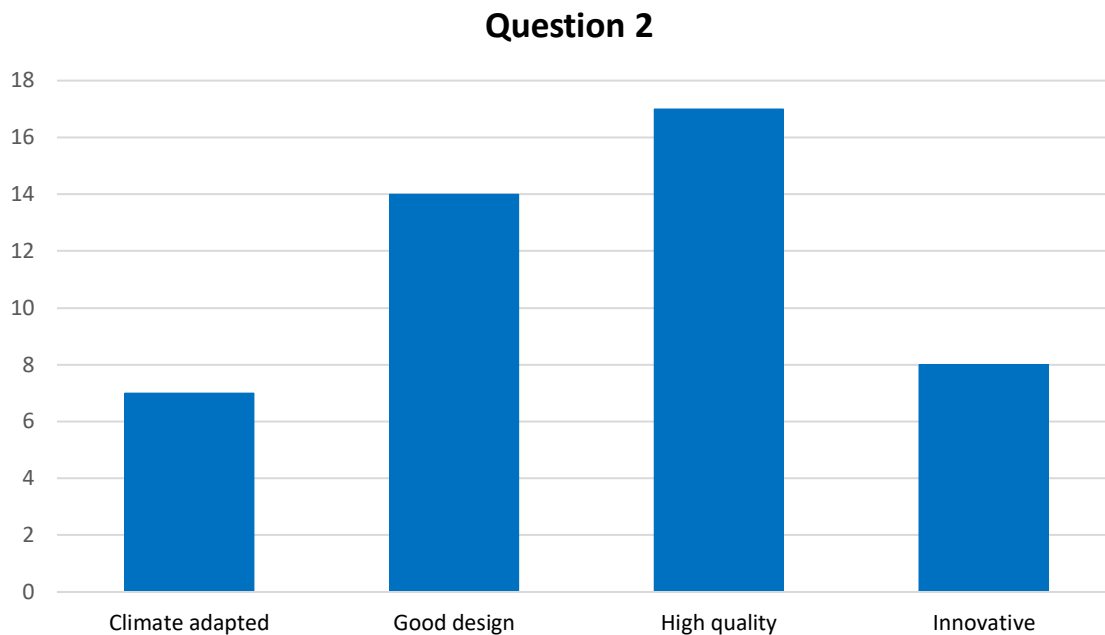
Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

The results show that 18 participants (39.1%) responded affirmatively, indicating that they have indeed made purchases from Scandinavian fashion brands. On the other hand, 28 participants (60.9%) responded negatively, indicating that they have not yet purchased clothes from such brands.

The distribution of responses provides insights into the participants' familiarity and engagement with Scandinavian fashion brands. The fact that a significant portion of participants have made purchases from Scandinavian fashion brands suggests a level of awareness and interest in this particular fashion category within the Spanish market.

The participants who have previously purchased clothes from Scandinavian fashion brands may have a deeper understanding of the brand's aesthetics, values, and overall appeal. Their experiences with these brands can offer valuable insights into their perception. On the other hand, the participants who have not yet purchased clothes from Scandinavian fashion brands provide an opportunity to explore the reasons behind their choices and their potential interest in the future. Their perspectives can shed light on the barriers or factors influencing their decision-making process and inform strategies to attract new customers or expand the reach of these brands.

Figure 6: Complete the following sentence: Scandinavian products are...



Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

In response to the open-ended question that asked participants to complete the sentence "Scandinavian products are...", several attributes were provided in the short answers. Among the various responses, four attributes emerged as the most frequent: "Climate adapted" which was mentioned by 7 participants, "Good design" which was mentioned by 14 participants, "High quality" which was mentioned by 17 participants, and "Innovative" which was mentioned by 8 participants.

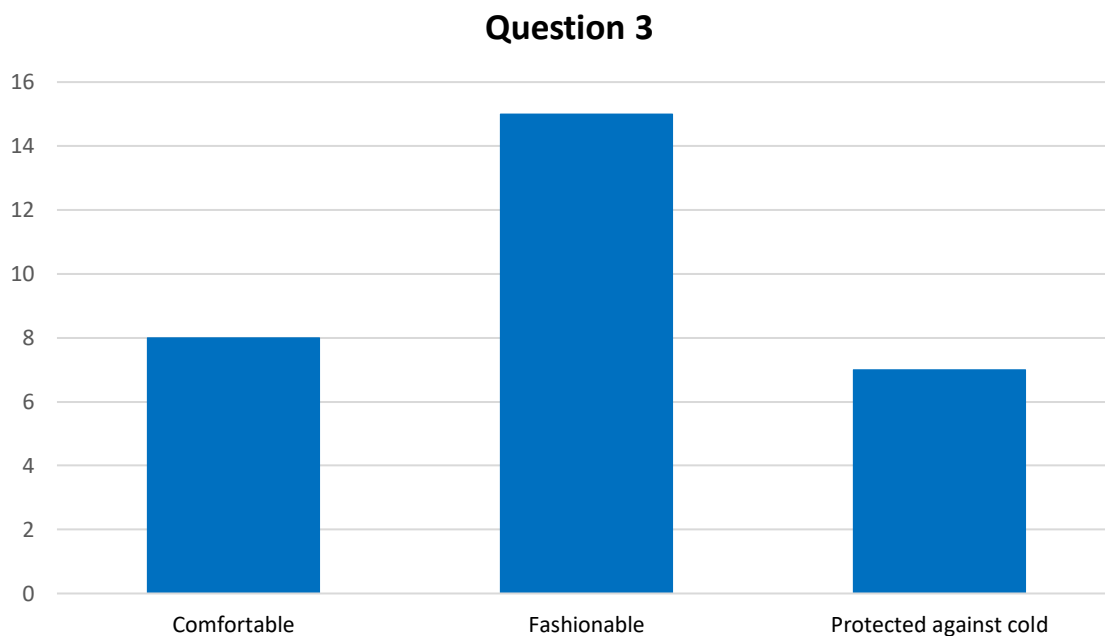
The prominence of these attributes suggests that participants associate Scandinavian products with specific qualities and characteristics that differentiate them from other brands or regions. The attribute of being "Climate adapted" highlights the perception that Scandinavian products are designed to meet the needs and challenges of the local climate or environment. This attribute reflects an appreciation for practicality in product development.

The mention of "Good design" by a significant number of participants signifies the recognition of Scandinavian products for their aesthetic appeal, functionality, and attention to detail. The emphasis on design indicates that participants perceive Scandinavian brands as offering visually appealing and well-crafted products.

The attribute of "*High quality*" resonates with participants' perceptions of Scandinavian products as being reliable, durable, and made with superior materials. This perception suggests a belief in the craftsmanship and overall excellence associated with Scandinavian brands.

The term "Innovative" highlights the participants' perception that Scandinavian products are characterized by cutting-edge ideas, novel approaches, and forward-thinking concepts. The mention of innovation suggests that participants view Scandinavian brands as trendsetters and leaders in terms of introducing new ideas and pushing boundaries.

*Figure 7: Complete the following sentence: While using clothing from a Scandinavian brand, I feel...*



*Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023*

In response to the open-ended question that asked participants to complete the sentence "*While using clothing from a Scandinavian brand, I feel...*", participants provided various answers. Among these responses, three attributes emerged as the most frequent: "*Comfortable*" which was mentioned by 8 participants, "*Fashionable*" which was mentioned by 15 participants, and "*Protected against cold*" which was mentioned by 7 participants.

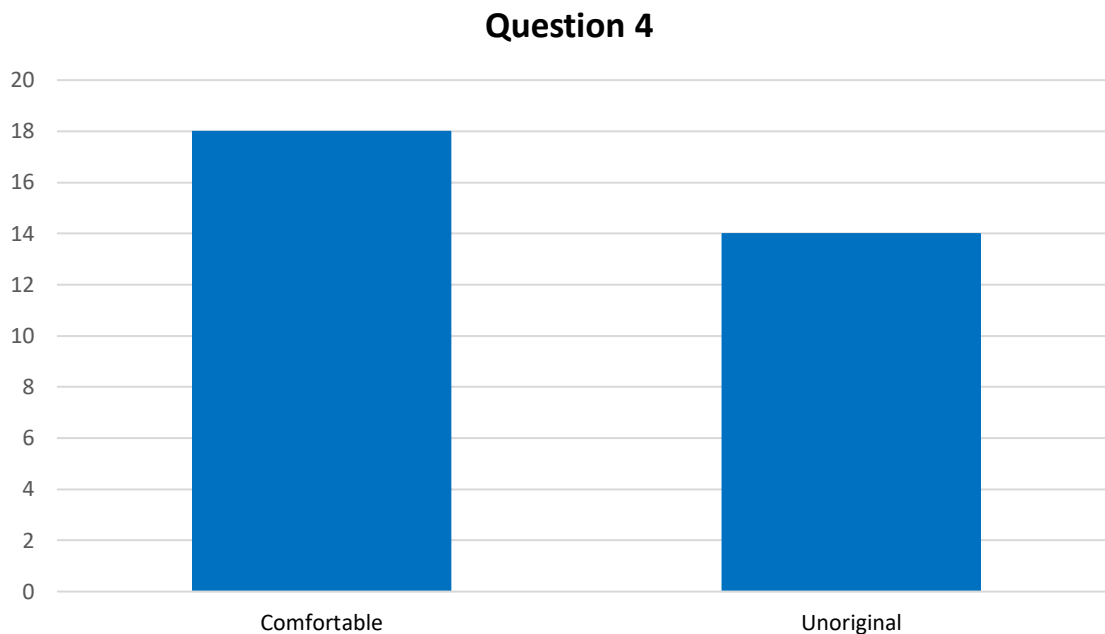
The frequent mention of "*Comfortable*" indicates that participants perceive clothing from Scandinavian brands as offering a high level of comfort. This attribute suggests that the

materials, design, and overall construction of these clothing items are tailored to provide a comfortable and enjoyable wearing experience.

The attribute of "*Fashionable*" reflects participants' perception that clothing from Scandinavian brands embodies current fashion trends and represents a stylish choice. This suggests that participants associate Scandinavian brands with modernity, sophistication, and a sense of being up-to-date with the latest fashion trends.

The mention of feeling "*Protected against cold*" highlights the participants' perception that Scandinavian brands prioritize functionality and insulation against cold weather conditions. This attribute suggests that participants view these brands as offering clothing that not only looks fashionable but also provides practical benefits in terms of keeping them warm during colder seasons.

Figure 8: Complete the following sentence: While using clothing from a Spanish brand, I feel...



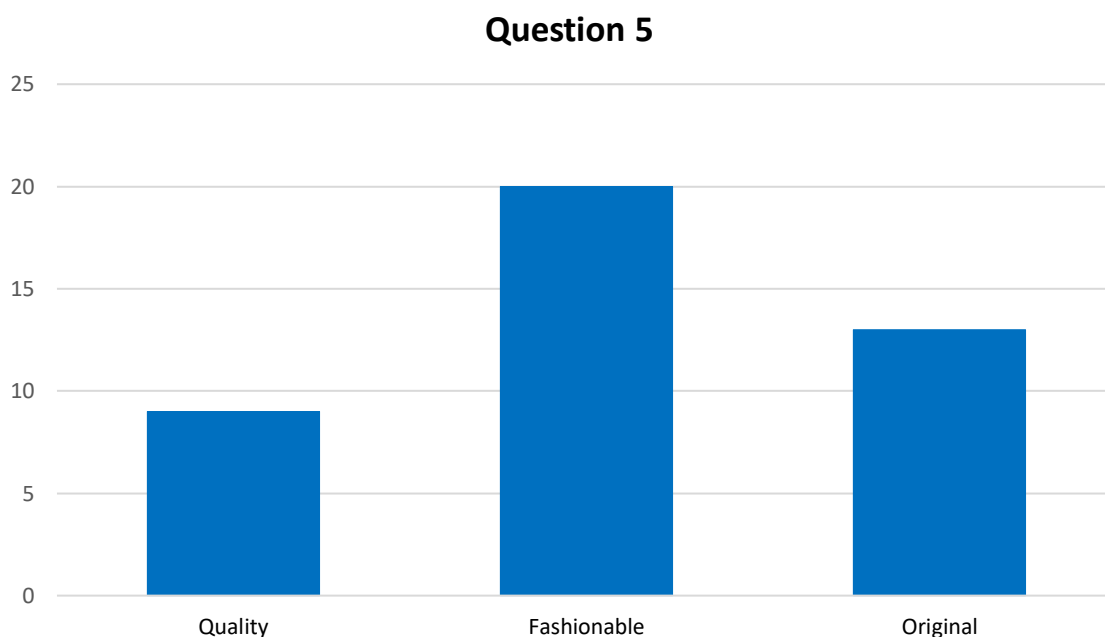
Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

In response to the open-ended question that asked participants to complete the sentence "*While using clothing from a Spanish brand, I feel...*", participants provided various answers. Among these responses, two attributes emerged as the most frequent: "*Socially Comfortable*" which was mentioned by 18 participants, and "*Unoriginal*" which was mentioned by 14 participants.

The mention of feeling "*Socially Comfortable*" indicates that participants perceive clothing from Spanish brands as providing a sense of ease and confidence in social situations. This attribute suggests that participants associate Spanish brands with clothing that helps them feel at ease and socially accepted, reflecting the importance of social aspects and self-expression in their clothing choices.

On the other hand, the attribute of "*Unoriginal*" reflects participants' perception that clothing from Spanish brands may lack originality or uniqueness. This perception suggests that participants may perceive Spanish brands as offering clothing that is more mainstream or less distinctive compared to other fashion brands. This is also due to the oversaturated market that can be witnessed specially in younger generations, where a few household names dominate the majority of the market therefore making these brands more known to the public while at the same time increasing spotting awareness of people styling them. The mention of feeling "*Unoriginal*" could potentially suggest that participants may desire more originality, innovation, or uniqueness from Spanish brands in order to meet their individualistic preferences and stand out from the crowd.

*Figure 9: Complete the following sentence: Young people purchase Scandinavian clothing because...*



*Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023*

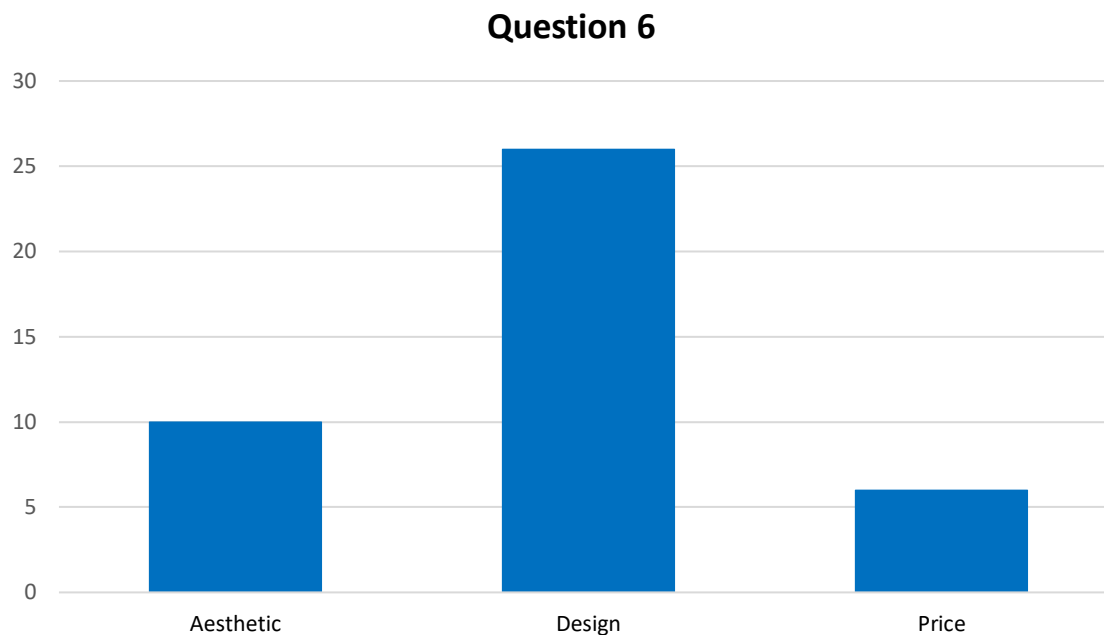
In response to the open-ended question that asked participants to complete the sentence "*Young people purchase Scandinavian clothing because...*", participants provided various answers. Among these responses, three attributes emerged as the most frequent: "*Quality*" which was mentioned by 9 participants, "*Fashionable*" which was mentioned by 20 participants, and "*Original*" which was mentioned by 13 participants.

The mention of "*Quality*" reflects participants' perception that young people purchase Scandinavian clothing because of its reputation for high-quality craftsmanship, durability, and superior materials. This attribute suggests that participants value the longevity and overall value that Scandinavian clothing offers.

The attribute of "*Fashionable*" indicates that young people are drawn to Scandinavian clothing brands because they are seen as trendy, stylish, and reflective of current fashion trends. This suggests that participants associate Scandinavian clothing with a sense of contemporary fashion and a desire to express their personal style.

The mention of "*Original*" reflects participants' perception that young people are attracted to Scandinavian clothing brands because of their reputation for offering unique and distinctive designs. This attribute suggests that participants value the individuality and self-expression that Scandinavian clothing provides.

Figure 10: Differences between Scandinavian and Spanish fashion.



Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

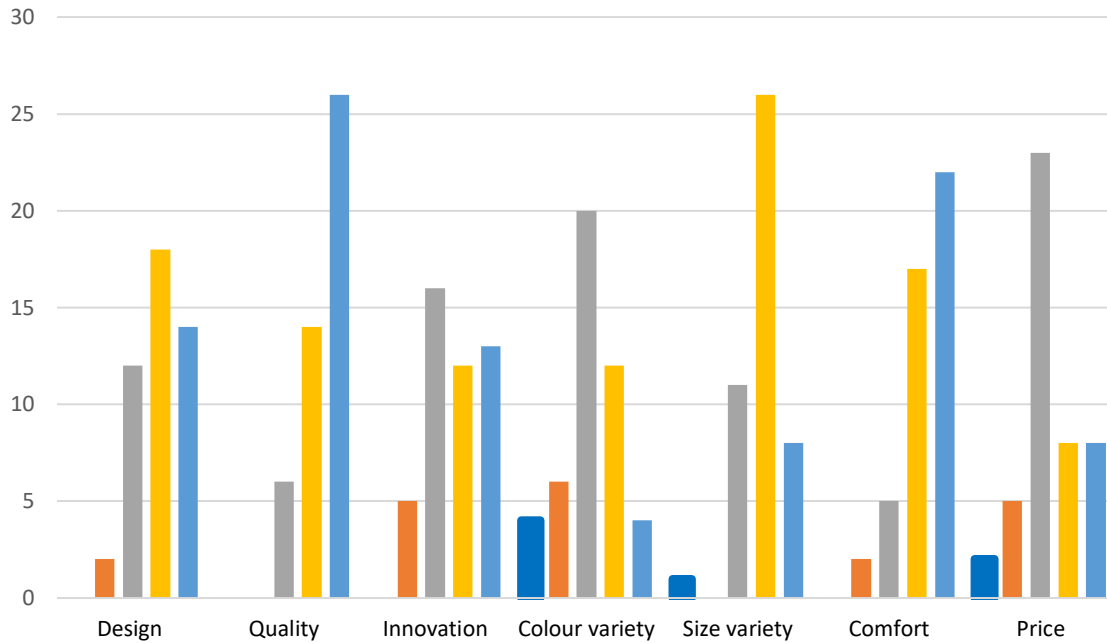
In response to the open-ended question that asked participants to describe the differences between Scandinavian and Spanish fashion, participants provided various answers. Among these responses, three attributes emerged as the most frequent: "Aesthetic" which was mentioned by 10 participants, "Design" which was mentioned by 26 participants, and "Price" which was mentioned by 6 participants.

The mention of "Aesthetic" reflects participants' perception that Scandinavian clothing has a more neutral color palette compared to Spanish clothing, which tends to have more colorful and flashy designs. Some participants also highlighted the simplicity of the Scandinavian aesthetic, suggesting that this simplicity contributes to the durability of the clothing, as consumers are less likely to get bored of them quickly.

The attribute of "Design" indicates that participants perceive a difference in the cut and style of clothing between Scandinavian and Spanish fashion. Participants noted that Scandinavian fashion often features clean lines and a more tailored, fitted silhouette, while in Spain, the oversized trend is more predominant. This difference in design reflects the varying preferences and trends within these fashion cultures.

The mention of "Price" highlights participants' perception that Scandinavian clothing tends to be more expensive than Spanish clothing. This suggests that participants associate Scandinavian brands with a higher price point, which may be attributed to factors such as quality, craftsmanship, and the brand image.

Figure 11: Rate from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest value) the following attributes of Scandinavian fashion: Design, Quality, Innovation, Colour variety, Size variety, Comfort, and Price.



Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023

#### Design:

- 0 participants rated it as 1
- 2 participants rated it as 2
- 12 participants rated it as 3
- 18 participants rated it as 4
- 14 participants rated it as 5

The majority of participants rated the design attribute positively, with a significant number of participants giving it a rating of 4 or 5. This indicates that participants recognize and appreciate the design aesthetics of Scandinavian fashion, perceiving it as visually appealing and well-executed.

#### Quality:

0 participants rated it as 1  
0 participants rated it as 2  
6 participants rated it as 3  
14 participants rated it as 4  
26 participants rated it as 5

Participants consistently rated the quality attribute highly, with a significant number giving it a rating of 4 or 5. This reflects the perception that Scandinavian fashion brands are associated with high-quality materials, craftsmanship, and attention to detail, which aligns with the reputation of Scandinavian fashion for producing durable and well-made garments.

Innovation:

0 participants rated it as 1  
5 participants rated it as 2  
16 participants rated it as 3  
12 participants rated it as 4  
13 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for innovation were more varied, with participants expressing mixed opinions. While a considerable number rated it positively, some participants gave it lower ratings. This suggests that there may be different perspectives on the level of innovation exhibited by Scandinavian fashion brands. Further analysis and qualitative insights may provide a deeper understanding of participants' views on this attribute.

Colour variety:

4 participants rated it as 1  
6 participants rated it as 2  
20 participants rated it as 3  
12 participants rated it as 4  
4 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for colour variety showed a relatively balanced distribution across the scale. While a significant number of participants gave it a rating of 3, indicating average perceptions,

there were also participants who rated it higher or lower. This suggests that participants have varying opinions on the range and diversity of colours offered by Scandinavian fashion brands.

Size variety:

- 1 participant rated it as 1
- 0 participants rated it as 2
- 11 participants rated it as 3
- 26 participants rated it as 4
- 8 participants rated it as 5

Participants consistently rated size variety positively, with the majority giving it a rating of 4 or 5. This indicates that participants perceive Scandinavian fashion brands to offer a wide range of sizes, accommodating diverse body types and providing options for a broader customer base.

Comfort:

- 0 participants rated it as 1
- 2 participants rated it as 2
- 5 participants rated it as 3
- 17 participants rated it as 4
- 22 participants rated it as 5

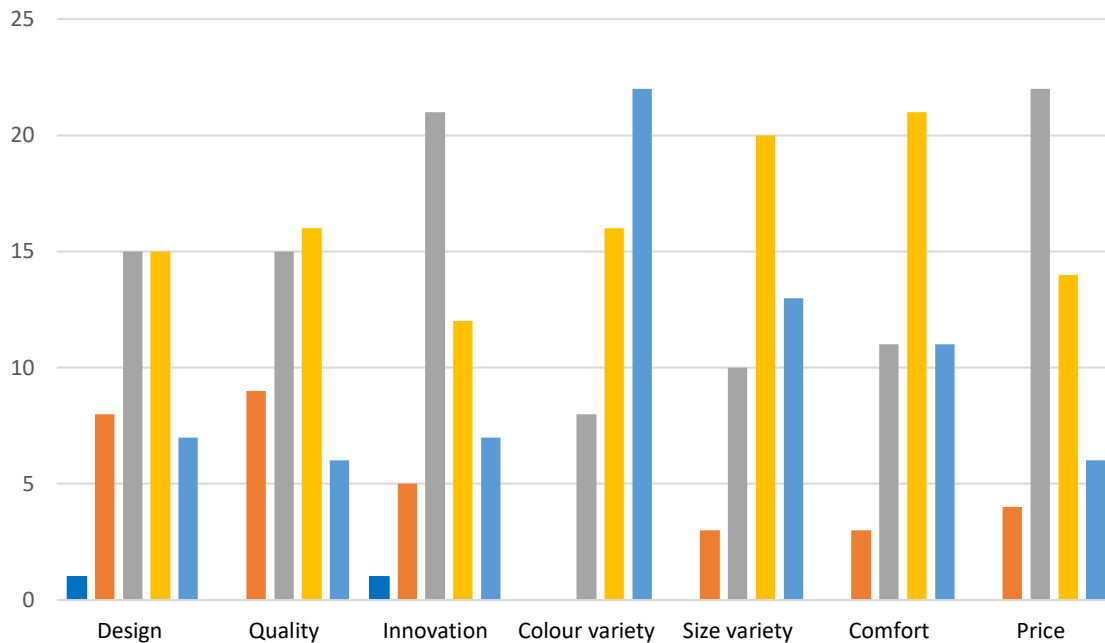
The majority of participants rated comfort highly, with a significant number giving it a rating of 4 or 5. This suggests that participants perceive Scandinavian fashion brands to prioritize comfort in their designs, offering garments that are both stylish and comfortable to wear.

Price:

- 2 participants rated it as 1
- 5 participants rated it as 2
- 23 participants rated it as 3
- 8 participants rated it as 4
- 8 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for price were more diverse, with participants expressing varying opinions. While some participants rated it positively, others gave it lower ratings. This indicates that there is a range of perceptions regarding the affordability and value for money of Scandinavian fashion brands.

*Figure 12: Rate from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest value) the following attributes of Spanish fashion: Design, Quality, Innovation, Colour variety, Size variety, Comfort, and Price.*



*Source: Own elaboration using Google Forms – 2023*

Design:

- 1 participant rated it as 1
- 8 participants rated it as 2
- 15 participants rated it as 3
- 15 participants rated it as 4
- 7 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for design in Spanish fashion were more evenly distributed across the scale, with a significant number of participants rating it as 3 or 4. In contrast, the ratings for design in Scandinavian fashion leaned towards the higher end of the scale, with a larger number of participants rating it as 4 or 5. This suggests that participants perceive Scandinavian fashion to have a stronger design aesthetic compared to Spanish fashion.

Quality:

0 participants rated it as 1  
9 participants rated it as 2  
15 participants rated it as 3  
16 participants rated it as 4  
6 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for quality in both Spanish and Scandinavian fashion were generally positive, with a considerable number of participants giving ratings of 4 or 5. However, the ratings for quality in Scandinavian fashion were slightly higher and more consistently positive compared to Spanish fashion. This implies that participants perceive Scandinavian fashion to have a slightly higher quality standard.

Innovation:

1 participant rated it as 1  
5 participants rated it as 2  
21 participants rated it as 3  
12 participants rated it as 4  
7 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for innovation in Spanish fashion were mixed, with some participants giving higher ratings and others giving lower ratings. The ratings for innovation in Scandinavian fashion were more evenly distributed across the scale. This suggests that participants may have varying perceptions of the level of innovation in Spanish fashion, while the perception of innovation in Scandinavian fashion is more consistent.

Colour variety:

0 participants rated it as 1  
0 participants rated it as 2  
8 participants rated it as 3  
16 participants rated it as 4  
22 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for colour variety in Spanish fashion showed a similar distribution to those of Scandinavian fashion, with a significant number of participants rating it as 4 or 5. This indicates

that participants perceive both Spanish and Scandinavian fashion to offer a good range of colours.

Size variety:

0 participants rated it as 1  
3 participants rated it as 2  
10 participants rated it as 3  
20 participants rated it as 4  
13 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for size variety in Spanish fashion were generally positive, with a considerable number of participants rating it as 4. However, the ratings for size variety in Scandinavian fashion were higher, with more participants rating it as 4 or 5. This suggests that participants perceive Scandinavian fashion to offer a wider range of sizes compared to Spanish fashion.

Comfort:

0 participants rated it as 1  
3 participants rated it as 2  
11 participants rated it as 3  
21 participants rated it as 4  
11 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for comfort in Spanish fashion were mixed, with some participants giving higher ratings and others giving lower ratings. In comparison, the ratings for comfort in Scandinavian fashion were consistently positive, with a larger number of participants giving ratings of 4 or 5. This implies that participants perceive Scandinavian fashion to be more comfortable overall.

Price:

0 participants rated it as 1  
4 participants rated it as 2  
22 participants rated it as 3  
14 participants rated it as 4

6 participants rated it as 5

The ratings for price in Spanish fashion were more evenly distributed across the scale, with a considerable number of participants giving ratings of 3 or 4. In comparison, the ratings for price in Scandinavian fashion were slightly higher, with more participants giving ratings of 4 or 5. This suggests that participants perceive Scandinavian fashion to be slightly more expensive than Spanish fashion.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

In relation to the general objective of this End of Degree Project I aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of how consumers in Spain perceive and interpret Scandinavian clothing brands. I was able to apply knowledge gained over the past 4 years of my university journey and delve deep into a topic of great interest. Throughout my studies, I developed a strong passion for the field of marketing and consumer behavior. I have explored various concepts and theories that have provided a solid foundation for this project. Undertaking this research project has been an opportunity for personal and academic growth. It has allowed me to apply the knowledge gained from courses with a special mention to Strategic Management and Corporate Politics II, Commercial Management and Marketing Management. I have learned to critically analyze literature, design research instruments, collect and analyze data, and draw meaningful conclusions.

Additionally, conducting this research has deepened my understanding of the complexities and dynamics of the fashion industry. I have explored the unique characteristics of Scandinavian fashion, such as its minimalistic design, focus on sustainability, and cultural influences. Through in-depth literature review and data analysis, I have gained insights into the factors that contribute to the success and appeal of Scandinavian clothing brands among Spanish consumers. Furthermore, this project has given me the opportunity to develop essential research skills, including data collection and analysis. By employing a structured questionnaire and utilizing various data analysis techniques, I have been able to derive meaningful insights and draw accurate conclusions. The process of surveying respondents, analyzing their responses, and interpreting the results has enhanced my ability to apply research methodologies in a real-world context.

This End of Degree Project has not only enriched my academic journey but has also provided me with valuable insights into consumer behavior and the fashion industry. It has allowed me to bridge the gap between theory and practice, enabling me to make informed recommendations for Scandinavian clothing brands seeking to establish a stronger presence in the Spanish market. As I reflect on this project, I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of marketing and consumer behavior. I am proud of the rigorous research methodology employed and the insights gained through the analysis of data. This project has strengthened my analytical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and

written communication skills, which will undoubtedly benefit my future professional endeavors.

Regarding the first specific objective of this End of Degree Project, which focused on exploring the perception of young Spaniards towards Scandinavian clothing brands, we can recognize significant findings that shed light on consumer attitudes and preferences. Through the analysis of survey responses and qualitative insights gathered from the participants, it became evident that Scandinavian clothing brands have garnered a positive perception among young Spaniards. The minimalist design aesthetic, high quality, and innovative approach of these brands were consistently highlighted as appealing characteristics. Participants expressed admiration for the simplicity, functionality, and attention to detail that define Scandinavian fashion.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that young Spaniards perceive Scandinavian clothing brands as being aligned with their personal values and lifestyle. The sustainable practices and eco-friendly initiatives embraced by these brands resonated with the participants, who demonstrated a growing concern for ethical consumption and environmental impact.

Interestingly, the perception of exclusivity and uniqueness associated with Scandinavian clothing brands also emerged as a prominent theme. Participants expressed a sense of pride in wearing garments that were not commonly found in mainstream fashion, contributing to a feeling of individuality and self-expression. In addition to the positive perceptions, it is important to acknowledge that there were variations in the level of familiarity and awareness among young Spaniards regarding specific Scandinavian brands. This suggests the need for continued marketing efforts to increase brand visibility and enhance consumer knowledge.

Regarding the second specific objective of the research, which aimed to explore the behavior and brand preferences of young Spaniards towards Scandinavian clothing companies, the findings derived from the questionnaire provide valuable insights into their consumer habits and preferences. The analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed that a significant portion of young Spaniards have engaged with Scandinavian clothing brands, with approximately 39.1% of the participants indicating that they have previously made purchases from these brands. This indicates a considerable level of interest and engagement in the market.

When asked about their motivations for purchasing Scandinavian clothing, several key factors emerged as influential. Firstly, the perceived high quality of the garments was consistently mentioned as a motivating factor, with participants appreciating the durability and longevity of the products. Secondly, the minimalist design aesthetic and attention to detail resonated with young Spaniards, who expressed a preference for clean and functional designs that align with their personal style. Furthermore, the findings indicate that young Spaniards perceive Scandinavian clothing brands as offering a sense of exclusivity and uniqueness. Participants expressed a desire to stand out from the crowd and differentiate themselves through their fashion choices, and they believed that Scandinavian brands provided them with the opportunity to do so.

Relative to the third and fourth specific objectives of this study, which aimed to evaluate the factors contributing to the success and appeal of Scandinavian clothing brands in the Spanish market and provide insights and strategies for these brands to grow, the findings from the questionnaire shed light on key factors and potential strategies for their success.

One of the main factors that contribute to the success of Scandinavian clothing brands in the Spanish market, as identified by the questionnaire responses, is their emphasis on high-quality products. Participants consistently highlighted the durability, craftsmanship, and attention to detail that they associate with Scandinavian brands. This factor resonated strongly with young Spaniards who value long-lasting and well-made garments, suggesting that maintaining and further enhancing the quality of their products can be a critical aspect for these brands' continued success. Another significant factor identified is the minimalist design aesthetic of Scandinavian clothing brands. Participants expressed admiration for the clean, functional, and timeless designs that are characteristic of these brands. The simplicity and elegance of the designs appealed to young Spaniards, reflecting a preference for understated and versatile fashion choices. Therefore, it is important for Scandinavian brands to continue focusing on their distinctive design philosophy and maintaining the aesthetic appeal that resonates with the Spanish consumer market.

To further grow in the Spanish market, Scandinavian clothing brands can consider strategies such as increasing their visibility and brand awareness through targeted marketing campaigns. Leveraging social media platforms and influencers popular among young

Spaniards can help generate buzz and reach a wider audience. Collaborating with local influencers or fashion bloggers who align with the brand's values and aesthetic can enhance brand visibility and credibility. Through the customization of product offerings to cater to the specific preferences and needs of the Spanish market Scandinavian brands can obtain an advantageous position. This may involve incorporating Spanish-inspired elements into the designs, collaborating with local artists or designers, or adapting to the climate and cultural context of Spain. Such adaptations can create a sense of localization and connection with the target audience, fostering a stronger brand-consumer relationship.

Furthermore, offering competitive pricing strategies without compromising on quality can help overcome the perception of high prices associated with Scandinavian brands. Providing options for different price ranges, seasonal discounts, or loyalty programs can attract a wider range of consumers and encourage repeat purchases. Incorporating customer feedback and actively engaging with the Spanish consumer base can also contribute to brand success. Creating opportunities for direct communication, such as through social media platforms or brand events, allows for a deeper understanding of consumer preferences. This valuable feedback can inform product development, marketing strategies, and overall brand positioning.

All in all, the success of Scandinavian clothing brands in the Spanish market lies in their focus on high-quality products, minimalist design aesthetics, sustainability, and ethical practices. By leveraging these strengths and implementing strategies tailored to the Spanish market, such as targeted marketing, customization, competitive pricing, and active customer engagement, Scandinavian brands can further enhance their appeal, expand their customer base, and foster long-term success in Spain's fashion industry.

In conclusion, this exercise has been highly beneficial in understanding the perceptions, preferences, and behaviors of young Spaniards towards Scandinavian clothing brands. The findings from the questionnaire provide actionable insights that can guide Scandinavian brands in their marketing strategies and business decisions when targeting the Spanish market. The exercise also demonstrates the practical application of academic knowledge and research methodologies, bridging the gap between theory and practice. The findings contribute to the existing knowledge in fashion marketing and consumer research, while emphasizing the importance of consumer-centric approaches and evidence-based decision-making. Overall, this

exercise holds significant value in driving strategic direction and marketing success in the fashion industry.

## **8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE LINES OF RESEARCH**

This research project has identified several limitations that should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the bibliographical research was limited to specific keywords and a restricted time frame of the last 5 years. To enhance future projects, it is recommended to extend the publication period and explore additional sources beyond articles. By incorporating a broader range of literature, a more comprehensive understanding of the topic can be achieved.

Secondly, the quantitative research approach employed in this study followed an exploratory design. Convenience sampling, a non-probabilistic sampling technique, was utilized for data collection. Consequently, the obtained sample may not be fully representative of the entire population. To address this limitation, future research is encouraged to adopt probabilistic sampling techniques, such as random sampling, to obtain a more representative and generalizable sample. This would enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

In terms of future lines of research, there are several promising avenues to explore within the same topic. One suggestion is to include a broader range of Scandinavian clothing brands for comparison. By incorporating multiple brands, the study can provide a more comprehensive analysis of the perceptions and preferences of consumers towards different Scandinavian fashion labels. Additionally, conducting focus groups with samples of the actual clothing items from these brands can offer a more realistic and in-depth evaluation. This qualitative approach can provide valuable insights into the subjective experiences and perceptions of consumers when interacting with the clothing. Future research can also delve into the impact of cultural and contextual factors on the perception of Scandinavian fashion brands. Exploring the influence of cultural backgrounds, social norms, and geographical locations on consumer preferences and attitudes towards these brands can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of their market positioning and potential for international expansion.

In summary, while this research project has made significant contributions to the understanding of brand perception of Scandinavian fashion, it is important to acknowledge its limitations and identify potential future directions for research. By addressing these limitations

and exploring new avenues, researchers can further enhance the knowledge in this field and contribute to the development of more comprehensive and insightful studies.

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