



LUNDS UNIVERSITET

Campus Helsingborg

Institutionen för service management  
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Examensarbete för kandidatexamen

# In-Store Recycling

## A Consumer Perspective



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Examensarbete  
VT 2015

## Abstract

The aim of the thesis is to study how a segment of Generation Y perceives *in-store recycling*, a service coined by the authors of this thesis. In-store recycling is a service many fast fashion retailers have begun offering by placing collecting boxes for clothes that consumers wish to be recycled or re-used and in return consumers are rewarded with a voucher to buy new clothes at a discount. To achieve the thesis's aim a two-part framework is presented. The first framework begins with an introduction into the interrelationship between consumption and waste from a consumer perspective. Thereafter theories and literature that focus on the field of textile recycling is introduced with focus on fast fashion and disposal behavior. The second framework consists of two psychological concepts: moral obligation and cognitive dissonance. Furthermore to enable a deep insight in the consumers' perspective of in-store recycling a multiple method approach was used. A pre-study in form of observations was followed by the main method of qualitative interviews with ten students at the Service Management program at Lund University. Thereafter two supporting-methods were conducted; interview with Phd candidate Emma Samsioe and unstructured interviews with attendees of a waste prevention seminar hosted by Lund University. The findings of the thesis was the importance of convenience, habit and moral obligation in understanding consumers' perception, attitude, and behavior on in-store recycling. An interesting conclusion that can be drawn from the empirical findings is that in-store recycling is perceived to be a solution to a symptom (increased textile waste) and not a solution to the real problem (increased levels of consumption). The thesis gives insight into how a particular segment of Generation Y views a reward based in-store recycling service, and will therefore contain valuable information for parties in both the field of retail and waste management.

## Keywords:

In-store recycling, disposal behavior, attitude, textile waste, recycling, retail, fast fashion, reward-based recycling

## Abstrakt

Syftet med uppsatsen är att studera hur ett segment av Generation Y ser på in-store recycling - en tjänst myntad av författarna till arbetet. In-store recycling är en tjänst som många fast fashion retail-bolag har börjat erbjuda genom att placera insamlingslådor för kläder som konsumenter vill ha återvunnet eller återanvänt, och i retur får konsumenten en belöning i form av en rabattkupong. För att uppnå uppsatsens syfte har ett tvådelat teoretiskt ramverk genomförts. Det första ramverket behandlar koncepten konsumtion och avfall, därefter presenteras teorier och tidigare forskning på avyttrandet av textilier med fokus på dess koppling med fast fashion och beteende. Det andra ramverket behandlar psykologiska koncepten: kognitiv dissonans och moralisk skyldighet. Vidare för att möjliggöra en djup insikt i konsumenternas perspektiv av in-store recycling användes ett flertal metoder. En förstudie i form av observationer följdes av den huvudsakliga metoden; kvalitativa intervjuer med tio studenter på Service Management utbildningen vid Lunds universitet. Därefter genomfördes två stödande metoder; intervju med blivande doktorand Emma Samsioe och ostrukturerade intervjuer med deltagare på ett avfallsförebyggande seminarium anordnat av Lunds universitet. Resultatet av uppsatsen är vikten av bekvämlighet, vana och moralisk skyldighet för att förstå konsumenternas perspektiv, beteende och attityd mot in-store recycling. En intressant slutsats som kan dras från empirin är att in-store recycling uppfattas vara en lösning på ett symptom (ökad textilavfall) och inte en lösning på det verkliga problemet (ökad konsumtion). Avhandlingen ger en inblick i hur ett segment av Generation Y ser en belönings baserad textilåtervinningstjänst, och kommer därför att innehålla värdefull information för aktörer i både retail- och avfallsbranschen.

### Nyckelord:

In-store recycling, avfallsbeteende, attityd, textiltavfall, återvinning, retail, fast fashion, belöningsbaserad återvinning

## Foreword

The thesis has been written equally between the authors. We want to thank our interviewees for allowing us to gain insight into their perspective on in-store recycling. Secondly we thank Emma Samsioe for sharing her expertise on fast fashion and consumption. Lastly we would like to thank our supervisor Hervé Corvellec for all the support and inspiration he has given us.

Gabriella Engström

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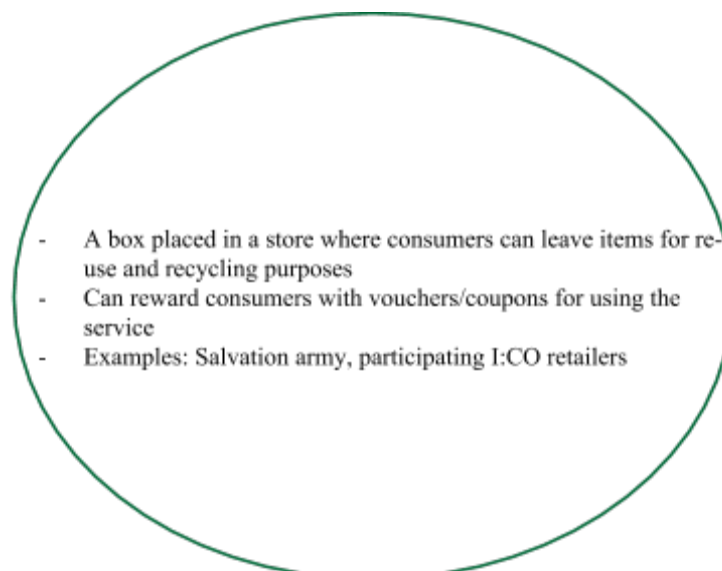
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# 1. Solving the Issue of Textile Waste

## 1.1 Exploring the Consumers' Perspective on In-store Recycling

About 7000 - 29000 liter of water and 0,3 - 1 kg of oil is needed to produce 1 kg of cotton. Few people are aware of these exact numbers but many understand the strain the environment takes when cotton is produced (Gustafsson & Ekström, 2012:285). However, what happens when a cotton t-shirt gets a stain or is deemed unfashionable? According to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (naturvardsverket.se) the average Swedish consumer buys about 12,5 kg of textiles per year and an estimated 8 kg of this is thrown as regular household waste, leaving circa 2,4 kg to be donated to charities. This means that the average Swedish citizen either donates clothes with nothing in return apart from a sense of having done something good for the world or throws away clothes without understanding that there may still be value left. So how would consumers react to a concept where they received something more concrete for their recycling of textiles, like a voucher that enables them to consume new items at a discount? Furthermore consumers are used to discarding clothes at an array of options such as at charity stores and large recycling centers. The common factor of the options are them being disconnected to the places of consumption, for example retail stores. So what would happen if textile waste services were placed in the retail stores? The combination of these two questions; what happens when a reward-based textile discarding service is placed in the confinement of a retail store, is captured in a concept coined by the authors of this thesis as *in-store recycling* (Figure 1).

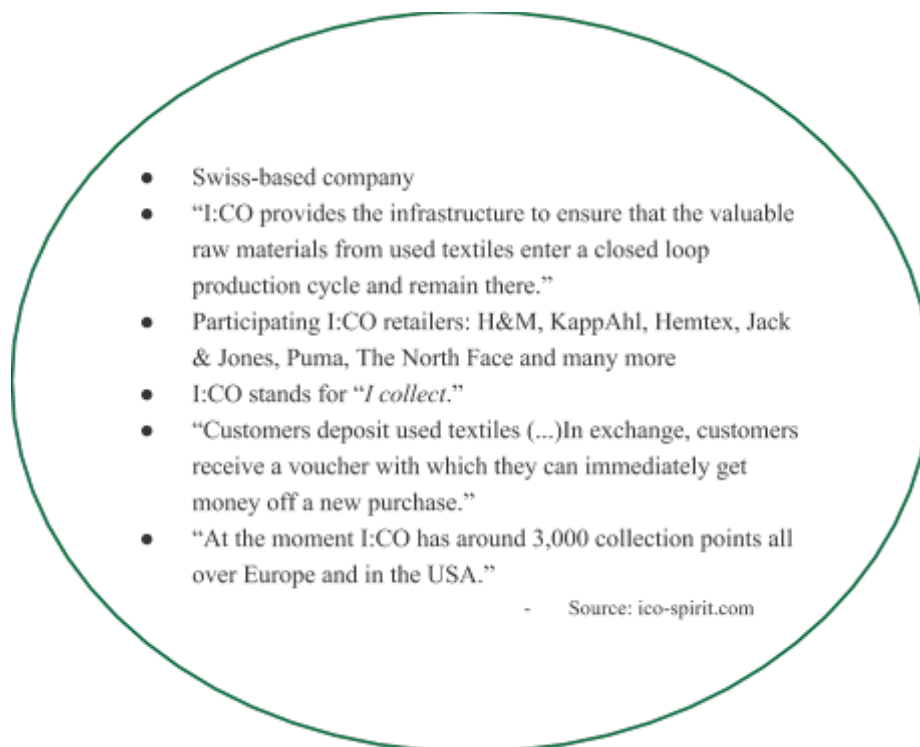
Figure 1: Defining In-store Recycling





The term in-store recycling was coined to enable a collective term for when a consumer deposits textiles in a store with the purpose of having it recycled/re-used by the company/third party. The store must parallel to offering recycling services focus on selling products. An example of in-store recycling is the Swiss company I:CO (Figure 2) that has turned in-store recycling into a business model. Several companies have started in-store recycling campaigns in collaboration with I:CO, for example KappAhl implemented in-store recycling by placing collector boxes in stores where consumers can leave old clothes, textiles and accessories (from any retailer) in return for a voucher on purchasing new items at KappAhl with a discount (kappahl.com). The companies that collaborate with I:CO are referred to as participating I:CO retailers in their video explaining their concept (ico-spirit.com). Hence the thesis will also use this name when referring to companies that collaborate with I:CO.

Figure 2: About I:CO



I:CO has developed a business-to-business service that enables the consumer to be rewarded with a voucher when they recycle textiles. To be able to use the voucher, the consumer must shop

for a minimum limit, for example at KappAhl and H&M a consumer must shop for at least 300 SEK to be able to use their 50 SEK discount (Kappahl.com, see appendix 1).

In-store recycling is not a new phenomena; the Salvation Army (Myrorna) and other charity second-hand stores have used it as the supply for their businesses for many years. However it is relatively new for fast fashion retailers to implement in-store recycling with the concept of rewarding consumers with vouchers. Although several studies (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2002; Joung, 2013; Palmsköld 2013; Barkman 2014; Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013; Ekström et al., 2012; Ekström & Salomonson, 2012) have been conducted in the past few years in the field of textile and clothing recycling from a consumer perspective, the concept of in-store recycling from a consumer perspective hasn't been explored. A consumer perspective on in-store recycling is relevant to study since the two factors of making waste visible to consumers, and giving a monetary reward for a behavior could entail new recycling and purchasing habits and behaviors. To conclude, the consumer perspective of a reward-based in-store recycling could give insight into the implications of connecting textile waste to consumption, and textile waste to a reward. Therefore the purpose of the thesis is to investigate the concept of in-store recycling with focus on participating I:CO retailers from the consumers' perspective. Another central part of the thesis is to gain insight in consumers' perspective on a paradox created by in-store recycling. The paradox is seen in inviting consumers to discard textiles for reuse and recycling while simultaneously encouraging consumer to further their consumption through the reward of a voucher. The paradox created could mislead consumers in misunderstanding the real problem of textile waste (overconsumption) and focus on a solution to a symptom (high levels of textile waste).

Due to the thesis's focus on participating I:CO retailer that are mainly fast fashion retailers, Generation Y has been chosen as a methodological approach to create a population focus and limitation. However to enable a deep understanding the thesis focuses on a segment of Generation Y. Furthermore, the focus on Generation Y (born 1979-1994) has been taken because according to Ekström, Gustafsson, Hjelmgren and Salomonson (2012:20) the generation is known for two contradictory characteristics; large consumption habits of fast fashion contra high

interest in social and environmental issues. Since this generation is already surrounded with the paradox of consumption and sustainability, how will they react to in-store recycling in fast fashion retail stores?

The purpose of the thesis is to fill the research gap of a reward based textile recycling concept that is placed in the realm of a retail store from a consumer perspective. The thesis takes a critical perspective on in-store recycling since the service creates a paradox that invites consumers to discard clothes for reuse and recycling while it simultaneously encourages consumers to consume new clothes with the help of the voucher. To aid in understanding the consumer perspective two central psychological themes will be used; moral obligation and cognitive dissonance. The psychological themes will give insight into factors outside demographic factors that affect how consumers' perceive in-store recycling. The thesis is based on previous research focusing on themes such as fast fashion disposal behavior, convenience, and common barriers to sustainable behavior. A multiple qualitative method in form of observations and interviews is used to gain a deep insight in the consumer perspective. Together the framework and multiple methods results in fulfilling the thesis' purpose of studying the concept of a reward-based in-store recycling service from the consumers' perspective. The research conducted in the thesis will help answer several questions:

- What are consumers' opinion and reaction to a reward-based in-store recycling?
- What role does moral obligation play in consumers' perception of a reward-based in-store recycling?
- Is reward-based in-store recycling convenient from a consumer perspective?
- How do consumers perceive the incentive of a reward for discarding textiles through in-store recycling?

Together the answers to these questions will result in valuable information for parties in both the field of retail and waste management.

## **1.2 From Research Question to Epilogue**

Firstly, a two-part framework will give insight to the conceptual, theoretical, and analytical framework the thesis is based on. The conceptual and theoretical framework firstly present the connection between consumption and waste and thereafter focuses on previous research on the field of textile waste with special focus on its connection to fast fashion. Lastly the analytical framework used to analyze the empirical research is accounted for. Together the two-part framework chapter gives insight into the perspective the authors of this thesis have had while conducting the research, analysis, and discussion. To give further insight into how the thesis was carried out a chapter on the multiple-part method is presented. The framework and method chapters' purpose is to give readers a transparent insight in factors that affect how the thesis reached its conclusions. The structure of the thesis reflects the process of the thesis; firstly the framework was established in accordance with the research questions, then appropriate methods were chosen and lastly the empirical research inspired to adjustments in the framework. After the framework and method chapter, a deep analysis of the empirical research in adjointment with the framework is presented. Thereafter a discussion of the thesis and thoughts on future research are presented. Lastly two ideas will be presented in the epilogue that the authors of the thesis hope will inspire to further research and show a different angle on the concept of in-store recycling.

## 2. Structuring the Theoretical and Analytical Framework

Since in-store recycling introduces textile waste into the realm of consumption, the thesis first framework begins with an introduction into the interrelationship between consumption and waste from a consumer perspective. Thereafter theories and literature that focus on the field of textile recycling will be introduced to gain insight on the knowledge from previous research that have been used to create this thesis and aid in the analysis and discussion. To conclude the theories and articles presented are chosen to give the reader an understanding of research in the field of textile waste with special focus on its connection with fast fashion, behavior, and barriers. Furthermore the chapter aids in understanding the interviewees behaviors, attitudes, and perception of in-store recycling.

Lastly two psychologically based theories; cognitive dissonance (Gregory-Smith, Smith, and Winklhofer, 2013:1204) and Schwartz's model of altruistic behavior (Davies et al., 2002:37f), will be introduced to establish an analytical framework. The two theories are the basis of how the interviewees answers are analyzed and enables categorization. The analytical framework also gives insight into important central themes that will developed on in the analysis, such as pride, guilt, and moral obligation.

### **2.1 Recycling, Fast Fashion and Textile Disposal Behavior Theories**

#### **2.1.1 Focusing on the Implications of Recycling**

A cultural approach on the link between waste and consumption is taken by Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi (2011) in the book *Waste and Consumption - Capitalism, the Environment and the Life of Things*. The connection between consumption and waste is important to discuss according to Falasca-Zamponi (2011:3) since many have little knowledge of or ignore the implications that their life choices have. Falasca-Zamponi (2011:3) also emphasizes the importance of connecting waste and consumption since many consumers defend their right to consume without understanding that they are simultaneously defending the privilege to create waste. Focus on

recycling is taken by addressing the implications it has and introducing The Environmental Protection Agency sponsored slogan reduce-reuse-recycle (Falasca-Zamponi, 2011:42f). The slogan reduce-reuse-recycle clearly shows that recycling is ranked last (Falasca-Zamponi, 2011:43). Falasca-Zamponi (2011:43) also argues that even though recycling has the lowest rank in the hierarchy, it has gained the most focus in debates, especially compared to reduce. Falasca-Zamponi (2011:43) states that in her book she “[...] wants to emphasize what little attention is paid to the “reduce” part of the slogan [...] [it is] the part of the recommendation that directly affects the production of consumer goods and encourages limiting it.” Furthermore Falasca-Zamponi (2011:42f) argues that recycling and the way it is portrayed in media and environmental advocates may lead to consumers feeling a permission to consumer at higher levels and also help consumers deal with the feeling of guilt that occurs when consuming. The issue of focusing on recycling according to Falasca-Zamponi (2011:43) shows that “While things are in continuous movement when it comes to environmental politics, it is evident to me that we have not yet resolved the fundamental issue at the core of our current sustainability predicament. I am referring here to our relationship with consumption.” In her conclusion Falasca-Zamponi (2011:49) stresses the need for consumers to have knowledge of the connection between consumption and waste, in order for consumers to find less destructive ways to search for happiness. Falasca-Zamponi (2011) gives a deep insight into waste and consumption interrelationship and will be an aid in the analysis when focusing on the paradox created with in-store recycling. However Falasca-Zamponi (2011) does not develop on the behaviors of consumer or focuses on textile waste. Therefore to gain understanding of consumers’ behavior the following research from Högskolan i Borås (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013; Ekström et al., 2012; Ekström & Salomonson, 2012) is presented, textile waste will also be further developed in following paragraphs.

### **2.1.2 Reports on Reuse and Recycling of Clothes**

Researchers from Högskolan i Borås conducted a project called *Reuse and Recycling of Clothes (Återanvändning och återvinning av kläder)* which resulted in a three-part report (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013; Ekström et al., 2012; Ekström & Salomonson, 2012). The project was created

in alliance with the Swedish Commerce Development Council (Handelsutvecklingsråd) and the Swedish Research Council Formas. The reports from Högskolan i Borås are all published in Swedish, therefore all quotes used in the thesis are translated to English by the authors. The aim of the project was to stop consumers from throwing clothes and textiles away as household waste and instead aid consumers to recycle and reuse the undesired clothes and textiles. In all reports the authors stress the negative effect that the increasing consumption of clothes and textiles is having on the environment, but also the negative effect of not properly recycling the purchased clothes and textiles (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:20, Ekström et al., 2012:11, Ekström & Salomonson, 2012:17). Due to relevance only the first and third report will be discussed in the thesis. The three reports were divided into different perspectives on reuse and recycling of clothes and textiles:

1. Consumer and consumption perspective: Studying consumers behaviors when purchasing and discarding clothes
2. Stakeholders view: Networking for a better recycling tradition of clothes and textiles
3. Practical implementation: The Textile Return

#### 2.1.2.1 Studying Consumers' Behaviors when Discarding Clothes

The first report focuses on gaining understanding of how consumers purchase and discard of clothes. The objective is according to Ekström et al. (2012:14) to gain a deeper understanding of consumers to enable retailers to create services and solutions to encourage reuse and recycling. The authors state that it is crucial that consumers and businesses take responsibility. An example of a company that has taken responsibility is Boomerang, which offers a 10% discount for old Boomerang items that customers return to the stores. (Ekström et al., 2012:13f) However Ekström et al. (2012:14) argue that it is not only the responsibility of the companies to take care of the way their clothes are produced and later collection, but they are also responsible for the consumption they encourage.

It is clear in Ekström et al's (2012:46) research also showed a correlation on high consumption patterns and high levels of discarding non-reusable clothes, while there wasn't a clear correlation between high levels of consumption and discarding of clothes that could be re-used. Therefore it can be concluded that high rates of consumption is often focused on fast fashion items that are not manufactured to be used long term and therefore are more likely to be thrown away then reused. Ekström et al. (2012:97) research points out that a consumer with the negative attitude to sustainability may still act sustainably because of external factors vice versa (a consumer with the wish to practice sustainable behaviors can be hindered by external factors).

#### 2.1.2.2 The Textile Return

The third part of the project introduces The Textile Return that was implemented on the 15th of May 2012 at a large Swedish outlet store called Gekås Ullared in partnership with Human Bridge (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:18). The goals with The Textile Return project was to study the process and effect of giving customers an opportunity to recycle clothes and textiles close to where they have planned to consume new items (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:16). As a reward consumers received a voucher for a cup of coffee (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:56). According to the authors the need for fashionable and affordable clothes outweighed many of the Generation Y consumers concern for environmental and social rights (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:13). This paradox is partially answered by stating that there is a gap between attitude and behavior. The reason for this gap is said to be knowledge, habit and accessibility to a place to leave textiles for recycling (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:12).

The study found that consumers didn't perceive it easier to leave their clothes at The Textile Return compared to how they discarded their clothes before. In many aspects The Textile Return project was not as successful as anticipated; no consumers lined up to discard their clothes, and no press came. (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:57,74) To enable a better response and engage customers to recycle clothes and textiles Hjelmgren & Gustafsson (2013:74) argue that economic, philanthropic, and sustainability factors should be emphasized in marketing. A reason why media didn't cover that concept of the Textile Return was that it did not match the image of



a major discount retailer like Gekås (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:75). Furthermore, by loudly pronouncing an environmental engagement Gekås may change customers' perception of them (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:75). Hjelmgren & Gustafsson (2013:75) compare this to the paradox created when retail giants like H&M and Topshop that are the epitome of consumption state, actively work with sustainability issues. However in the concluding sentences Hjelmgren & Gustafsson (2013:75) admit that the all attempts to minimize negative impact on the environment are crucial. Ideas should be shared and spread to milden the environmental impact that today's' consumption and the ever increasing consumption of tomorrow has on the planet (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:75).

Several interesting conclusions are made in the project *Reuse and Recycling of Clothes* , three of these were a big source of inspiration for this thesis: the discussion of Generation Y, research on garment disposal behavior and the results of an in-store recycling concept The Textile Return. The reasons to the failure of The Textile Return are discussed to be perception of convenience, knowledge, and too little marketing. (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:75f) To deepen the understanding of fast fashion consumers' disposal habits and main problems in creating new habits two perspective are introduced.

### **2.1.3 Two Perspectives on Fast Fashion Consumers' Disposal Habits**

Consumption of fast fashion is, according to Joung (2013:689), driven by cheap prices and trendiness and is characterised by an ever increase of impulsive purchases and consumption levels. At the same time the poor quality of fashion products results in clothes being discarded after just one or two times of usage. The poor quality also affects the disposal behavior of textiles as Joung's (2013:689) research point outs that poor quality clothes were discarded as household trash instead of given to charity for reusing. Joung (2013:689) blames fast fashion for the effects of poor quality pointing out that fast fashion clothing is sold and designed to be worn fewer than ten times. Palmsköld (2013:115) also point out fast fashion as being problematic since quality has been sacrificed to ensure fast rate of production and low prices, causing clothes to not be suited for reuse. Fast fashion also leads to high rates in impulse purchases which in turn leads to

consumers owning clothes they barely use; Joung states that on average consumers wear only 20-30 percent of the clothes they own. To explain how consumers deal with the guilt of purchase mistakes Joung (2013:689) presents Ha-Brookshire and Hodges theory that consumers donate unwanted clothes to deal with the guilt feelings of purchase mistakes and to make space in the closet for new items. Similarly according to Palmsköld (2013:62) a clear majority of the respondents from her research see sorting out clothes for reuse as an obvious part of cleaning out one's closet, motivating it with the philanthropic purpose of wanting to do good, and deal with the guilt of throwing out clothes that could be re-used.

One of the main issues found in Joung's (2013:693f) research was the implications of lack of awareness, education and knowledge of textile waste. For fast fashion consumers the lack of awareness resulted in not participating in recycling textiles (Joung, 2013:693). Similarly when Morgan and Birtwistle (2009:190) investigated the disposal habits of fast fashion consumers, the results clearly identified consumers' lack of understanding of the consequences and the responsibility of their behaviors as one of the main problems in tackling textile waste. To explain these problems Morgan & Birtwistle (2002:196) give the example that several respondents felt that "[...] any steps they took to try to reduce their fashion consumption or disposal behaviour would be insignificant in the grand scheme of things." (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2002:196). Other problems identified are the lack of media coverage and the lack of convenient solutions (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2002:192, 195f).

A solution that Morgan & Birtwistle (2002:192) discuss are campaigns such as the one Marks & Spencer did in cooperation with Oxfam. The campaign meant customers could leave a bag of unwanted clothes to Marks & Spencer in return for a "£5 voucher redeemable against purchases at Marks & Spencer to the value of £35 or more." The result of this campaign was an increase in sales at Marks & Spencer and increase in donations for Oxfam. (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2002:192) In their concluding sentence Morgan & Birtwistle (2002:196) call on more retailers to take their responsibility and encourage recycling and reusing by doing projects and campaigns similar to Marks & Spencer. Joung (2013:694) also brings up the outdoor sports company The North Face

in-store recycling campaign (The North Face also participated with I:CO) to call upon more fast fashion retailers to supply in-store recycling for the customers. Joung (2013:694) reasons that it is crucial that retailers take responsibility but also make it convenient for customers to recycle.

To conclude Morgan and Birtwistle (2008), Joung (2013) and Palmsköld (2013) problematise the issue of textile waste in connection to fast fashion from a consumer perspective. Furthermore Morgan and Birtwistle's (2008) research gives insight in problems in textile recycling such as lack of media coverage, lack of convenient solutions and lack of consumer knowledge of responsibility and consequences. Morgan and Birtwistle (2008:192) mention an in-store recycling campaign that major British retailer Marks & Spencer ran in collaboration with Oxfam. In the conclusion Morgan and Birtwistle call upon and encourage retailers to take more responsibility. However they do not problematize the concept of in-store recycling or give more examples (other than in-store recycling) to what retailers can do to take their responsibility. Similar conclusions can be drawn from Joung's (2013) research where in-store recycling is given as an example to tackle textile waste without being problematized or investigated.

#### **2.1.4 Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges**

Barkman's (2014:12f) research focuses on the barriers and bridges of sustainable consumption. Researchers within the field of sustainability are often confronted with the attitude and behavior gap and Barkman (2014:60) argues that while a consumer may choose to recycle household waste, buy organic bananas and take public transportation to work they do not take environmental issues into account when purchasing electronics. Previous research stressed that motivation and resources were the defining aspects to create behaviors from attitudes. Barkman (2014:60f) opposes this and says it ignores several thresholds that also contribute to creating a gap between attitude and behavior. These thresholds that are often ignored can be divided into individual and societal (Barkman, 2014:61) .

Thresholds on individual level such as responsibility, interests, attitudes on consumption, education, and income (Barkman,2014:61). Another factor on individual level that Barkman (2014:61) argues creates a barrier between attitude and behavior on issues within sustainability is the distance and complexity of a consumer's actions and environmental issues. In Barkman's (2014:132) conclusion it is stated that one of the most defining individual thresholds for consumers to engage in sustainable consumption is if they see consumption as a problem for sustainable development and if they believe they and other consumers bear the responsibility. Barkman (2014:61) introduces cognitive dissonance as neutralisation mechanism that people use to deal with attitude and behavior gaps. To conclude Barkman's (2014) touches on concepts such as cognitive dissonance, attitude and responsibility connected to sustainability and consumption. Many of these concepts are vital and can be used as a complement to the psychological analytical framework.

## **2.2 A Psychological Perspective on Emotions and Behavior**

### **2.2.1 When We Compare Our Behavior and Attitude**

Festinger coined the concept of cognitive dissonance in 1957 and explained it as a motivation theory that explores the mental unease a person experiences when he/she has two ideas, values, beliefs or other cognitions that oppose each other (Gregory-Smith, Smith, and Winklhofer, 2013:1204). By either disregarding or strengthening one of the cognitions, a person is able to alter their opinion on the matter and therefore justify their actions (Evans, Jamal & Foxall, 2006:17). An example of this is when a person who is well aware of the impact over-consumption has on the environment decides to purchase an object he/she doesn't need but nonetheless desires. The person can then choose to either focus solemnly on the happiness the purchase will bring him/her or deciding to ignore the environmental implications the purchase will cause.

### **2.2.2 How We Deal with Self-Conscious Emotions**

Gregory-Smith, et al. (2013:1201) further explore the role of emotions and cognitive dissonance in ethical consumption. Self-conscious emotions (SCEs) such as shame, guilt, embarrassment and pride, are presented as an area that researcher often forget, but are according to Gregory-Smith et al. (2013:1203) important in understanding ethical consumption due to the emotions being triggers of motivation. SCE's are important in understanding consumption since they demand a self-reflective act of comparing the behavior (actual self) with the attitude (ideal self). It is clear that SCE's are closely related to the theory of cognitive dissonance since "*Dissonant behaviour can be regarded as a manifestation of the attitude-behaviour gap [...]*" (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013:1202). Despite the fact that most consumers state that their behavior is affected by attitudes and values, research tends to show that these two factors do not certainly need to correlate (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013:1204). They furthermore proclaim guilt as the most negative of the self-conscious emotions and that consumers tend to use ignorance or justification to appease their guilt (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013:1211), which is an act of cognitive dissonance.

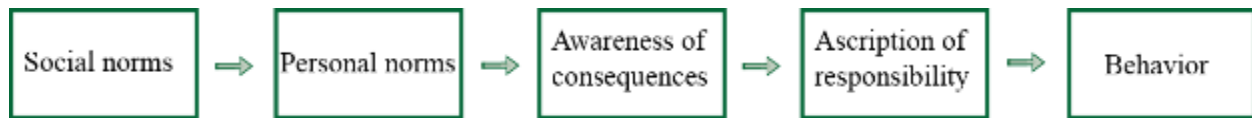
### **2.2.3 When Consumers Feel Moral Obligation**

"In affluent societies, environmental behaviours like recycling are typically classified within the domain of morality in people's mind. Attitudes regarding this type of behaviour are not based on a thorough calculation, conscious or unconscious of the balance of costs and benefits. Rather they are a function of the person's moral beliefs, that is the belief in what is right or wrong to do."- (Thøgersen in Davies et al., 2002:37f)

Authors of the article *Beyond the intention-behaviour mythology An integrated model of recycling*, Davies, Foxall, and Pallister (2002:29) chose to critically analyze models used in understanding behavior by investigating how well they explain recycling attitudes and behaviors interrelationship. The models analysed are: Theory planned behavior (TPB), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Schwartz model of altruistic behavior (Davies et al., 2002:30-31). The results of the critical analysis was that a more elaborate model is needed to understand the attitudes and behaviors of recycling (Davies et al., 2002:29). However the authors also came to the conclusion

that Schwartz model is better at predicting recycling behavior than TPB or TRA. The reason for this is that perceived moral obligation is taken into account (Davies et al., 2002:101). Schwartz social-psychological model of altruistic behavior is a five part model:

Figure 3: Schwartz's Model of Altruistic Behavior



The first part of the model, social norms, represents what a society generally agrees upon as moral behavior. These behaviors are what we expect others to follow and they expect us to follow but are vague and very general. A social norm such as recycling can be abstract but can also be easy to observe, as Davies et al. (2002:42f) explains with neighbours leaving their containers for collecting in the streets, signalling to other neighbors or visitors that recycling is a social norm in the area. The next step, personal norm, is when a person chooses to internalise the social norm into his/her definition of moral behavior. If the person doesn't act according to their personal norm they feel guilty (vice versa if a person acts according to their personal norm they feel at ease and proud.). (Davies et al., 2002:38) Schwartz argues that an internalised social norm is not enough to create behavior, the next two steps, awareness of consequences and ascription of responsibility are crucial in making moral attitude into behavior. Awareness of consequence refers to the individual feeling and having knowledge of the what happens if they act accordingly or not accordingly to the norm. Ascription of responsibility is when the individuals recognising that she/he has the responsibility and that the consequence will occur even if only one person does not act according to the norm.(Davies et al., 2002:38) It is these last two parts that are so crucial for recycling behaviors, individuals have to have knowledge of the consequences and feel responsibility for the act and the consequences on an individual level to create behavior. (Davies et al., 2002:38)

The term habit is often referred to in Davies's et al. (2002:102) article as a driving force of recycling habits, in order for non-recyclers to attain the habit of recycling it is argued that three

main factors have to be taken into consideration: convenience, visibility and reward. Further more instilling a sense of moral obligation, understanding of the consequences on individual level of recycling are crucial to ensure more people recycle (Davies et al., 2002:101).

To conclude Schwartz's model enables a categorization of the interviewees behaviors and attitudes on textile waste. Furthermore, Schwartz's model gives a deeper understanding of the differences between the interviewees in terms of moral obligation to engage in responsible textile waste behaviors. Cognitive dissonance (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013:1204) will be used as a complement to Schwartz's model to further explain the behavior-attitude gap. Lastly emotions such as guilt and pride that are touched upon in Schwartz model, are complemented through Gregory-Smith et al., (2013:1203) research on self-conscious emotions such as pride and guilt.

### **2.3 Connecting the Framework's Different Parts**

The theories, research and models introduced in the two-part framework give insight into central themes for the thesis such as moral obligation, fast fashion disposal behaviour, pride and guilt. Since in-store recycling places textile waste into the world of consumption, Falasca-Zamponi (2011) is introduced to gain an understanding of the implications of waste and consumptions relationship. Furthermore Falasca-Zamponi (2011:42f) sheds light on the implications of focusing on recycling has on consumption. Falasca-Zamponi (2011) critical approach on waste and consumptions interrelationship is used as an aid in the thesis when focus on in-store recycling's paradox of inviting consumer to responsibly discard their textile while simultaneously encouraging further consumption is analysed. Thereafter focus is put on textile waste beginning with research from Högskolan i Borås (Hjelmgren & Gustafsson, 2013:20, Ekström et al., 2012:11, Ekström & Salomonson, 2012:17) that gives a deeper understanding of textile waste from a consumer behavior perspective. Thereafter Morgan & Birtwistle (2009), Joung (2014), and Palmsköld (2013) connects fast fashion to consumption, textile waste, and consumer disposal behavior. To further the understanding of consumer disposal from a

behavioral perspective Barkman (2014) introducing the concept of thresholds and the analytical framework introduces moral obligation and cognitive dissonance. Together the two-part framework defines the thesis's approach, background, and analytical tools. The framework enables transparency into the authors of the thesis perspective while also enabling future research to replicate the research. However to fully enable replication and transparency the methods used must also be accounted for, therefore the next chapter develops on the methodological approach.



### 3. Combining Observations and Interviews

To gain a broad insight of a segment of Generation Y's perceptions on in-store recycling, the subject has been studied from multiple qualitative points of view. The focus of this study is placed on an in-store recycling service offered by the Swiss company I:CO that rewards customers with a voucher when they recycle clothes. Therefore firstly, a pre-study consisting of hidden observations were carried out in six participating I:CO retail stores in areas where the respondents (of the main research method: qualitative interviews) live, to see how the in-store recycling is formatted in stores from a consumer perspective. To gain a deep understanding of the consumers' perspective, the main approach was conducting qualitative interviews with ten third-year students at the Service Management program at Lund University. To further deepen the understanding of the subject, two help-methods were conducted; a semi-structured interview with Emma Samsioe - a Phd candidate with expertise in fast fashion consumption, and unstructured interviews with attendees at a waste-prevention seminar. Lastly the implications of a multiple method approach and how the methods complement each other is developed on.

#### 3.1 Visiting Participating I:CO Retailers

To broaden the understanding of how consumers perceive in-store recycling, observations of two multi-national retailers who offer in-store recycling services in cooperation with I:CO have been conducted (see appendix 2 to see observation scheme). Stores have been chosen in areas close to where the interviewees live in hopes that this will gain a better understanding of the customers' perspective. Factors such as marketing and placement of the collector boxes may alter between the stores as some of the stores recently started the in-store recycling service and others have a longer standing in-store recycling campaign. Therefore, the chosen stores have had cooperation with I:CO both under one year and more than one year. By observing the way these two stores market their recycling encouragements, a deeper understanding of how convenient it is to use the in-store recycling boxes as a consumer is gained. Arvastson and Ehn (2009:26) stress the importance of not just seeing when observing, but rather to feeling the surroundings with as many senses as possible. To be able to ensure as equal observations as possible, the

authors of this thesis made sure all observations were carried out on weekdays during work-hours. The observations were conducted by pretending to be customers and asking the service personnel how in-store recycling works to see what type of information consumers received in the stores. It is therefore clear that the method used can be classified as researcher participant observation; a category according to Bryman (2011:390) that was coined by Gans. Furthermore a researcher participant observation entails that field notes were written down after conducting the observations Bryman (2011:390). The field notes were structured according to the observation guide (see appendix 2). By acting as customers and not telling the service personnel of the intentions of the observation, the risk that they might act differently towards researchers than to regular consumers was eliminated. This is of key importance since the purpose of the observation and the thesis is to have a consumer's point of view. Because these observations main foci is on the placement of the collector boxes and few human interactions were necessary, the relevance of discussing the ethnological implications concerning observations is limited (Bryman, 2002:377f, Arvastson and Ehn, 2009:21-31). However from an ethical perspective, the implication of the authors of the thesis having the role categorized by Bryman (2002:390) as fully participating, the retailers observed and the names with the service personnel interacted with will remain anonymous to secure an ethical qualitative research. The observations enabled correct explanations of in-store recycling through a consumer perspective to the interviewees while also aided in understanding the interviewees who had seen or used the service.

### **3.2 Semi-Structured Qualitative Interviews**

The semi-structured interviews are a relevant method to secure a deep understanding and a broad view of consumers' opinions, perception and experiences (Bryman, 2008:415). A semi-structure is preferred due to it allowing the researcher insight into the respondent's perspective, something that a fully structured interview guide can counteract (Ryen, 2004:44). The interviews that were conducted were inspired by McCrackens interview guide structure presented in Ryen (2004:47) as well as Kvale's nine question category system present in Bryman (2002:422) and therefore began with general questions concerning consumption and recycling habits so as to ease the

interviewee into the subject of in-store recycling (to see the interview guide, see appendix 3). The initial questions also allowed the interviewee to naturally talk about the topics without the interviewer constraining them to their own point of view. Similar to Ekströms et al. (2012:63f) research on textile waste behavior, the initial questions included the topic of recycling of household garbage. In accordance to Bryman (2002:423) the element of listening to what the interview says (and doesn't say) was addressed by having one of the authors of the thesis focus on interviewing while the other was mostly quiet and listening to possible places to ask an interviewee to develop further. During the interviews two forms of visual ethnographic aid were used: voucher (see appendix 1) and I:CO video (ico-spirit.com). The use of visual ethnographic methods are according to Bryman (2002:403f) a strong growing trend in qualitative studies in order to aid in developing discussions and engaging the respondents.

### **3.2.1 A Generation Living with a Constant Paradox**

The choice to examine a segment of Generation Y is based on several factors. One factor is that Generation Y is said to be according to Gustafsson and Ekström (2012:285) as the largest consumer of new clothes. Secondly according to Gustafsson and Ekström (2012:287) consumption patterns are learned at a young age often stay with a person throughout their lives, hence Generation Y has the ability to affect future consumer generations. There is an interest and understanding of the negative effects that consumption has on social, environmental and economic aspects within Generation Y consumers according to Ekström et al. (2012:20). Ekström et al. (2012:79) also argue that in the case of younger generation, consumers aspects of fashion and price comes before environmental ones when purchasing. According to Parment's (2008:55) survey respondents stated that the main reason (over 60%) they didn't consume was for economical reasons, while consideration to the negative environmental effects and the morality of not over-consuming together amounted to only 17%. These factors make Generation Y interesting to study, however the results from this thesis will not be possible to generalize on all consumers born 1979-1994 due mainly to the constricted number of interviewees. Instead theories on Generation Y is used to motivate the population restriction the thesis has and as an

analytical tool to understand what social climate and common social phenomena that affect Generation Y.

### **3.2.2 Connecting Fast Fashion, In-Store Recycling and Generation Y**

The focus on I:CO and the collaborating stores are a three-fold. Firstly, many of the companies collaborating with I:CO are fast fashion brands that are popular among Generation Y since they, according to Gustafsson & Ekström (2012:285), allow consumers with a limited income to create their identity through consumption. According to Morgan & Birtwistle (2002:190) young consumers interest in fashion trends is one of the largest contributing factors of their loyalty to consuming fast fashion, and although there has been a growth in consumers getting tired of fast fashion, forecasts show that there will continue to be an increased demand for fast fashion over the next five years in the 15-29 year-old group (Generation Y). An increase in fast fashion consumption is one of the main reasons Morgan and Birtwistle (2009:191) argue that more research needs to address issues on textile waste. They argue that “The relationship between fast fashion and increasing textile waste is now unmistakable.” (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009:191) Although it is unmistakable in the eyes of Morgan and Birtwistle, their research shows that although consumers are becoming more aware of fast fashions connection with unethical working conditions there is little awareness of it’s effect on textile waste (2009:192).

Secondly, I:CO is one of the few companies that has successfully made a business of introducing in-store recycling in fast fashion retailers. Thirdly, I:CO has a collaboration with Sweden’s top retailer H&M, whose stores many visit on a regular basis, including our respondents who 7 out of 10 stated was a store they regularly shopped in or visited. H&M’s campaigns and marketing is seen on a wide array of marketing forms. For example, on H&M’s official Facebook-page ([facebook.com/hmsverige](https://www.facebook.com/hmsverige)) a video is posted, introducing a collecting-clothes day on the 17th of April, 2015, which resulted in 55 tons of textiles being collected in Sweden. With over 22 million people following their Facebook page, and over 900,000 views on the video launching the collecting-clothes day, there is a big chance respondents have seen or heard of H&M’s in-store recycling campaign. (H&M, 2015; [facebook.com/hmsverige](https://www.facebook.com/hmsverige)) However emphasis in this

thesis will not be on H&M, instead multiple participating I:CO retailers will be taken into account.

### **3.2.3 Neutralizing Common Factors**

The interviews were conducted with a relatively homogeneous group of people so as to be able to spot differences in recycling behaviors easier. The group of people that were interviewed were between 22 and 26 years old and were all in their last year of the Service Management program at Lund University. The interviewees personal information will be anonymous except for age, gender, och education. To enable anonymity the interviewees have been given fakes names that will be used in the thesis. The interviews were conducted in Swedish (the mother tongue of the interviewees) and therefore all quotes in the thesis are translated by us. Some linguistic differences can appear in these translations but they will not alter the analysis.

The choice to study a homogeneous group was inspired by Bäckströms (2010:34) research where she argued that homogenous interviewees neutralizes common factors such as social, geographic, occupation, and financial factors leading to better insight in other factors that may affect behavior. Furthermore inspiration was taken from Joung (2013:690f) research on fast fashion consumers post-consumption behavior, where college students were chosen as the focus on. Joung (2013:690f) argued that college students are part of the group targeted by fast fashion retailers. Due to our choice of focusing on I:CO retailer who generally are fast fashion retailers Joung's (2013) argument is relevant in this thesis as well.

Because of our interviewees' education in Service Management, they had an easier time understanding the benefits in-store recycling can entail from the companies perspective, which can be seen as a strength for the interviews. On the other hand, it was clear after the interviews that because of this it might be harder for them to give answers as regular textile consumers since they are taught through their education to constantly analyze campaigns like in-store recycling through the eyes of the companies. Consideration was taken to the different specializations that Service Management offers: retail, health, tourism, and hotel and restaurant by choosing at least

two interviewees from each specialization. This enables a fair perspective on third year students at Service Management and accounts for differences that can be caused by for example retail specialist's being more accustomed to studying services in retail environments. A quota based selection of this segment of Generation Y has therefore been conducted, which according to Bryman (2002:197) is a suitable method when studying a population's opinion. To be able to gain a fairer overview of this segment of Generation Y's opinions on in-store recycling, as many men as women were interviewed; this because of Kaijser and Östberg's (2010:45) statement that gender is one of the largest factors that affect a person's view on consumption.

The narrow selection of interviewees makes it impossible to generalize the perceptions and opinions Generation Y has on in-store recycling as the students who were chosen for the interviews were highly educated but had a low monthly income. Only certain segments of Generation Y can fit into that description. Therefore as stated previously and in Ryen's (2004:77) book the purpose of qualitative interviews is not give result that can be generalized over a large population and therefore the population studied does not to be a perfect representative of in the case of this thesis Generation Y. The purpose is on the other hand to gain a deep insight the individual interviewees way to perceive the world Ryen (2011:77), or in the thesis's case in-store recycling.

### **3.2.4 Choosing the Best Qualitative Method**

Focus group interviews were not conducted despite it also being a natural way to gain a deeper insight into the views Generation Y has on in-store recycling. However as Bryman (2002:464) argues there will be more dominant and others will be more silent, leaving the silent respondents perceptions unaccounted for. In the thesis's example Ekström et al. (2012:20) argument that Generation Y is often depicted as an environmentally conscious generation could affect the quality of focus groups since there will always be people who are more conscious than others and it is therefore easy to feel guilty if there are some interviewees who don't live up to the rest of the group's environmental consciousness. Some of the interviewees might have kept quiet on their views of in-store recycling if they felt guilty about giving their honest answers. Therefore,

qualitative interviews were carried out so as to make the interviewees more comfortable with giving honest answers.

### **3.2.5 Use of the I:CO Video During the Interviews**

To make sure every interviewee had the same understanding of the concept of in-store recycling a short video on I:CO's business idea (ico-spirit.com) was shown to each interviewee as a form of visual ethnographic method. This video was shown about half way through the interview. In the video they explain their concept by stating that;

*“We have too many things [...] instead of thrashing things why not return them to their natural cycle. [...] Gather your old shoes and clothing then drop them of where you love to go most: your favourite participating I:CO retailer. [...] A clever piece of engineering, it collects your worn objects, weighs them and prints a voucher and you are ready to shop. When the I:Counter is full [...] I:CO picks up and I:CO recycles. By recycling discarded shoes and clothes valuable resources can be reprocessed and repurposed into just about anything [...]. Fact is when we rethink our consumption cycle everybody benefits. If you could save the world one item clothing or shoe at a time, wouldn't you? Rethink, Recycle, Reward.”* (ico-spirit.com)

The video does not only encourage watchers to recycle their textiles but also shows more of what happens to the textiles once they are recycled. The video was shown halfway through the interview to be able to question the interviewees on their textile recycling habits before they fully understood what in-store recycling was, and then to see if their perceptions had changed after they saw the video. This way the interviewees could base their answers on the same knowledge after a certain time of the interview.

### **3.2.6 An Interactive Approach to Analyze the Interviews**

All interviews but the last one were carried out in the same week and took place at Campus Helsingborg because of its convenience for our interviewees. The last one took place on the weekend and at the interviewee's home, also because of her convenience. The difference in

location and timing of which the interviews took place will not have any impact on the answers that were given. Simultaneously during the week of interviews the transcription were carried out, this allowed for, as Bryman (2002:430) argues, possible weaknesses in the interview guide and interesting themes for the analysis to become visible. Throughout the simultaneous transcriptions it became clear that after the first two interviews that an adjustment in the interview guide and visual aids needed to be conducted. Therefore the first two interviews were slightly different from the rest. They became pilot interviews of sorts and as a consequence some of the questions asked in the following eight interviews were altered slightly to procure clearer answers. Bryman (2002:194) stresses the importance of having pilot interviews to ensure that the answers given can be used for the study. The two first interviews did however provide sufficient information and could still be used in this thesis. The main difference between the first two interviews and the following eight was that the first two were simply asked about their views on the voucher a customer receives when returning textiles in an I:CO in-store recycling service box. The remaining eight interviewees were first given a voucher from H&M's recycling service (see appendix 1) to hold on to and then asked of their opinion. This seemed to help the interviewee visualize their actions and perceptions on the voucher much easier than when they had to make up the scenario in their head. The reactions of most of the interviewees was also stronger when they held the voucher rather than when they imagined it. The voucher can be seen as a form of visual ethnography which Harper's research presented in Bryman (2002:425) states can be a powerful way to stimulate interviewees to reflect and engage. Interviews ranged from 30 to 50 minutes, it was clear that a contributing factor to the differences in time was due to the personal interest of the interviewee with the subject of in-store recycling.

During the data analysis inspiration was taken from Huberman and Miles introduced in Ryen (2004:118) with focus on finding patterns, counting, and building a logical chain of evidence. The patterns and common themes found were clearly connected to the themes in the theoretical framework for example moral obligation, knowledge of textile waste, convenience, habit, etcetera. In accordance to Bryman 2002:428 focus was put on both what interviewees said and how they said things. While conducting the data analysis central theories proved to be irrelevant



while new theories that proved to be more appropriate were integrated, which is inline with Ryen's (2004:106f) guide for an interactive process. By changing the theoretical basis slightly the analysis of the answers could be conducted. Schwartz model on altruistic behavior (Davis et al. 2002:30f) was used to categorize interviewees (see figure 4) in accordance to if textile waste was seen as a social norm, been integrated as a personal norm, awareness of consequences understood and ascription of responsibility of the consequences was taken. Cognitive dissonance also proved to be a valid theory in understanding how the interviewees coped with feelings of guilt caused by their textile recycling behavior. There was not a clear distinction in the interviewees answer in respect to several demographic factors such as gender, what educational field they specialised in. Several themes could be found in the interviews for example convenience, habit, and lack of knowledge.

### **3.3 Interviewing Phd Candidate to Deepen the Understanding of Fast Fashion**

After having completed the interviews with the Service Management students and the categorization had begun, the formulation of a complementing semi-structured interview began (see appendix 4). The semi-structured interview was used because it, as Ryen (2004:44) argues, gives a deeper insight into the respondent's perspective than a structured interview, and was used as an aid to broaden the analysis and ensure important details were not missed due to too much focus on the chosen theoretical framework. Emma Samsioe is a Phd candidate at Lund University at the department of Service Management specializing in fast fashion. Although Samsioe has a consumption based background compared to being a waste management expert, her ideas are valuable. The argument for choosing Samsioe as a complementing interview was that in-store recycling connects the often separated fields of consumption and waste management. Since the thesis has been supervised by Hervé Corvellec who has lead several research projects in the waste management field, it felt appropriate to invite the ideas and insight from a purely consumption and retail perspective. The interview data was transcribed and were used to further the analysis of the interviewees responses and develop the discussion.

### **3.4 A Waste Management Representative Perspective**

The authors of this thesis attended a seminar at Campus Helsingborg May 7th 2015 that focused on spreading knowledge, ideas, and contact between representatives, professors and students interested in waste management and waste prevention. The seminar was the last of a three part project called *From waste management to waste prevention* (Från avfallshantering till avfallsförebyggande) (ims.lu.se). At the seminar unstructured interviews with attendees were conducted. Unstructured interview where used when discussing in-store recycling with the representatives due to as Bryman (2002:415) argues in enabling the interviewer to ask few questions and allowing for a discussion close to a normal conversation. Quotes from the unstructured interviews on in-store recycling with two representatives from the waste management industry who attended the seminar are used in the thesis to enrich the analysis. The representatives have given consent to the use of quotes through email correspondence, they will however remain anonymous. The quotes from the representatives have been translated by the authors of this thesis. Furthermore ideas and inspiration from the seminar have been used in the thesis firstly in form of the aspect of happiness when engaging in waste prevention from Savita Upadhyaya (2015) presentation which is discussed in the epilogue.

### **3.5 The Implication of a Multiple Qualitative Method**

The combination of a pre-study in form of structured observations, the main method of qualitative semi-structured interviews, and lastly the two help methods in form of semi-structured interview with Samsioe and unstructured interviews with attendees at the waste prevention seminar has several implications. Firstly the observation of participating I:CO retailers aided in the formulation of the interview guide and when explaining the concept to the interviewees. Thereafter the semi-structured interviews resulted in the most important research and answers to the main questions of the thesis. When analysing the interviews questions arose around if the theoretical framework was appropriate to understand the interviewees and if the authors for the thesis were missing an important angle. Therefore a semi-structured interview

with Samsioe was conducted. The interview enabled further understanding of responses from the interviews from a consumption theoretical based view and also confirmed the relevance of the theoretical framework. Furthermore unstructured interviews with attendees at the waste seminar gave insight in the relevance of studying the concept of in-store recycling since they stressed the need to spread ideas, understand the consumer perspective, and invite to discussions on concepts within the waste management field. Secondly the unstructured interviews gave insight into how representatives from the waste management industry thought consumers would perceive in-store recycling as well as their personal reaction to in-store recycling. Together the multiple qualitative methods proved the relevance of studying in-store recycling and aided in gaining a deep understanding of in-store recycling from a consumer perspective. However the authors of thesis stress that as Ryen (2004:77) argues the purpose of qualitative methods is not to gain results that can be generalized over a large population. Therefore the results of the multiple qualitative methods will not be able to be generalised over Generation Y. The implication of the multiple methodical approach is a deep and broad understanding of the opinions and perceptions the studied segment of Generation Y has on in-store recycling.

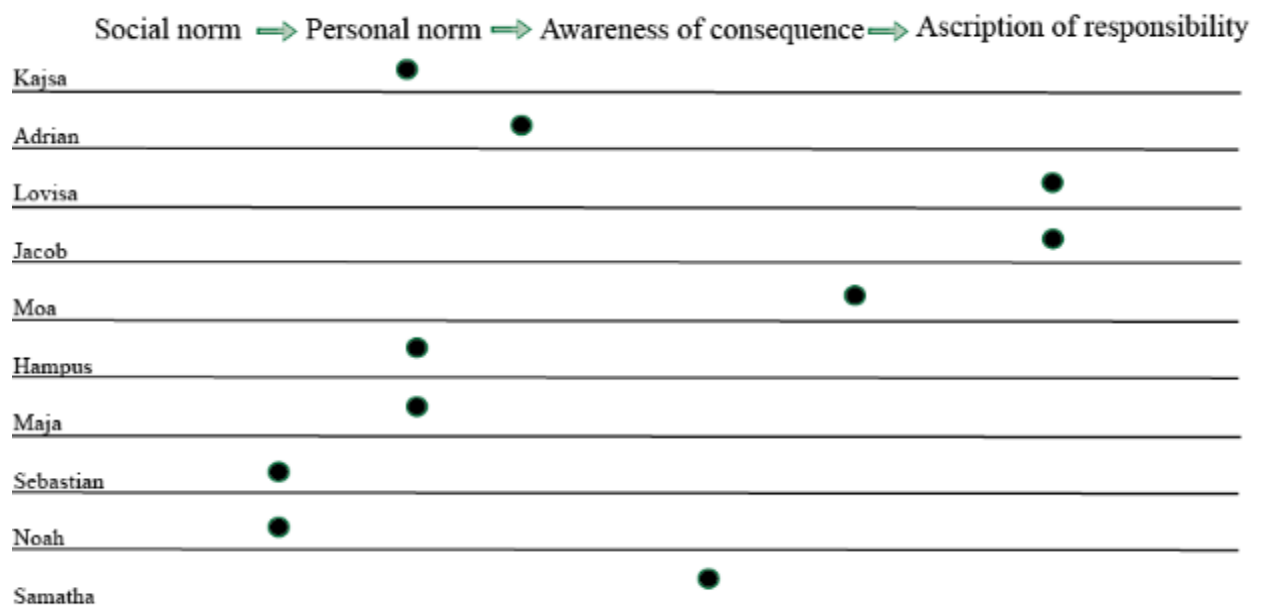
## 4. Combining Empirical Research and Frameworks

In accordance to the interviews and theoretical framework these central themes will be analysed: moral obligation, guilt and pride, convenience, habit, and paradox. To be able to understand the consumers' perception of in-store recycling we must also take into account their general recycling behaviors. This enables a broader in-sight in the interviewees' behavior, and enables a compare and contrast.

### 4.1 Assessing Why Differences Between Interviewees Exists

It is clear after conducting the interviews that Schwartz model of altruistic behavior (Davies et al., 2002:30f) can be used to categorize the interviewees. Although all of the interviewees had some form of textile waste recycling and reuse behaviors, the reason for the behavior differed. The interviewees had adopted the norm to act responsibly when discarding textiles and clothes to different degrees (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Categorization of Interviewees in Accordance to Schwartz's Model of Altruistic Behavior



Kajsa, Adrian, Hampus, Maja, Sebastian, and Noah did not express awareness of the consequences of textile waste and therefore felt little or no responsibility. Samantha and Moa had begun to understand the consequences their textile discarding behaviors had however they did not express a feeling of bearing the responsibility for these consequences. Lovisa and Jacob were the interviewees that most clearly showed attitude and behaviors that align with them ascribing responsibility for the consequences of their textile waste. Furthermore Lovisa and Jacob showed strong critical attitudes to consumption. The following section will give insight into why the interviewees range in how they have adopted the norm of acting responsibly when discarding textiles and clothes, and how this affects how they perceive in-store recycling.

#### **4.1.1 The Establishment of a Social Norm**

A social norm, similar to what Palmsköld (2013:62) saw in her respondents, of discarding clothes and textiles responsibly can be depicted in the way most interviewees claimed that the source of their behavior was affected by parents, relatives, and friends. It was clear in all interviews that throwing textiles and clothes into the regular household trash was seen as not acting in accordance to the social norm, for example Samantha stated that;

*“[...] I don't want to just throw my clothes away. That would feel very weird.”*

It was also clear that the social norm of household recycling and caring for the production of textiles was stronger than social norms concerned with textile waste. Social norms and behaviors concerning textile waste did prevail in all interviews however other factors of Schwartz's model (Davies et al. 2002:37f) varied between interviewees: personal norm, awareness of consequence, and ascription of responsibility. These three categories can be used to enable a categorization of the interviewees in accordance to how much moral obligation they feel towards issues of textile waste (see figure 4). The categorization of the interviewees allows a better understanding to why they reacted differently to the concept of in-store recycling.

#### 4.1.2 Textile Waste Versus Textile Production

According to Schwartz model (Davies et al., 2002:38) it is crucial when a personal norm is formed that the social norm becomes a personal definition of moral behavior. Neither Noah nor Sebastian took personal responsibility of discarding clothes and textiles, but instead gave the responsibility to their girlfriend/mother. However it was clear that they both felt that it was important to recycle in general, as Sebastian stated;

*“Recycling is good. Save the environment, we only have one Earth.”*

It is clear that Sebastian and Noah have begun internalizing the social norm of household recycling however textile recycling behavior was still largely based on convenience. Both interviewees didn't elaborate on issues concerning textile waste and recycling in comparison to household waste and the production of textiles. In general it can be said that all interviewees had more knowledge of the effect of textile production than waste. For example Hampus stated that his passion for high quality clothing leads to better consequences for the environment and he understood his responsibility to buy clothes of high quality in order to ensure better production. However the consequence and responsibility in terms of post-consumption consequences and responsibility was hard to get Hampus (and many of the interviewees) to develop on. It can be concluded that Hampus has better understanding of his responsibility of the consequences that his purchases have on the environment at the pre-purchase and purchase moment but not post-consumption. However it is clear that the purchasing of high quality products lead to less clothes being discarded as household trash according to Joung (2013:689) and Palmsköld (2013:115). The knowledge that high quality clothes are better not only from a production perspective but from a textile waste perspective was only visible in Jacob's interview. Jacob answered when questioned what he saw a solution to textile waste that:

*“I think it goes much deeper than that. It's not just a solution like you have a t-shirt and you do like this. I believe it's more that if you compare the generation in the 40's/50's with today's generation then there was a completely different consumption behaviour. [...] I*

*mean if you every time you need to hammer a nail and go and buy a cheap hammer at Clas Ohlson because the old one broke. Even if you give the old broken one to recycling, you could have all along bought one really high quality hammer that you can have for 50 years. I don't think there is a solution to the problem more than going to the source of the whole thing. The economic perspective has completely taken over retail, and it's more about people wanting to buy things cheaply. And now you get a incentive to buy cheap things even cheaper because you gave them your broken cheap thing...No I think it goes deeper than that."*

#### **4.1.3 Dealing with the Feeling of Guilt**

Schwartz model (Davies et al., 2002:38) states that when a social norm becomes internalized into a personal norm, the person feels guilt when not adhering to the behavior. For example Noah seemed to have a stronger feeling of personal norm compared to Sebastian, since he often excused his lack of engagement in acting as an environmentally conscious consumer. Although a sense of guilt could be seen in Noah answers, no awareness of responsibility and ascription of consequences on a personal level could be seen, the clearest indication of this was when Noah stated that;

*"I don't really have that feeling that what I do will make enough of a difference, and maybe that's stupid to think like that, but that's how it is."*

Morgan & Birtwistle (2002:196): also saw several respondents with similar disbelief as Noah, who believed that their actions didn't have an impact on the whole picture. Similar to this Adrian mentioned several times that he understood factors that affected how sustainable an item was and the consequences of his actions had, but that he didn't act on his knowledge. He felt guilt for this, as can be seen in his statement that;

*"[...]I am conscious about how things are but maybe I don't care as much as I would like to."*

The guilt Adrian felt is a clear indicator that he had implemented a social norm into a personal norm. However it is important to note that the subject Adrian said he was conscious about was general environmental issues. Once again consciousness of textile waste didn't seem to be as high as that of textile production. Kajsa, and Maja had a similar lack of feeling responsible and ascribing consequences of textile waste. Maja stated that convenience was the biggest factor to her recycling behavior and clearly states that without a convenient place to discard clothes (and other trash)

*"[...] I probably wouldn't do it [...] If it doesn't take too much time, it's worth doing it."*

Kajsa states a similar argument and motivates it by saying that waste issues aren't important since;

*"[...] it doesn't affect me."*

This is, according to Barkman (2014:61) a common barrier that creates an attitude-behavior gap; the distance and complexity of how sustainable issues affect the individual. Kajsa's statement is also a perfect example of Gregory Smith et al. (2013:1211) argument how people use ignorance to justify their lack of environmental consciousness. In contrast Samantha, Moa, Jacob and Lovisa showed higher levels of consciousness and responsibility than the other interviewees. Moa boldly stated;

*"I absolutely think that it makes a difference, I am allergic to the argument that it doesn't matter what I do because all you can do is look at your own habits. If you look at it from a lifetime perspective it has to be enormous amounts of waste or clothes that is purchased, so if your conscious I absolutely think that you can make a big difference."*



For example Samantha who expressed a deep feeling of guilt after having used the in-store recycling service at H&M and realized she had no knowledge of what happened to the clothes she had given.

*“That was hard [...] I felt so stupid in some way. [...] That I didn't know what they did with them. That's something you want to know...you want to know what they do.”*

It is clear that Samantha felt a responsibility towards what happens with the clothes she gave, although she didn't develop on what she wanted H&M to do with her clothes it was clear that she was aware that there were good and bad ways to take care of textile waste.

According to Gregory Smith et al.'s (2013:1211) theory the prevalence of emotions like guilt and pride show that there is an attitude-behavior gap. It is clear in the interviews that this theory is confirmed. To deal with the guilt interviewees used the neutralization mechanism that Barkman (2014:61), Gregory-Smith et al., (2013:1201), and Foxall et al. (2002:17) explored; cognitive dissonance. The guilt the interviewees felt was expressed in different ways however were dealt with in accordance with what Gregory Smith et al. (2013:1211) stated: ignorance or justification. The most common justification used by all interviewees was the financial situation that being a student entails. However this justification was mainly used to deal with guilt of consuming fashion, from a textile recycling (not re-use) perspective the most common justification was lack of knowledge and ignorance. The problem of dealing with guilt through ignorance is it leads to a lack of knowledge on issues such as textile waste which according to Morgan & Birtwistle (2002:190) is one of the main problems when tackling textile waste. In-store recycling has the power to help consumers deal with guilt of consumption or not acting in accordance to a personal norm. According to Gregory Smith et al. (2013:1203) guilt och pride triggers a motivation, this can be seen as a source that in-store recycling can exploit. When consumers feel guilty for having too many clothes in their closet they can use in-store recycling to rid their feeling of guilt. Consumers can also rid their feeling of guilt of consuming new items by having used the in-store recycling service beforehand.

#### 4.1.4 The Adrenaline Kick of Pride

When the concept of in-store recycling was mentioned to a representative in the waste management business they laughed and said that it was “[...] *a double adrenaline kick.*”

The double adrenaline kick is the combination of getting a feeling of pride that you have responsibly discarded your clothes and textiles, while also getting to consume new items at a discount. According to Schwartz model the feeling of pride comes when a consumer acts according to their personal norm. In-store recycling cleverly plays on the personal and social norm that one should act responsibly when discarding textiles. Joung (2013:689) and Palmsköld (2013:62) also mentions consumers use of responsibly discarding clothes to deal with guilt from over-consuming. This feeling of pride can be seen as one of the key success factors of in-store recycling since it is as Samantha said is:

*“[...] something symbolical that I get, like god you are such a good person for having done this, now you get a reward.”*

Similarly Mathilda said that shopping after using the in-store recycling service is

*“[...] my reward to myself, kind of like ‘Oh you’re such a good person, now you can shop.’ It becomes a reason to shop even though I maybe don’t need to shop seeing that I just got rid of clothes because my closet was full.”*

Jacob stated an interesting point that a negative aspect of in-store recycling was having to carry old clothes in bags through town and in front of other consumers throw the bags into the container. However midway into his explanation he stopped and said:

*“On the other hand people could use [in-store recycling] and see [the voucher] as a badge of honor.”*

The badge of honor and feeling of being a good person when disposing of textiles for reuse and recycling could trigger as Falasca-Zamponi (2011:42f) argues consumers feeling a permission to consume at higher levels and also help consumers deal with the feeling of guilt that occurs when consuming. In-store recycling plays cleverly on the adrenaline rush of pride when consumers feel they have done a right thing when disposing of textiles and the rush of having bought something nice and new at a discount. It is in this double adrenaline kick that a paradox becomes clear; is the purpose to inspire responsible textile behavior or to consume more? However, even if the paradox was clear to many interviewees especially after seeing the I:CO video, many weren't bothered by it. Why? In the interview with Samsioe the question of why many respondents didn't see the paradox was discussed. Samsioe argued that it is important to not forget the perspective of the consumer in question, what do they want, what do they care about. Emma says that the interviewees perhaps;

*“[...]aren't looking for that [...] why should you be interested in something that doesn't connect to your attitude and self-image. [...] They only want to get access to more money to be able to buy more.”*

This argument proved to be true in the case of the interviewees. Those interviewees whose attitude towards consumption was critical and sceptical, and had a self-image of being a person who was critical to consumption were disturbed by the paradox. The feeling of pride when using textile waste services such as in-store recycling can therefore be argued to be subjective to who the consumer is, what their attitude and self-image is and if in-store recycling in their perspective is the best alternative?

To conclude a correlation between level of awareness and responsibility of textile waste can be seen with the level of awareness and responsibility of waste in general. However, due to the small group of interviewees it can't be generalized on Generation Y without a larger study. In-store recycling can be seen as a clever way to invite consumers who don't feel a moral obligation to partake in textile recycling and reuse by offering a monetary reward. It was clear that the

interviewees who feel the highest level of moral obligation were the most sceptical to the paradox that in-store recycling creates. The prevalence of feelings of pride and guilt are dominant in all interviews which shows an attitude and behavior gap. From this thesis's perspective it is clear that the lack of knowledge is the creator of the largest behavior and attitude gap for our interviewees. In-store recycling has the possibility to invite consumers to gain knowledge on how the responsibility of consuming textiles stretches from production to discarding. By placing the collecting-boxes in a frequently visited area (retailers) and incorporating it into a popular behavior (shopping) a conversation can begin on textile waste. Although interviewees ranged in how much knowledge of the possibilities, consequences and effects of textile waste they had, all interviewees had some form of textile waste disposal habits. The differences seen between the interviewees in terms of moral obligation highlights the importance of other factors outside moral obligation in the creation of behaviors and habits. Two of these factors are according to Davies et al. (2002:102) convenience and habit, which will be developed in the following sections.

## **4.2 The Importance of Convenient Solutions**

In the beginning of the interviews we asked the interviewees about their household recycling habits. Half of our respondents: Adrian, Lovisa, Jacob, Moa, and Samantha were very conscious about their recycling behavior and recycled most of their recyclable household garbage while others simply recycled food (Sebastian) or only PET-bottles/cans (Kajsa). Jacob admitted that the Swedish recycling system is so well developed that he feels obliged to contribute to it. The convenience of recycling proved to be the main reason as to why our respondents were relatively good at recycling. Our findings correlate with Hjelmgren and Gustafsson's (2013:12f) theoretical statement that convenience is one of the main reasons why people recycle. Lovisa also points out that:

*“The easier it is to recycle, the more people will do it [...]. The second things become difficult people get lazy”*

Most of our respondents found that discarding clothing was a relatively easy task. The majority decided to donate old clothes to charity organizations or second hand shops such as the Myrorna, and the Red Cross. These organizations have large collector boxes placed strategically around cities, most of the time where people live and where they shop for groceries rather than in the city centers. Even Sebastian, who admitted he didn't care much about textile recycling, found no problem in donating his used clothes to a collector box because there is a box just across the street from where he lives. For Sebastian it is all about convenience. Despite not being able to criticize in-store recycling in any particular way he admits he would never use the service because leaving his old clothes in the box outside his house would always be easier.

When asked to picture themselves using the in-store recycling service our respondents were suddenly of split minds whether in-store recycling was convenient or not. From our own observations of participating I:CO retailers we have found that all collector boxes are placed next to or very close to the counter and requires assistance from service personnel. In some stores the collector boxes were only available on the second floor of the stores and in others they were available on all floors. Kajsa pointed out that since the collector boxes were placed in stores that were always located in the city centers they were easily accessible, but she found the collector boxes' location inside the stores could be less convenient. Adrian similarly claimed that:

*“H&M has a problem that there are long queues, so maybe one won't feel like standing in a line just to get rid of old things. [...] it would have been really great if there was a machine, like the one they showed in the video for example, right by the entrance. Then one could just leave the clothes there and get the voucher and go into the store”*

He later expresses his understanding of the store's perspective that having the collector box right by the entrance with minimal surveillance would enable customers to throw almost anything into

the boxed and receive a voucher, which would be unbeneficial. Other negative aspects of in-store recycling such as lack of marketed information on how to use the service was pointed out by several interviewees.

One of the points I:CO stresses on to prove the convenience of in-store recycling is combining the hassle of throwing away old clothes and textiles with a popular and regular activity; shopping. Although many interviewees understood this point, they saw a problem. Many interviewees said they are spontaneous shoppers and in-store recycling demands a more planned behavior. Similarly Joung (2013:689) points out that specifically fast fashion stores encourage spontaneous purchases. Samsioe also commented on this and said that she personally saw a problem in how convenient in-store recycling is if consumers have to plan when they visit a participating I:CO retailer. Joung (2013:694) further stresses that retailers need to take responsibility for recycling but cannot neglect that it needs to remain convenient for the consumer. The general view of the interviewees was that in-store recycling is perceived as a convenient service, but not as convenient as the charity collector boxes places around the city neighborhoods. It could however be argued that this is a strategic move from I:CO retailers by making consumers think of their store when they need to recycle and to perhaps increase visitors.

### **4.3 The Possibility of Creating a New Habit**

Our respondents already had well-practiced habits of what to do with the clothes they did not want anymore. The majority of our respondents stated that they had learned from their parents or from friends how and where to discard old and unwanted clothes, and all our respondents donated reusable clothes in one way or another. On the other hand, in-store recycling is a new version of textile reusing and recycling because it is placed in the stores of the main shopping districts of cities. Unlike for example Myrorna, participating I:CO retailers also encourage consumers to leave non-reusable clothes in their collector boxes, making the recycling process more convenient for the consumer as they no longer need to sort non-reusable clothes from

reusable ones. Lastly the voucher as a reward for recycling might in some cases work as an incentive to recycle textiles. When asked whether she were interested in using the in-store recycling service offered by a participating I:CO's retailer, Maja expressed her excitement;

*“Absolutely, because then it really feels as if you do something good and you sort of get a reward, and sometimes you just need a little... it doesn't have to be money, but you sort of need a small reward, it becomes a little easier to actually act, sadly”*

Similarly, Moa reacted positively to the service;

*“ [...] that textiles could be recycled to make new textiles I didn't know, it is very exciting! I would've loved to use it!”*

The recycling aspect of in-store recycling was a factor that most interviewees reacted to while watching the I:CO video. The knowledge of the recycling possibilities of textiles was low and clearly contributed to an attitude-behavior gap where respondent who wanted to responsibly discard their textiles weren't aware of the recycling possibility. Samsioe touched upon this in the interview, stating that the habit of giving reusable clothes to charity;

*“It is something you learn when you're young, your mother taught you that. [...]it is only the things that are broken that can't be reused that we throw away. However we can recycle them, but there are a lot of people who don't know that.”*

It is clear that the issue of convenience, accessibility and habit are not the biggest hinders to engage the respondents in textile recycling since they all in some form had textile waste habits. However the habit of throwing clothes that can't be reused could change for many consumers if their awareness and knowledge of the possibilities of textile recycling increases. According to Hjelmgren and Gustafsson's (2013:12f) it is not only habit and accessibility and that have significant impact on people's humanitarian and environmentally conscious behavior but also

knowledge. Likewise Joung (2013:693f) argues that the main reasons why consumers do not participate in textile recycling is because of the lack of education, awareness and knowledge of the consequences. Similarly Barkman (2014:61) states education as one of the main thresholds that separate attitude and behavior in sustainable consumption. Furthermore according to Falasca-Zamponi (2011:49) it is crucial for consumers to understand the connection between waste and consumption in-order for a reduction in consumption to take place. The role of knowledge was clear after interviewees watched I:CO's video and through it gaining knowledge on textile recycling resulting in many respondents said there were more prone to use the service than before having seen the video. Furthermore majority of interviewees also clearly displayed being surprised by the I:CO video introducing the concept of textiles being able to be recycled into fibers. The knowledge of this could have a large impact on the possibility of interviewees recycling clothes that are not meant to be reused. However from the interviews it is impossible to tell if the respondents who reacted positively to I:CO's version of in-store recycling will ever use the service or not. On the other hand it was clear through the interviews that other factors could possibly contribute to a new habit of using in-store recycling could be formed.

One of the factors that stood out in the interviews was the voucher, which is in-line with Davies et al. (2002:102) argument that to change an old habit into a new one the alternative needs to give a reward. I:CO's in-store recycling service is cleverly designed around the reward factor as well as Davies's et al. (2002:102) other two important factors; visibility and convenience, since the collector boxes are easy to use, placed in the main shopping districts, and offer a monetary reward. Ekström et al. (2012:97) states that a person with negative attitudes toward sustainability might still act sustainable due to external factors. The voucher can be seen as an external factor that invites a new population of consumers, like Maja, Hampus and Kajsa who according to Schwartz model have little interest or no knowledge of the consequences or responsibilities to engage in textile waste issues and discard textiles responsibly. This is due to the voucher's appeal to the economic instead of philanthropic values. In-store recycling also invites consumers who already engage in responsible textile waste behaviors, such as Moa and Samantha, to broaden their horizon of the options they have when discarding textiles. On the other hand, as stated



earlier, this thesis has no way of proving that the respondents' words lead to action. What can however be concluded is that the voucher is a powerful tool, just how powerful will be analysed in the following paragraph.

#### **4.4 The Power of the Voucher**

Before showing the interviewees I:CO's video, the majority of them admitted they had seen collector boxes at H&M at some time. On the other hand, few of them understood the whole concept of I:CO's reward-based recycling process. Some respondents saw the paradox that in-store recycling creates after seeing the video from I:CO, however the voucher served as a powerful tool to get respondents to think critically and gave more insightful answers. When shown the voucher almost all respondents' spontaneous reaction was negative to the minimum purchase rule. However the majority of respondents quickly became less negative and said that they understood the need to have a minimum purchase amount from the companies' perspective, for example interviewee Noah said;

*"[...] otherwise people could abuse the system [...] That's why it's good that it isn't too good."*

On the other hand, after showing the video, Lovisa reacted strongly against the concept;

*"But they destroy the whole concept by giving money to buy new things!"*

Similarly, Jacob spots the paradox of the reward-based in-store recycling at once. After having watched I:CO's video his spontaneous reaction to the service was;

*"[It's] both good and bad. It... I think the thought and the concept is pretty good with the recycling [...], but on the other hand because you get a voucher you're encouraging*

*further consumption, which can be seen as if you're just speeding up the [consumption-] cycle rather than solving the actual problem.”*

Samantha, who was the only interviewee who had used I:CO's in-store recycling service admitted she had reacted to the paradox when she had seen that she needed to spend 300 SEK to be able to use her voucher. The first thing she had done after having discarded her clothes was to walk around the store to look for something new. Several other respondents who had never used the service admitted they would do the same if they had received a voucher for their discarded clothes.

Parallels can be drawn from Samantha's reaction to Morgan and Birtwistle's study (2002:192) of Marks & Spencers' cooperation with Oxfam, which proved to increase sales for Marks & Spencers during the campaign. This is the effect that Falasca-Zamponi (2011:42f) warns about when recycling is portrayed as being a justification for consuming. Although Falasca-Zamponi (2011:42f) does not touch upon reward based recycling, instead has a broader view on recycling, it is clear that without a reward the risk of further consumption can be correlated with how a recycling service is portrayed or implemented. At the same time, Ekström et al. (2012:14, 46) and Palmsköld (2013:62) argue that large amounts of fast fashion consumption lead to poorer quality of the clothing and therefore large amounts of non-reusable textiles that need to be recycled. It can be argued that in-store recycling ignores the most important part of The Environmental Protection Agency (Falasca-Zamponi, 2011:42f) sponsored slogan reduce-reuse-recycle: reduce while also ignoring Ekström's et al. (2012:14) argument that retailers need to take responsibility for the consumption they encourage. In the interviews all respondents agreed that between reducing consumption, reusing materials and recycling textiles, reducing consumption was the option that would have the least negative impact on the environment. This is in line with Falasca-Zamponi (2011:43) argument that the reduction in pace and quantity in which people consume is the most important and efficient way to tackle the real problem - overconsumption. However the voucher consumers receive when using in-store recycling seems to be an incentive for increased consumption and thereby counteracting and drawing attention

away from efforts to reduce consumption. If consumers choose to recycle textiles through a participating I:CO's retailer that encourages further consumption, the consumption-wheel will keep spinning. Even though interviewees agreed on reduce being the highest ranked of the the slogan only four out of ten of the interviewees were bothered by the fact that in-store recycling, which in I:CO's video (ico-spirit.com) is portrayed as "the right thing", simply seems to cure the symptoms of the problems with textile waste rather than fixing the root of the problem (consumption). According to Falasca-Zamponi (2011:3) this due to many people not connecting their consumption to waste. If in-store recycling keeps drawing attention to away from reducing and onto recycling Falasca-Zamponi's (2011:49) wish for more consumers to gain knowledge on the connection between their consumption and waste, and to understand that when consumers defend their right to consume they simultaneously defend their privilege to create waste.

Joung (2013:694), Ekström et al. (2012), Hjelmgren and Gustafsson (2013), and Morgan and Birtwistle (2002:192) all present in-store recycling as possible solutions to engaging retailers in taking responsibility for textile waste but do not problematize the concept. Although it may be argued that in-store recycling from a corporate perspective has mainly positive effects, and from a consumer perspective can be concluded to be seen as a relatively convenient and a welcomed service, what about the environmental perspective? Is in-store recycling a way for corporations to take responsibility for textile waste or is in-store recycling, as an attendee from the waste-prevention industry seminar stated; "*Greenwashing in it's purest form*". This thesis will not look into the actual environmental impact I:CO's in-store recycling service has on the environment. However one can speculate that in-store recycling could misdirect efforts that the waste management industry has implemented to tackle increased consumption and projects focused on waste prevention. Consumers may be drawn towards a textile waste behavior where economic factors are prioritized over philanthropic factors. If focus on economic factors in disposal behaviors are stressed over philanthropic, consumers may not be inspired or encouraged to gain knowledge on textile waste options, consequences and responsibilities. Therefore it can be questioned if in-store recycling is a cure to the symptom or a solution to the problem.

## 5. Insights in Consumers' Perspective on In-Store Recycling

The purpose of this thesis was to gain insight from a consumer perspective on a reward-based in-store recycling. To understand how well the purpose of the thesis was achieved a discussion on the framework and the multiple methods used will be presented. To conclude the thesis the four questions mentioned in the introductory chapter will be revisited to ensure all are answered.

### 5.1 Vast Possibilities in Perspectives on In-Store Recycling

The results of the interviews align with the authors' of the thesis expectations, proving that the chosen theories were appropriate. The implication of using cognitive dissonance with focus on the guilt and justification, and Schwartz model of altruistic behavior (Davies et al., 2002:101) to analyze and understand the interviewees proved to be effective, but was at times missing angles or aspects not included in the theoretical framework. The authors of the thesis stress that more research on image, trust, and marketing in relation to in-store recycling as well as the cultural implication of placing textile waste in the realm of consumption is needed in future research and will therefore be developed on in following section.

#### 5.1.1 The Perspectives of Trust, Marketing, and Image

The concept of trust, loyalty and marketing were touched upon in the interviews, however are outside of the thesis's framework. For example Adrian would rather see in-store recycling being marketed by I:CO and not the participating retailer, especially in the case with H&M;

*“If it's I:CO that has responsibility for the service and not H&M then maybe it will become more trustworthy [...]If it was H&M's own recycling service like I previously thought then it would mean nothing to me. But since [H&M is cooperating with I:CO] then it's a totally different story.”*

Similar concepts were discussed in Hjelmgren and Gustafsson's (2013), and Morgan and Birtwistle (2002:196) research. Future research on how retailers image are affected by introducing in-store recycling could be done to gain insight in if more consumers share the thought of Adrian. This insight could help participating I:CO retailers to understand how they can market the service of in-store recycling. The issue of mistrust in a recycling campaign such as in-store recycling is not only connected to a company's image but also the paradoxical core purpose of the concept of in-store recycling which future research could study.

### **5.1.2 Cultural Implications of In-Store Recycling**

An interesting angle of in-store recycling that future research could study is what it will mean from a cultural perspective the future; will waste management services become part of the act of consuming? Two worlds meet when the recycling-boxes enter the stores therefore in-store recycling is challenging the norm and inviting post-consumption and consumption into the same room. Although charity shops such as Myrorna have invited reusing and recycling into the same room for several years, reward-based in-store recycling is introducing recycling and reusing in the same room as consuming new products. What happens from a cultural perspective when these two worlds are placed side by side? Furthermore could in-store recycling in the long run aid in creating a cultural paradigm shift where consumption is seen from a more circular perspective? Although many interesting theoretical and analytical angles could have been used in the thesis it is important to note that at the time of conducting the thesis in-store recycling is an unexplored concept leaving room for an array of possible research question, angles and perspectives to be applied.

## **5.2 Evaluating the Multiple Qualitative Method Approach**

The main method of interviewing ten students proved to give a deep insight into the varying perspectives consumers may have on in-store recycling. The argument that a homogenous group of interviewees would give room to difference in perception caused by factors other than financial, education and generation proved valid. The methodological approach limitations lies in the number of interviewees and focused population which results in an outcome that can't be generalized over a population. Furthermore the implication of using Generation Y as a methodological population restriction is the possibility of the authors of the thesis having a preconceived idea the social climate and common social phenomenons that affect Generation Y. A possible method that could give further insight into the thesis questions is following up the interviewees after a long time (circa 6 months) to see if they used in-store recycling, researched on the subject or in any way changed their habits or attitudes after their interviews. A second possible method is a comparative thesis between the consumer and corporate perspective. However a comparative thesis would be more relevant when more research on in-store recycling has been conducted. The use of visual aid in form of the I:CO video and a physical aid in form of a voucher from H&M proved to be crucial tools in gaining deeper insights in consumers' perspective. The video also enabled an even knowledge base between the interviewees and allowed the authors of the thesis to participate in the moment when interviewees learned about the entirety of in-store recycling for the first time.

### **5.3 Answering the Purpose of the Thesis**

In the following discussion the results of the thesis that are of interest from both the field of retail and waste management is clarified by revisiting the four questions mentioned in the introductory chapter:

- What are consumers' opinion and reaction to a reward-based in-store recycling?
- What role does moral obligation play in consumers' perception of a reward-based in-store recycling?
- Is reward-based in-store recycling convenient from a consumer perspective?
- How do consumers perceive the incentive of a reward for discarding textiles through in-store recycling?

#### **5.3.1 The Role Knowledge Plays on the Perception of In-Store Recycling**

It is clear that attitude on consumption, habits and stage on the Schwartz model of altruistic behavior (Davies et al., 2002:30f) are determining factors in how interviewees perceived in-store recycling. It seems as if the views the interviewees have on in-store recycling become more positive as the awareness of the consequences inappropriate textile discarding has on the environment increases. However, once the respondents feel responsible for the consequences of their textile waste they suddenly take a more critical view on in-store recycling. This correlates with Barkman's (2014:132) argument that once a person perceives consumption as a problem and start feeling responsible for their action, they will engage in more sustainable behavior. Similarly Falasca-Zamponi (2011:3f) points out the importance of consumers gaining knowledge on their relationship to consumption and how it affects the amount of waste produced to enable more sustainable relationships to consumption. Therefore it can be concluded that there is a possibility that the more knowledge a consumers gain on textile waste, the more critical they are likely to become to in-store recycling. Marketing of in-store recycling must therefore be sure to be directed mainly towards a consumer group with limited knowledge of textile waste so as not to attract too many critical eyes. The implication of this is that as knowledge of textile waste becomes more available in-store recycling may need to be reconstructed to avoid attracting negative criticism and attention. Some examples that were called upon from the interviewees was to make

one voucher for all participating I:CO retailers that could be used in any shop, or that a consumer could choose to donate the money offered on the voucher to charities rather than having to use it in the store. The last idea would not only be more focused on philanthropic values, it would also partially eliminate the encouragement for further consumption.

One important conclusion made through the research is that despite the interviewees being well-educated and having taken courses on sustainability the general knowledge of textile waste and its consequences are low; they showed more knowledge and understanding of production issues in the textile industry. This is a crucial conclusion for future research and for decision makers within the textile waste field, since it shows that knowledge affects the gap between attitude and behavior. It is clear that the aspect of being able to recycle clothes and textiles down to their original fiber in order to make new products is new knowledge for many of the respondents. Perhaps the spreading of this fact can prevent some consumers from discarding clothes and textiles that are non-reusable into the trash.

### **5.3.2 The Voucher from a Consumer, Corporate, and Environmental Perspective**

A key conclusion from the qualitative interviews is the power convenience plays in creating a habit. Despite the fact that many respondents do not feel or are not aware of their responsibility for the consequences of their textile disposal behavior, most interviewees have the habit of giving their old clothes to charity organizations, mainly due to the convenience of charity collector boxes. The collector boxes placed in participating I:CO retail shops are perceived as convenient, but not as convenient as the ones placed close to where the respondents live. After watching the I:CO video an interest in most interviewees was sparked due to learning that discarded items could be recycled. Hence many respondents consider changing their old textile discarding habits to using in-store recycling both because of the improved convenience of textile recycling and because of the allure of the voucher. The reward works as form of cognitive dissonance mechanism neutralizing the guilt of buying new clothes since the consumer has just acted responsibly, as Maja previously stated.



From a consumer perspective the power of the voucher seems to create a bridge over the perceived inconvenience and hassle of creating a new habit. The voucher from a corporate perspective creates a way to new invite to further consumption. However the implications of the voucher from an environmental perspective can still be questioned. Furthermore, how will the implications of the voucher from an environmental perspective affect the trust, image perception, and loyalty consumer have to the concept of in-store and participating companies? From the research conducted in the thesis it can be concluded that the implications the voucher has from an environmental perspective did not affect the majority of the interviewees on a moral level. This conclusion can also be seen when the interviewees at the end of the interview were asked whether or not they were still positive to the in-store recycling concept and the answer was an unanimous yes. This despite that the majority of the interviewees spotted the paradox in inviting consumers to responsibly recycle textiles while simultaneously encouraging further consumption. Furthermore even though four of the interviewees were critical to the concept, all of the interviewees still admitted that all attempts to milden the negative effect the textile industry has on the environment is a step in the right direction.

#### **5.4 A Step in the Right Direction**

Although the thesis takes a critical perspective on the concept in-store recycling the argument that a representative from the waste management industry who attended the waste prevention seminar said concerning in-store recycling:

*“If anything is going to happen we need the biggest corporations to engage.”*

This thought is shared by many academics and involved parties who believe that all possible practical solutions and ideas on how to engage consumers in understanding the implications of fast fashion on textile waste should be shared (Ekström et al., 2012:13; Hjelmgren & Gustafsson,

2013:75; Morgan & Birtwistle 2002:196; Joung 2013:694). Samsioe reacted similarly, stating that

*“You can be as cynical as you want, but it is good to make things visible for consumers. [...] hopefully it inspires new thoughts in some of the consumers that there is something after [consumption].”*

To enable a more sustainable textile industry all corporations within fashion retailing (especially fast fashion retailers) need to cooperate, and if their revenues increase from the campaign it might be even easier to catch their attention. From a consumer perspective Lovisa explained that even though she was sceptical to in-store recycling she saw it as an opportunity to vote for the environment and show companies that she thinks they should take responsibility. The implication of this finding is that there are consumers who appreciate retailers that attempt to take responsibility even if this means sacrificing the perfect solution (consuming less) for a good and convenient idea (in-store recycling).

## 6. Two Ideas that Deserve to be Discussed

While conducting the thesis creative and interesting ideas were gained from informal discussions with participants at the seminar and from the authors of this thesis personal interests. Two of these ideas deserve to be touched upon and will hopefully inspire to further research.

### **6.1 Sustainable Consumption Defined by who the Consumer is**

While this thesis focuses primarily on the consumers' perspective of a textile waste service, Christian Fuentes' (2012:4) research elaborates on how companies make their sustainability work meaningful for their consumer. Fuentes (2012:17) discusses the idea that companies redefine and alter their sustainability projects in accordance to their idea of who their consumer is. For example Åhlens defines its consumer as the active women who "[...] do not have the time nor the resources to manage the complexities involved in sustainable consumption." (Fuentes, 2012:14). Therefore Åhlens has chosen to have their sustainability work focused on making it easy, visible on a wide array of products to make it easy for the consumer to choose the most sustainable option (Fuentes, 2012:14). Fuentes (2012:17) explains it as "These retailers become enablers that offer consumers the opportunity to be sustainable – in different ways – and be part of a specific lifestyle." When connecting this thought with in-store recycling it could be argued that in-store recycling satisfies fast fashion consumers' definition of sustainable consumption even though it may not be sustainable consumption behavior in others definition.

### **6.2 Because It Makes You Happy**

The Danish Ministry of the Environment in cooperation with Happiness Research Institute (2015) published a report on the correlation between sustainability and happiness. The report challenges the previous preconceived notion that sustainability compromises opportunity to be happy. (The Happiness Research Institute & Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2015:15) The

issue with this notion is that “[...] quality of life entirely depends on economic growth and that personal well-being is raised through consumption and material abundance.” (The Happiness Research Institute & Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2015:15) When analyzing figures collected from circa 50,000 people from 30 nations a correlation appeared: “People who agree with the statement ‘It is important to care for the environment’ report higher levels of subjective well-being.” (The Happiness Research Institute & Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2015:16) Does this apply to sustainable issues concerning waste? Yes, according to a project undertaken by Zero-waste a Danish organization committed to eliminating waste in Denmark. The result showed that participating families reach high levels of well-being due most likely to; “a sense of purpose, a stronger community feeling, and an improvement of the visual beauty of the local surroundings.” (The Happiness Research Institute & Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2015:19, see figure 5). In light of this it can be said that the concept of in-store recycling cleverly combines the happiness created by managing textile waste with the happiness created from consumption. Or as a representative from a company in the waste industry responded when we asked of their opinion of in-store recycling; “*It’s a double adrenaline kick!*”. Further research on consumers that have used the service of in-store recycling could give insight about the prevalence of a double adrenaline kick. Is the adrenaline kick stronger when using in-store recycling in fast fashion retail companies compared to charity shops such as those driven by the Myrorna? Future research could focus on how to implement new and creative textile waste services that exploit the happiness created.

Figure 5: A Link Between Sustainable Behaviors and Happiness (The Happiness Research Institute & Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2015:22)

**FOCUSING ON WASTE MANAGEMENT, THERE ARE AT LEAST FOUR POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR WHY THERE IS A LINK BETWEEN SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOURS AND HAPPINESS.**

- 1.** Happier people are more likely to engage in waste management and sustainable behaviours. Positive emotions or a sense of flourishing may lead them to care more for their surroundings and act accordingly.
- 2.** Waste management and sustainable behaviours induce happiness in people. Waste prevention may be conducive to happiness because actions like recycling, diminished consumption, and waste reduction increase subjective well-being and satisfaction with life.
- 3.** Waste management and sustainable behaviours improve the environment and civil society, which subsequently increases happiness. So, it is not waste management itself, but the consequences of waste management that lead to happier lives.
- 4.** Happiness and sustainable behaviours may both be caused by a third common factor and may not necessarily be directly linked.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1

#### Voucher from H&M's In-Store Recycling Campaign



### Appendix 2

#### Observation Scheme

Where is the collector located in the store?

Is there any signage pointing to the location?

What knowledge does the service personnel have?:

Are answers to the these questions clearly stated close to/on the collector? (in what form)

- What are the rules?
- Where do the clothes end up?

How was the procedure to use the collector?

Could you use the collector without assistance of service personnel?



## Appendix 3:

### Individual Semi-Structured Interview Guide (English version)

#### Introduction/warm-up questions:

Age?

Main occupation?

If you're a student, do you have a part-time job? If so, where?

Do you identify yourself as a conscious consumer? (when purchasing clothes?)

How do you motivate that you are/ are not a conscious consumer?

What are your recycling behaviors with households garbage?

How often do you buy clothes (not socks/underwear)?

What stores do you prefer to shop in and why?

When was the last time you cleaned out your closet?

What was it that made you sort out your closet?

#### Main questions:

What did you do with the clothes and why?

Did you find it easy/convenient to discard the clothes?

What was it that made it easy or hard?

Did you feel that you had options on where to discard your old clothes?

Did you buy any new clothes after having cleaned out your closet?

Can you tell us anything about in-store recycling?

Have you ever used the service?

If not why and could you consider using it?

What is your opinion of in-store recycling?

(VIDEO)

After seeing the video what is your reaction and has your opinion on in-store recycling changed?

Is in-store recycling a service you would want more stores to offer?

Could in-store recycling service play an important role in choosing what store you make your next purchase in?

Do you think it is convenient? (in what ways do you find it convenient/inconvenient?)

What are the pro's and con's of in-store recycling?

Can you visualise the path from your home to the in-store recycling? Any pro's/con's?

How do you feel about the incentive of getting a discount for your old clothes?

## Individual Semi-Structured Interview Guide (Swedish version)

Introduktionsfrågor:

Vi kommer inte ha med ert namn i arbetet men kommer skriva vilken utbildning, ålder och kön du har.

Ålder?

Huvudsysselsättning?

Om du är student, har du extrajobb, vart?

Hade du sagt att du var en (miljö)medveten konsument? (När du handlar kläder?)

Varför/Varför inte?

Vad är dina återvinnings beteende/rutiner med hushållssopor?

Är det viktigt för dig att återvinna och varför?

Hur ofta köper du kläder (inte strumpor och underkläder)? / Hur mycket kläder har du handlat sista 3 månader?

Vilka butiker väljer du att handla hos (för kläder) och varför?

När rensade du ut din garderob senast?

Varför valde du att rensa ut din garderob?

Fokusfrågor:

Vad gjorde du med de utrensade kläderna?

Upplevde du att det var enkelt/bekvämt att bli av med de utrensade kläderna?

Vad gjorde det enkelt/svårt?

Upplevde du att du hade flera val av sätt att göra dig av med de utrensade kläderna?

Vet du hur processen ser ut där du har lämnat kläderna? återvinning eller återbruk?

Köpte du nya kläder i samband med att du rensade ut garderoben? (inom en månad)

Kan du berätta något om in-store recycling/återvinning i butik?

Har du någonsin använt dig av tjänsten in-store recycling?

Om du har, hur upplevde du det?

Om du inte har, varför och hade du kunnat tänka dig att använda det?

Vad är dina tankar och åsikter av in-store recycling?

(VIDEO)

Efter att ha sett videon, vad är din reaktion?

Har dina tankar och åsikter ändrats?

Varför tror du I:Co har valt att starta ett företag kring detta? (Varför finns det ett behov att ta hand om gamla kläder?)

Är in-store recycling något du hade uppskattat att se fler butiker erbjuda?

Kan in-store recycling vara en avgörande faktor för vilken butik du väljer att handla från?

Upplever du att in-store recycling är bekvämt/enkelt att använda? (Varför/Varför inte?)

Vad är för och nackdelarna med in-store recycling?

Kan du visualisera hur det hade sett ut om du skulle använda dig av in-store recycling? (Vad hade varit för/nackdelar?)

Efter att du har använt in-store recycling tjänsten och håller kupongen i handen, vad gör du närmast?

Hur upplever du incitamentet att få kupong/rabatt för dina utrensade kläder?

I videon använder dem sig av sloganen Rethink, Recycle, Reward. Denna slogan härstammar från the three R's: Reduce, reuse, recycle. Vilket R (Reduce Reuse Recycle) är det bästa alternativet för miljön och varför? Nu när du har sett videon, vilken/vilka av de tre R:en anser du att I:CO arbetar med? Så du säger att Reduce är bäst för miljön men samtidigt ser vi att I:CO fokuserar på recycling och reusing, vad får det dig att tänka på?

Så har dina tankar om in-store recycling ändrats?

Om du vill hitta information om olika alternativa sätt att göra dig av med kläder, upplever du att du vet vart du ska hitta information?

Upplever du att det är lätt att hitta mer information?

Upplever du att det kan kännas överväldigande med information och val kring textilåtervinning?

Recap

Har du några frågor eller något mer du vill tillägga

## Appendix 4

### Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Emma Samsioe (English version)

Themes to discuss:

- Fast fashion
- Generation Y
- Cognitive dissonance
- Behavior-attitude gap

Introductory questions

What are you candidating in?

Did you see the I:CO video we sent?

We have interviewed 10 students on the concept of in-store recycling, they got to see the video halfway through and also got to see an example of the voucher given to consumers. What do you think their reaction was?

Why do you many interviewees didn't see a problem with in-store recycling? (which factor, age, attitude, consumption level etc)

We could sense that many interviewees didn't see consumption as having a negative effect on the environment in term of textile waste. Why do you think that is?

Do you think there is a correlation between fast fashion and textile waste?

From a consumer perspective what do you believe are the pro's and con's of in-store recycling?

From a corporate perspective what do you believe are the pro's and con's of in-store recycling?

What are your thoughts on the implications of putting post-consumption in the same room as consumption?

Do you think in-store recycling could affect how consumers think about consumption and act?

## Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Emma Samsioe (Swedish version)

Teman att diskutera:

- Fast fashion
- Generation Y
- Cognitive dissonance
- Behavior-attitude gap

Inledningsfrågor:

Vad är du blivande doktorand i?

Hann du se videon vi skickade eller vill du se den nu?

Vi har intervjuat 10 studenter kring in-store recycling, de har fått se videon vi skickade till dig och har fått hålla i kupongen man får av H&M. Vad tror du deras rektion var?

Varför tror du att många inte såg det som problematiskt eller paradoxalt? (Vilken variabel tror du det hänger på: ålder, utbildning, intresse etc)

Vi kunde tyda på att det var många som inte störde sig på att konsumtion har en negativ påverkan på miljön eller kopplade konsumtion till ökad textil avfall, varför tror du att det är så?

Vad är det inom fast fashion konceptet som du tror bidrar till ökad textilt avfall?

Om du ser från ett konsumentperspektiv, vad tycker du är för- och nackdelarna med att erbjuda en sådan här service?

Om du ser från ett rent företagsperspektiv, vad tycker du är för- och nackdelarna med att erbjuda en sådan här service?

Vad är dina tankar kring att ha konsumtion och post-konsumtion i samma rum?

Tror du att in-store recycling kan ändra våra köpbeteende då konsumenter möts av början och slutet och konsumtionscirkeln i samma rum? (varför/varför inte)