The interplay between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction
A qualitative study of consumers in the clothing industry

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on clarifying how brand loyalty interplays with brand satisfaction. As most research conducted on this subject have been quantitative, this study takes a qualitative approach as a way to further describe the interplay on an individual level in a specific context, in this case the clothing industry. It has been conducted through semi-structured interviews, using seven heterogeneously brand loyal informants who answered questions concerning their brand satisfaction and brand loyalty towards brands within the clothing industry. The results demonstrate that there are significant differences in the interplay on the individual level, though most of these can be explained through previous research. Furthermore, there is considerable differences between interplay that can be explained by the brand loyalty levels of the informants. The interplay was clear amongst manifestly brand satisfied consumers. Subcategories to mental brand loyalty influenced both brand loyalty and brand satisfaction and the identification-subcategory had a distinct influence on the reasoning of all consumers.

Keywords: Brand loyalty, brand satisfaction, mental brand loyalty dimension, behavioural brand loyalty dimension, manifest brand satisfaction, latent brand satisfaction, disconfirmation paradigm
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1. Introduction

As competitors in different markets, especially the retail market, have multiplied and products have turned more homogenous, the importance of focusing on existing consumers has increased (Fornell, 1992; Lewis and Dart, 2010; Rosenberg and Czepiel, 1984). This is due to the cost of retaining existing consumers being much lower than that of gaining new ones (A dictionary of marketing, 2016). Maintaining existing consumers can be achieved through consumer loyalty and it has thus become highly researched. It is a measure of how unwilling a consumer would be to switch from one competing brand, service or product to another (ibid.). In turn, it contains the subcategory brand loyalty and research on consumer loyalty has been widely applied on brand loyalty (e.g., Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Söderlund, 2001:30; Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). Brand-loyal consumers are willing to pay more for a particular brand, since they perceive a value in it that no alternative can provide (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) The factors that drive brand loyalty is thus becoming increasingly important to researchers (Veloutsou, 2015).

Much research has in turn attempted to identify the influences on brand loyalty, usually mentioning consumer satisfaction, brand evaluation and trust forming (e.g., Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Fornell, 1992; Hess and Story, 2005; Oliver, 1999; Schirmer et al., 2016; Veloutsou, 2015). There is a common belief among marketers that consumer satisfaction in particular exerts a positive effect on purchasing behaviour, thus becoming a primary source for the firm's consumer-relationship-building (Hess and Story, 2005; Peluso, 2011:2). It is therefore one of the most frequently discussed influences on brand loyalty, as there seems to be a connection between high consumer satisfaction and high consumer loyalty (A dictionary of marketing, 2016).

As with consumer loyalty, consumer satisfaction contains the subcategory of brand satisfaction. Whereas consumer satisfaction describes the consumer’s feeling towards an object or service in general, brand satisfaction describes satisfaction towards brands in particular (Bloemer and Kasper 1995; Oliver, 1999; Söderlund, 2001:30; Veloutsou 2015). Oliver (1999) in turn points out the difference between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty, stating that brand satisfaction could be considered as a temporary feeling after consumption, whereas brand loyalty represents a longer-lasting feeling (Oliver, 1999).
In *Whence Consumer Loyalty*, one of the most widely cited works in this field, Oliver (1999) problematizes the concept of brand satisfaction, as he concludes that brand satisfied consumers are not necessarily brand loyal and that brand loyal consumers will not necessarily be less so as a result of lower brand satisfaction (Oliver, 1999). Furthermore, when brand satisfaction results in strong brand loyalty, known as true brand loyalty, it apparently diminishes significantly in importance when it comes to maintaining it (Oliver, 1999). These conclusions make the interplay between brand satisfactions and brand loyalty particularly interesting to investigate. In the mid-90s, Bloemer and Kasper (1995) concluded that the relationship between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction has not been fully understood and this still seems to be the case, since research still investigates this interplay (e.g., Broback 2009; Schirmer et al., 2016; Veloutsou, 2015). How brand satisfaction interplays with brand loyalty therefore remains a major question for marketers (Peluso, 2011; Veloutsou 2015). While several studies have shown a positive relationship between them (e.g., Bennett and Rundle-Thiele, 2001; Bloemer and Kasper, 1995; Veloutsou, 2015), and the mixed findings amongst researchers have contributed to the conclusion that the relationship between the two seems to be contextual (Oliver, 1999; Schirmer et al. 2016; Szymanski and Henard, 2001) Furthermore, brand loyalty does not have to be dependent on brand satisfaction (Szymanski and Henard, 2001; Veloutsou, 2015), and brand satisfaction does not have to be a factor in the creation of brand loyalty (Oliver, 1999). All these different results points toward the uncertainty of how the interplay could be described, in particular depending on the context. There is thus a need for more context specific research that can contribute to the understanding of the interplay between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty. In the next section we further discuss how we aim to do such a study and why.

### 1.2 Purpose

When newer research has attempted to pinpoint this relationship in different contexts, it has often been done through a quantitative approach (Bennett and Rundle-Thiele, 2001; Bloemer and Kasper, 1995; Oliver, 1999; Veloutsou, 2015). In order to reach increased understanding, we deem it necessary to try another approach. We therefore create a theoretical framework for brand satisfaction and brand loyalty and describe their interplay qualitatively in a specific and isolated context. Thereby contributing to a better understanding the individual differences
in interplay and of how the concepts can interplay depending on situation and individuals reasoning concerning their interplay.

The clothing industry is interesting to look at, due to clothing being a product that is consumed by everyone, resulting in most people having unique opinions and preferences. Furthermore, due to ever-shifting fashion trends, the focus and esthetics of producers clothing products are bound to change constantly. In such an environment, one would assume that brand loyalty becomes important for the producers, as they would want to maintain their customers despite the ever-changing nature of the product. Consequently, this implies an importance of brand satisfaction, due to its assumed interplay with brand loyalty in this context (Peluso, 2011:1). Looking at the clothing business as a whole means suggests that one would have to take too many factors into account, therefore we found it is found necessary to delimit to one specific price range. We also wanted to exclude happenstance buying as much as possible, therefore focusing on a higher price segment as expensive clothing create a bigger financial impact on the average consumer, making it reasonable to assume that the purchase decision on average is preceded by more consideration that can be valued in describing the interplay. It paves way for more insightful responses from the informants, as they will most probably have considered their purchases. Yet the highest price segment is not chosen. The reason is that the average consumer does not consume the most expensive products on a regular basis, meaning that they have more limited experiences of brands within that segment. We therefore look at brands with a price range between 1000 SEK and 5000 SEK for the average clothing garment. Through this approach, the interplay between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction in the clothing industry within an “upper-middle-price” segment is described. This allows one to understand more clearly how brand satisfaction interplays with brand loyalty in a specific context, thereby contributing to the overall understanding of the concepts.

In the next section the theoretical framework is described. A description of how the study was conducted is presented in the method section. Thereafter, disclosing our results in the section results from interviews. We then discuss the results and classify the informants brand satisfaction and brand loyalty and then analyse the interplay between the informants classification. Lastly, a conclusion is presented to our study and suggested further studies.
2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework is structured by first defining brand loyalty. The two different brand loyalty dimensions, behavioural and mental brand loyalty, which together forms a true brand loyal consumer. Followed by defining brand satisfaction as well as the two different categories of brand satisfaction, manifest and latent brand satisfaction. The theoretical framework that is built will be applied when describing how brand loyalty and brand satisfaction interplays.

2.1. Defining brand loyalty

Brand loyalty has been defined as; “a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour” (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001:82; Oliver, 1999:34). The description shows that the consumer still finds the need to repurchase and commit to a certain brand instead of others, despite negative external influences.

The brand loyalty idea assumes there is an actor with a free will, that there is an object towards which the actor is aiming their will and that brand loyalty is a relationship built over time (Söderlund, 2001). The last denominator, time, is of particular importance. It leads to some ambiguity, since one can question which time frame that is required for a consumer's behaviour to be defined as brand loyal (Söderlund, 2001). The long-term brand loyalty relationship can also occur in two different dimensions: A dimension of behavioural brand loyalty and a dimension of mental brand loyalty (Söderlund, 2001). Furthermore it has been discussed whether both dimensions, behavioural and mental, are needed for the creation of a higher level of brand loyalty, known as true brand loyalty, where most researchers agree that they do (e.g., Bandyopadhyay and Martell, 2007; Bloemer and Kasper, 1995; Söderlund, 2001; Veloutsou, 2015).
2.1.1 The behavioural brand loyalty dimension

The behavioural dimension of brand loyalty is detected from the consumers observable patterns, which refers to re-purchasing items from the same brand. The observable pattern is measured through how much a consumer has been buying a certain product from a brand. This is put in relation to the total amount of years the consumer has been a consumer of that specific type of product. In addition, another measure that has been used is the consumer share which describes the total share of the consumed products that is put on a certain brand during a period of time. Non-purchase behaviour is also added to the description, which includes the power of word-of-mouth. (Söderlund, 2001:31-34)

Bloemer and Kasper (1995) describe the behavioural dimension of brand loyalty by adding the component of inertia to the observable purchase pattern. It is described that the behavioural brand loyalty dimension also refers to a consumer that due to inertia easily choses to buy the product they need from another brand than the one chosen previously when in need of the precise product (ibid.). Inertia is in turn a sign of passive consumption, where choices are made without thorough contemplation. For example, if the consumer finds a better deal, they might choose another brand instead of the one previously consumed (ibid.). Oliver (1999) concludes that behavioural brand loyalty, such as consistent repurchase of a product, could be an invalid indicator of brand loyalty as the consumer can do happenstance buying or have a preference for convenience. This further points to the importance of the mental brand loyalty dimension.

2.1.2 The mental brand loyalty dimension

The mental dimension of brand loyalty refers to the psychological perspective containing the factors which are necessary for a higher level of brand loyalty. This dimension consists of the non-observable patterns of consumers. (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995; Söderlund, 2001:31; Veloutsou, 2015). Research has shown that two consumers can repurchase the same products from a brand, have identical behaviour, yet differentiate themselves considerably in their mental process prior to and after the purchase (Söderlund, 2001:27-31). The mental brand loyalty dimension is in turn built on attitudes, intentions and their relationship to the actor's
object. Actor is the consumer and objects includes products from a certain brand (Söderlund, 2001:26-27).

The mental brand loyalty dimension therefore consists of the reflection and research conducted by the consumer. This in turn leads to an action in the form of consumption. The consumer without a mental emotional connection can easily switch consumption behaviour when they find an equal product from another brand. The consumer that is brand loyal in the mental brand loyalty dimension, will be less prone to stop consuming a certain brand's products according to research. (Söderlund, 2001: 28-31).

The mental dimension has been described by Söderlund (2001) through six different subdimensions: Intentions, attitudes, preferences, commitment, identification and involvement. The subdimension of intention measures the consumer's intention to act in a certain way. The underlying assumption when using this measure is that intentions has a prediction-value when it comes to the consumers future behaviour. It is important to remember that the consumers intention does not always become action. (Söderlund, 2001:36-37)

The subdimension attitudes concerns the attitudes the consumer has towards an object, for example a product or a brand. This dimension is also one of the most notable differences between the dimensions of mental brand loyalty and behavioural brand loyalty, as an attitude might not be developed on a behavioural level. It is also important not to confuse attitudes with intentions, since intentions concerns the will to do something, whereas attitudes reflects positive and negative judgement towards the object. (Söderlund, 2001:37)

The subdimension preferences reflect how brand's strengths depend on the degree of preference a consumer has for that particular brand. Preferences could develop to an extent where a consumer persistently wants to buy a certain product and only from a particular brand. It is also possible to interpret a preference as a type of attitude, as they could be a result from an underlying judgement. (Söderlund, 2001:37-38)

The subdimension commitment measures a consumer's will to put effort into consuming a brand's products. Even when a consumer faces problems in the short term, the consumer will remain brand loyal over time if they have a high level of commitment. An example could be a consumer who has their wage cut significantly for a period, yet does not try to find substitutes for their preferred brands during that time. (Söderlund, 2001:38-39)
The subdimension \textit{identification} explains if the consumer defines itself as part of the brand. Which means what the brand offers, its values and what it represents (Söderlund, 2001:39). The subdimension \textit{involvement} is the extent to which an object or brand is of importance to the consumer. When a higher level of involvement is found, it indicates that the consumer will be motivated to process, pay attention to and respond to information about a product or brand. When describing involvement, the degree of experienced personal affinity is brought up as an indicator of personal relevance to the consumer. Thus, if a consumer experiences personal affinity, the level of involvement will heighten. (Söderlund, 2001:39-40).

The mental dimension of brand loyalty becomes important through the six subdimensions of non-observable patterns which in turn can lead to true brand loyalty.

2.1.3 True brand loyalty

For a consumer to experience true brand loyalty, they must have developed both a behavioural and a thoroughly elaborated mental brand loyalty dimension. True brand loyalty is defined by the psychological function expressed over time, with an elaborated decision-making process where the consumer chooses one brand's products over a set of others. The consumer should evaluate the brand choice and if this results in commitment, the consumer gradually reaches true brand loyalty. (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995)

The definition shows that true brand loyalty is a mix of both a psychological part, including an elaborated and evaluated decision, as well as a re-buying pattern that is typical of the behavioural brand loyalty dimension. A truly brand loyal consumer is fully committed to their brand, which entails that they insist on re-buying the next time they need products from that product category (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). Consumers are also less affected to change their mind from outside negative factors or influences, which shows that true brand loyalty is a more durable state of brand loyalty (Veloutsou, 2015). Furthermore, Oliver (1999) describes it as a consumer who has the desire to rebuy a product from a brand at all costs, despite any existing impediments (1999).

Commitment is the significant component of true brand loyalty (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). It is however not only necessary for true brand loyalty, it is highly relevant to brand satisfaction as well. Research has shown a positive impact of brand satisfaction on true brand loyalty (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). However, Oliver (1999) concludes that brand loyal
consumers do not necessarily have to be brand satisfied to be brand loyal. In the following section, the concept of brand satisfaction and the different aspects that determine if a consumer is brand satisfied is explained.

2.2 Defining brand satisfaction

Oliver (1999) states that brand satisfaction is when a consumer will find itself satisfied with a product when their subjective summarized evaluation of a brand’s products performance exceeds or equals their personal expectations. This definition is called the disconfirmation paradigm and is widely cited and referred to in brand satisfaction research (e.g., Bloemer and Kasper 1995, Hsu et al. 2016; Peluso, 2011:3). It describes the difference between the expectations that the consumer may have had prior to using or buying a product from the brand and the actual performance of the product as perceived after consumption, which means that brand satisfaction is created post-consumption (Oliver, 1980; Oliver, 1999; Peluso, 2011:13). The definition of brand satisfaction is widened by adding that brand satisfaction is a pleasurable fulfillment. The consumer fulfills a personal need, desire, goal or other pre-purchase internal standard of comparison which is pleasurable (Oliver, 1999; Peluso, 2011:14). Furthermore, two different types of brand satisfaction exist, which are called manifest brand satisfaction and latent brand satisfaction (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). These are described in detail in the following two sections.

2.2.1 Latent brand satisfaction

A consumer is said to be latently brand satisfied if they are not fully aware of their own brand satisfaction, which means that they have not gone through a process of analysing what they prefer and why. A consumer feels latent brand satisfaction when there is no explicit comparison made between brands and the brands products. Explicit comparison is non-existent or not fully developed and the consumer is lacking motivation and/or the ability to evaluate their brand choices. Bloemer and Kasper (1995) explain that a consumer with latent brand satisfaction has done an implicit evaluation which has not in turn been evaluated. They conclude that the evaluation has been done without question or thought, thus without an active evaluation process. Therefore, the evaluation has not been completed. The degree of elaboration, changing if a consumer would become more motivated or have the ability to
evaluate a brand. the consumer's latent brand satisfaction could develop to become manifest brand satisfied. (ibid.)

2.2.2 Manifest brand satisfaction

It is stated that manifest brand satisfaction occurs if the consumer is motivated to make an evaluation and has the capacity to do so. Manifest brand satisfaction is thus characterised by the supposition that the consumer will make a comparison between expectation and brand’s product performance. Therefore, a consumer is supposed to evaluate a brand and elaborate on the expectations and performance, and see expectation and performance as separate factors. To be able to do this, the consumer must be motivated and show capacity to evaluate the brand relative to their subjective reference point, such as previous experiences from similar products and brands, as both factors, - expectation and performance. (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995)

To summarize, manifest brand satisfaction is a type of brand satisfaction which is thoroughly elaborated upon. Consumer’s should be well aware of the outcome of their evaluation as well as their brand satisfaction from their explicit comparison of subjective expectations and post-consumption performance. This should, according to Bloemer and Kasper (1999), lead to a higher degree of commitment. The conclusion they make shows that the impact of manifest brand satisfaction on true brand loyalty is greater than the positive impact of latent brand satisfaction on true brand loyalty. Another drawn conclusion was also that the consumer's motivation to evaluate the consumer's brand choice had a direct positive effect on true brand loyalty. (ibid.)

In the final section, we describe how we will analyze the information we gather.

2.3 Analysis model

By using the theoretical framework for brand loyalty and brand satisfaction, a description on how the two concepts interplay with each other for each consumer will be made. This will be done by continuously classifying which type of brand loyalty and brand satisfaction each consumer expresses. The interplay between their brand loyalty and brand satisfaction will then be discussed for each consumer individually. Lastly a description of the differences between the informants individual interplay will be given where they are found.
3. Method

Here, we explain how we choose our method approach, our informants, constructed our interviews as well as operationalized our theoretical framework. First, we describe why we opted for a qualitative approach.

3.1 A qualitative approach

A qualitative approach puts focus on the details and nuances that make each studied individual unique (Jacobsen, 2002:142), as well as implications and effects, thereby trying to understand how people construct their view of the world (Alvehus, 2013:20). In turn, the main contribution of a qualitative analysis is that it points towards the complexity of cause and effect relationships (Alvehus, 2013:21). These aspects were fitting, as we wanted to analyze the seemingly context-dependent, interplay between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction in the clothing industry. In particular when it comes to analyzing the interplay in a specific context, such as in the clothing industry, qualitative research is optimal since it offers true understanding of a phenomena in a particular situation (Jacobsen, 2002:142-143). This approach is in turn important, as research conducted earlier on brand satisfaction and brand loyalty has generally been quantitative (eg., Bloemer and Kasper, 1995; Oliver, 1999; Broback, 2009; Veloutsou, 2015; Schirmer et al., 2016). We choose to contribute to the qualitative research as it seems necessary to fully understand how the interplay works on an individual level, meriting further studies in this area.

In turn, one of the most common methods when doing qualitative research are interviews (Alvehus, 2013:23), as they give context-specific insight into the subjective perspectives and reflections of individuals (Dalen, 2015:14). We therefore choose to do interviews with consumers interested in clothing, as they would give us the best opportunity to analyze how individual consumers express and discuss their interplay of their brand loyalty and brand satisfaction in the chosen context (Fejes and Thornberg, 2015:34-35).

The type of interview that would best fit our approach was semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews allow for several individuals to reflect on the same questions, while they simultaneously allow the spontaneous addition of questions when the informant
touch upon interesting aspects (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2013:46-47). As we assumed the informants would have different and unique perspectives, we wanted our interviews to be flexible. They also give the informants more space to contemplate their subjective views (Lantz, 2013:43). While at the same time following a structure based on our theoretical framework. This approach also allows structuring of the interviews in such a way that they can be steered towards the central questions in a way that familiarises the informant with the central concepts (Lantz, 2013:36).

In the next section, we will elaborate further on how we selected our informants, followed by a section on how we set the criteria for our interviews.

3.2 Choosing our informants

To find our informants, we used a strategic selection approach, in other words an active selection of informants on our behalf. This was because it ensures that we got informants that can give relevant information (Alvehus, 2013:67). First, we formulated a set of criteria that each informant should fulfill. The informants should live or work full time in Stockholm. This was due to the importance of them being passively exposed to as many competitors as possible, and not needing to actively search for clothes to be exposed to different set of brands. While also having access to stores that carry clothes within the price-segment we studied. Examples of brands we considered to meet the criteria of the upper-middle price segment includes, but are not limited to: Acne Studios, Dagmar, Filippa K, Hope, Michael Kors, Our Legacy, Samsoe Samsoe, Whyred, Tommy Hilfiger, Ralph Lauren.

Furthermore, we wanted a selection of people with heterogenous brand loyalty dimensions so we could also discuss how the interplay looked like depending on the level of brand loyalty. The strategic approach allowed us to be sure that both mental, behavioural and true brand loyalty was represented in our selection. We did this by identifying people from our surrounding of acquaintances, whom we considered to have tendencies to belong in the respective brand loyalty dimensions. In addition, we asked them if they were willing to participate. Further, as previously mentioned in 3.1, it was important that the informants we contacted had some interest in clothes.

In the end, we found about twenty people who we considered to be possible informants. The next step was to choose the appropriate amount of interviews. As described
by Kvale and Brinkmann (2014:156-157), the chosen amount of informants depends on the purpose of the study. They do also lift the concept of saturation, which is when the data gathering process reaches a point where additional interviews does not result in any more findings or perspectives (ibid). Reaching saturation is also common when studying a well defined social group (Alvehus, 2013:69). Which we identified as being the case in our study. We therefore decided to interview people we found relevant until we reached a point where the answers started to become similar. When the answers did not show on any relevant different way of reasoning from the informants we interpreted this as reaching saturation. In our case, we reached a degree of saturation where we considered the data collection complete after seven interviews.

We gathered seven informants: Johan, Emelie, Sofia, Leo Monique, Anna and Oscar. We created Figure 1. Level of brand loyalty found on page fifteen and grouped the informants in accordance with their presumed type of brand loyalty to showcase their individual level of brand loyalty. We knew all of the informants to have behaviourally loyal tendencies. Thus, the figure was constructed to include behavioural brand loyalty in all its stages. The bottom contains behavioural brand loyal consumers, the middle section contains consumers with both mental brand loyalty dimension and behavioural brand loyalty dimension tendencies. Finally, true brand loyalty is the upper section and has both dimensions incorporated. Each part of Figure 1 represents a type of brand loyalty and each individual's placement within Figure 1. indicates their brand loyalty ranking, as presumed by us, where Oscar is considered the most brand loyal and Johan the least.
In the next section, we will discuss the interview questions, as well as how the interviews were conducted.

### 3.3 Operationalization

When we created our interview questions, the questions used by previous researchers, mainly Veloutsou (2015) and Bloemer and Kasper (1995), served as an inspiration. They offered a relevant insight into how we could structure our interview and how the questions should be organized. As the interviews were semi-structured, we created a framework consisting of eighteen questions, as well as a preparation of potential follow up questions that we could use depending on the informants answers. We conducted test interviews before we set meetings with our informants. As it allowed us to test the questions and our interview techniques (Dahlen, 2015:40). Before we conducted the interviews, we told the informants that they...
were to partake in an interview on consumer behaviour. We also informed them why they had been selected and asked them to center their answers around the “upper mid price-segment” of clothing. This was done so the informants would understand the purpose of the interview and direct their focus to significant aspects, since it makes for a more effective interview (Lantz, 2013:71).

We organised the questions in three separate groups for the guideline. Questions 1-2 where intended as a warm up that would introduce the informants to the concepts of clothing and brands. After they had reflected upon these, the step to the brand loyalty questions would come naturally. Even though questions 1-2 were intended as a warm up, they still offered insight into the consumer's brand loyalty. Question 1 did this in particular. When asked about their purchasing process, it showcased if planning was important to the informants, which intentions they prioritized, as well as their attitudes. Question 2 was in turn particularly focused on attitudes. Questions 3-10 where thus centered on how the informants viewed trying new brands, what made them want to do it, if they had favourite brands and what they valued with them. These questions exclusively tried to identify intentions, attitudes, preferences, commitment, identification and involvement. Since they are the subdimensions and predictors of the mental brand loyalty dimension. Questions 3 and 6 were particularly focused on identifying commitment, as we considered it one of the central predictors to the degree of mental brand loyalty leading to true brand loyalty. Question 9-10 with follow up questions made during the interviews in accordance to what the informants explained, looked into the interplay with brand satisfaction.

Questions 11-18 explored the respondents brand satisfaction, focusing on the expectations the consumers had when trying new brands, whether they were fulfilled, how seeing brands in different contexts would affect them and what would make them stop buying a brand. Some of these questions also included brand loyalty aspects, but we centered the discussion on brand satisfaction as much as possible. Furthermore, questions 11-18 incorporated brand satisfaction and identity to a larger extent while also looking at the interplay with brand loyalty. Questions 11 and 13 was intended to identify if the informant was manifestly or latently brand satisfied by making them elaborate on the expectation for their brand satisfaction and commitment. Questions 17 and 18 looked into the interplay with brand loyalty giving the chance to the informants to describe and reason around the subjects. Between question 11 and 13 we started to see that the informants started to discuss the
interplay. The expectation and performance evaluation was specifically looked at in the brand satisfaction section of the interviews, such as in question 11, 12 and 18, it could also be identified through questions earlier in the interview, especially the warm-up questions.

The interviews were conducted in private at an office where no one could hear the informant nor influence their willingness to answer. The average interview took about 40 minutes and were recorded with the permission of the informants. We also informed the informants about the extent of the research, where the information could be found and whom might read it. As per request from some of the informants, all of the names were anonymized. The recorded interviews were then transcribed, since it would make it easier for us to analyse the information. When conducting the interviews, we focused on words like expectations, routine and frequency, instead of bringing up the words brand loyalty and brand satisfaction. Which could have lead them to discuss different things (Lantz, 2013:44).

In the following section we will describe how we analysed our results in relation to the questions given by the informants and which particular words or reasonings we looked for.

3.4 Analysing the interviews

After conducting the seven interviews we transcribed all the interviews, printed them and started to highlight what information that would be relevant to classify their brand loyalty and brand satisfaction and how to describe the interplays between the two concepts.

We searched for the intensity of their repurchasing of particular brands, how well they could motivate these purchases, word-of-mouth behaviour and how much of a product category from a particular brand they consumed. As well as how long they had been loyal to the brand. This was done to classify the behavioural brand loyalty dimension. When classifying how the informants described the mental brand loyalty dimension, we searched in particular for words or quotes that showed on how well elaborated the decisions and choices that lead to the six subdimensions were. For true brand loyalty, we focused on the commitments the informants showcased, the effect of negative influence as well as how well elaborated the decision to buy a certain brand's products was to discuss if they evaluated the consumption choices. When analysing the interplay, we looked at each respondent's level of brand loyalty and brand
satisfaction. How they described the different factors in either their brand loyalty or brand satisfaction could affect the other one.

In the final part of the method, we will discuss the encountered problems with our method approach.

3.5 Method criticism

Criticism can be directed towards us knowing the informants. Since we searched for heterogeneous levels of brand loyalty in our informants and used a strategic selection, the informants had to be found in our surrounding of acquaintances. Knowing the informants can lead to biased answers both concerning sensitive subjects as brand ethics and the financial ability the informants have to purchase a certain amount of clothing. Although, the opposite was found when executing the interviews. Everyone was comfortable in the presence of someone they trusted and knew, therefore freely discussing the subjects. Several informants said that ethics was not important or that they sometimes had to hold back on clothing purchases as the expenses on other areas was too high for them to legitime buying more clothes that month. This indicates that a high degree of trustworthiness can be found in our informants answers aswell the way we conducted our gathering of primary data sources.

We needed to know beforehand which tendencies of brand loyalty towards brands in the clothing industry they would categorise into. This resulted in the informants being quite homogenous in age, wage, and full time jobs. Still differences were found in family settings, kids and further general background. The similarities concerning what they do as a professional was not seen as affecting our research nor the individual view the informants had on their personal interplay between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction. Instead we found that the similarities made it easier to compare their individual interplay between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction without other factors being an influence as well.

The theoretical framework is mainly based on Bloemer and Kasper’s (1995) “The complex relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty”, Richard Oliver's (1999) “Whence consumer loyalty” and Magnus Söderlunds (2001) book “Den lojala kunden”. The research can be seen as rather outdated, however, they are major works in the field and have had a considerable impact on other researchers, as they are still being used referred to (e.g, Veloutsou, 2015; Hsu et al., 2016). We offset this by also using more recent
work based on the original theories. Amongst them are Alessandro M. Peluso's (2011) book “Consumer satisfaction: advancements in theory, modeling, and empirical findings”. These sources do not only provide a relevant insight into the contemporary research, but also showcase the relevance of the problem.

4. Results from interviews

The interviews that were conducted will be presented in accordance to Figure 1. page 15 in the method. The figure illustrates the informants tendencies on brand loyalty levels of behavioural and mental brand loyalty dimensions and true brand loyalty.

4.1 The sensation driven consumer - Johan

Johan explains that sensation is an extremely important attribute when he consumes clothing. He clarifies that ”sensation is an esthetical need. In my opinion, there are not many functional needs”. He also tries unknown brands spontaneously. This due to his trust towards the service and his reclamation rights. If he experiences a high degree of positive sensation, the interest for the brand will heighten and he would consider re-buying a product despite poor quality. But that did not mean he would continue to re-buy from the brand in general he said. He gives an example of a pair of poor quality Whyred-shoes he had bought: “They broke after a year, which was disappointing […] but i bought a new pair this year, which also broke, but I am still satisfied with the shoes […] so even if the quality hasn't held and the shoe has broken twice, I think that you should not give up”. He also explains that chances of him going back to a particular brand whose clothing products had been good earlier was greater. He did not consider social contexts important, unless taken to the extreme: “If there was Sandqvist commercials on every Mcdonald's coffee cup, then i would probably stop buying it ”. The ethical aspects were also of minor importance. But if he in some sense feels that the clothes adds to his image, he could re-purchase and also talk in favour of the brands: “It is very fun if you start buying from a new brand who is not that well established, and you want to stand out, and then tell your friends about your new favourite brand”.

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4.2 The service driven consumer - Emelie

Emelie explained that her favourite brands were & Other stories, Rodebjør and Bimba Y Lola and that they had been for some time. She could however buy products from another brand if the opportunity came. Emelie explained that it was more fun and cool to consume brands that was modern and in the now, clothing people in her surrounding would recognize. Since it also were important that not everybody had the same clothes as her. Emelie would just take notice of a new brand if it triggered her curiosity. If she did not know about the brand she usually did some research before purchasing. She also mentioned that the expectation she had on the brands she liked was “to be satisfied”, saying that she did consume expensive clothes instead of H&M because she thought they would be sustainable and a better long term investment. Emelie showed low interest in ethical aspects, stating that neither a poor nor a positive ethical record would affect her. She justifies this by saying that if you do, you have to make it your lifestyle in all aspects of your consumption. But if the wrong person would use the brands products it would negatively affect her. As an example she said that if Pernilla Wahlgren, a Swedish singer, would wear one of her favourite brands, for example a dress, she might consider not rebuying from that brand. The opposite would enhance the social status that the brand is giving her, and thereby making it more interesting. At the same time, she clarifies that the most important factor in her consumption of the brands is that she truly liked them herself.

4.3 The price quality connecting consumer - Sofia

She considers the brands to be of superior quality and image, stating that “[...] There’s a reason why I do not buy pants from H&M. The more expensive the clothes are, the more things that are important to me they contain. There is some kind of quality stamp on those brands”. Her favourite brands are Filippa K, J.Crew and Dagmar, though she said she could abandon them if they changed aesthetics to much. She explained that if they were not aesthetically pleasing, they would not match her personal expectations and she would not repurchase. It was also of great importance that the quality was good in relation to the price. She stated that “You can say that if it is 80% wool and 20% cashmere it will with no doubt be of good quality ... I always look at materials”. Furthermore, it was always good if the product
was “made in italy”. She was also comfortable in her way of consuming products; “I am very risk-minimizing … if I would buy something from the internet, I would first go to the store to, de facto, see what the product looks like”. She could go on unplanned shopping sprees, but mainly bought brands she knew about, unless advised by a friend or a blogger. This could happen often, as she explained herself to be quite spontaneous. She did not prioritize CSR, stating that “you know what, it is actually not that important”. She would however re-consider buying from a brand if the conditions for the workers were not good, but again concluded that if the workers were in Europe the conditions “has to be good”. She was however sensitive to social scandals from a brand.

4.4 The fashion driven consumer - Leo

Leo explained that he has gained considerable exposure to different clothing brands through his work. Though he was not actively searching for information on new brands, he was still exposed to it through work and social media and continually found new brands of interest. He described his favourite brands as actively selected by himself. He explained that there was a certain quota of brands to be filled and that he did not find new favourites often. He had favourite brands within different categories of clothing, which he in turn had purchased for several years. Two he mentioned were Filippa K and Calibrese. He expresses himself with his clothing, therefore his preferences could change over time. Leo was also stringent in putting his own needs and tastes at the top and showcased a low sensitivity towards factors such as others opinions and trends. He explained that “I am undeniably inspired by what I already own, and therefore I continue to consume those brands”. He valued treatment and service and he explained that it can create a desire to re-purchase. He truly felt that the social responsibility a brand undertook was of importance. Furthermore, he also pointed out ethical factors as central to his evaluation, though ethics mainly acted as a reason for stopping to consume a brand rather than an incitement to start, though he saw it as positive when brands made ethical statements he identified with. He did considerable ethical research before purchasing new brands and would stop to consume from a brand in a social scandal. He also explained that he would become less prone to re-purchase a brand's product if the quality decreased, although he might not stop consuming it all together.
4.5 The knowledgeable consumer - Monique

Monique did not test new brands often, preferring the brands she already knew well. She described how she felt no need to follow the brands she liked, since she “knew them so well”, showing she had accumulated knowledge from repeat purchases. She did express interest in trying new brands, but considered the supply in Sweden too homogenous for her. She knew exactly what she liked, having contemplated this extensively. She also held onto her favourites: “Why should I switch brands if I like them?”. However, she stated that she would stop consuming a brand quickly if she experienced that she did not get what she paid for, an evaluation she did after each purchase. A deterioration in quality in particular was one of the main reasons to stop consuming a brand. Filippa K was an example: “[...] their clothing has gradually deteriorated in quality, I am not satisfied with the quality after washing the clothing and I have had holes in my blouses, so I have stopped buying their clothing”. She clarified that “If i am supposed to pay that much, they must maintain a certain level” She put her own preferences regarding price, quality, fit and look first, before ethical and social factors as well as the opinions of others. Her statements “I am very stubborn, because I like what I like [...] you should not be affected by everything” and “[...] it is always a bonus if a brand pursues CSR, but it is not super important” clearly shows this. Monique further explained that “I want to know what I am going to get - it feels safe, especially when you are buying something expensive”. Monique was clear concerning the brands ethics, as she would definitely stop consuming a brand she liked if they would be in a social scandal.

4.6 The true brand loyal consumer - Anna

Anna had spontaneous, yet determined, shopping patterns and regularly took walks in department stores that held her favourite brands. Determined does in this case mean that she usually went there spontaneously, though with the purpose of looking at her favourite brands. She could consider unknown brands if they were to “pop up” during these rounds, though she did not actively search for them. Her three favourite brands, which she has consumed for several years, were Samsoe & Samsoe, Filippa K and Ida Sjöstedt: “If I am looking for festive clothing I always go to Ida Sjöstedt”. She showcased high tolerance towards these favourites and negative external influence would not offset her from to re-buying them. She
explained herself: “I am very strong in my own opinions, so I would not care that much [...] if someone says something is ugly and I do not agree, I would not stop consuming the brand”. Her favourite brands made her feel a need: “the garment is sometimes left lingering in my head, that is when I think again that I really need it”. She stated that it was the brands ability to fulfill expectations that made her feel that way, not the product in itself. For example she expressed that she liked Filippa K:s design, image and quality and therefore ended up in their stores quite often. Ethical scandals could lead to her dropping a brand, though she was less sensitive to occasional lacking quality. She identified herself with the style of the brands she liked, stating that they offered several products she liked which gave her a sense of comfort. For her, comfort meant that she felt that she knew what she would get, from fit to aesthetics.

4.7 The extreme consumer - Oscar

Craftsmanship is the most important thing to Oscar and the price does not matter if the quality is superior. He would become curious about new brands and gradually take interest in it if it was true craftsmanship behind the brand. When he got interested, he could buy close to only that brand for extended periods of time. His purchasing process was also highly thought through, as he contemplated his preferences extensively and put considerable time into finding information. “Generally I do not want any surprises, I want to be like a surgeon when I go shopping”. He stated that the extensive research he made before purchasing resulted in him “seldomly get[ing] surprised, the interest is slowly taking a hold on me and it is usually I myself who control it”. He was more interested in finding brands he saw as new and exciting than finding products that meet certain social expectations. It was also important that the brand had a story to tell since he identified extensively with what he chooses to wear. Oscar could however stop consuming a brand completely after six months, one or several years, all depending on when a new brand caught his interest. He still liked the brands he had previously been loyal to however. He explained that “I have low living costs and my salary is pretty good so almost my whole salary goes to buying from this brand [the current brand he liked]”. Oscar clearly stated that CSR and ethical aspects was not of importance in his purchasing decision, unless he considered the brand as a whole as being unethical and distanced himself from brands that he considered partook in unethical practices. He
considered it a strong argument for stopping to consume a brand and mentioned American Apparel as an example.

5. Analysis

The following discussion will describe the informant’s brand loyalty, brand satisfaction and how the concepts interplay as well as the difference in interplay amongst the informants.

5.1 Johan

When looking at Johan's behaviour, he appeared to have low expectations on the clothing beforehand. He did not consider lack of knowledge as a reason to not consume a brand, since he considered it “fun” to try new things. He could consume from different brands in the same product category if it was more convenient for him, therefore showing low consumer share. This might also indicate weak overall brand loyalty since his preferences were seemingly based in convenience, as concluded by Oliver (1999). He could identify himself with a brand though and that was the only mental subdimension he showed, along with positive attitudes towards the brands. Attitude in this case refers to the sensation of the brand's products. He did not fully contemplate why he felt that way, leading to a feeling of inertia. His preferences were as he was mainly driven by sensation and was willing to try new brands frequently, therefore not showing commitment. In conclusion, he only showcased behavioural brand loyalty.

When it comes to his brand satisfaction, the shoe example is telling. Despite the expectation of them holding for more than one season not being met, it did not matter, as the service from the store was what he expected when he returned them. He also stated that he expects somewhat better quality from the Whyred-shoes because of the brand, yet did not see it as a major problem when their performance did not meet his quality expectations. He liked the sensation and feel of the shoes to the extent that he repurchased them anyway, as his main pre-determined expectations seemed to be on service and finding products that fulfilled his need of sensation. The sensation of it “feeling right” in particular was highly important to him, it appeared to be the main aspect driving his satisfaction. Nonetheless, he did not seem to make a fully developed evaluation between brand’s or clothes, qualifying him as latently
brand satisfied. He did show both capacity and motivation to evaluate the performance of the products, however they were not explicit or evaluated from a set of brands.

Johans brand satisfaction is focused on the individual clothing products rather than the whole brand as such, therefore his brand loyalty is positively affected by good service, which gives him satisfaction and alter his behaviour brand loyalty by making him want to re-purchase from a brand, such as Whyred. However, the brand loyalty does not affect his brand satisfaction to the extent that it alters his evaluation of the expectations or performance, Johans expectations do not appear to be brand specific, unless they are not fulfilled, his expectations and evaluation lies in his treatment from the store staff and his reliance on the general reclamation laws. In conclusion, the interplay is weak as it only based on his need for clothing and not the brand as a whole.

5.2 Emelie

Emelie could buy the same brand repeatedly during a period, though her consumer share was rather small. She wanted to buy certain products from a certain brands, but could not elaborate on her reasoning or decisions. She mentioned that she identified herself with brands, but rather identified herself with social contexts she found important and the status they gave. As she explained how she thought it was “cool” with modern brands, she clearly showed the importance of her surroundings to her preferences. That was the main reason for her choosing specific brands and in that sense she also had vague preferences, since they did not seem to originate from her. However, she did express that her own opinion was important to her. Yet, her expectations were not met if the brand was put in the wrong context, as was the case with the Pernilla Wahlgren example. This, combined with her being highly influenceable by negative external influences, demonstrates low commitment. She fitted in the behavioural brand loyalty dimension due to her repeated purchases, but her mental brand loyalty dimension signs were weak since she did not contemplate her choices and mainly motivated them with the opinions of others.

When she evaluated her personal expectations and the performance of the brands products, Emelie had clear expectations on brands she consumed. She explicitly stated that she consumed the brands she did because she wanted to become brand satisfied. In turn, brand satisfaction meant that her expectations would be met by the performance of the brand,
such as quality. However, she could not elaborate why it was important or do explicit comparisons between brands when asked. Her brand satisfaction appeared to be dependent on her expectations, but these expectations were in turn not fully defined by her, but rather by her surroundings and the service. Therefore, she showed limited motivation and capacity to evaluate the brands performance, which lead to her demonstrating weak manifest brand satisfaction.

She explained she would stop consuming a brand if the service was bad, which might influence her-long term brand loyalty. Ethics, scandals and CSR would not affect her brand satisfaction and therefore not her brand loyalty, as she did not expect the brands she favoured to emphasize these aspects. Emelie’s brand loyalty interplayed with her brand satisfaction to some degree as her weak manifest brand satisfaction created a positive attitude and identification. But as her identification related profoundly to her satisfaction, she was susceptible to external factors to such an extent that her brand satisfaction could have a profound effect on diminishing or increasing her brand loyalty.

5.3 Sofia

Sofia had both strong intentions to repurchase from certain brands, showed strong signs of word-of-mouth and had a slightly large consumer share. She presented strong and extensive preferences, thoroughly choosing her brands based on quality and esthetics. She also had the will to continue consuming the brand and could give motivations as to why, which showcased some degree of commitment. Sofia showed signs from both the behavioural brand loyalty dimension, due to her frequent repurchasing, and mental brand loyalty dimension, since she motivated her choices extensively. However, she would not buy from a brand at all costs and could be influenced by others, thus not fulfilling all subcategories of the mental dimension.

When it comes to Sofia's brand satisfaction she expressed similar, rational and direct ideas, since she expected that a certain price indicated quality as well as certain performance from the brands. She also actively compared expectations to the performance of a brand as well as other brands she had previously consumed. Furthermore, when she elaborated why she felt this way, she showed both motivation and capacity, as she explained the buying
process both pre- and post-purchase and what she valued, such as quality. This lead to her showing manifest brand satisfaction.

She could keep consuming a brand, no matter if it was happenstance or planed, as long as she was manifest brand satisfied. Thus she would also remain brand loyal as long as she remained manifest brand satisfied, because her preferences and intentions would still go in line with those brands. Therefore her brand satisfaction had a high impact on her brand loyalty, as it completely dictated whether she would keep purchasing a brand. Her mental brand loyalty subdimensions helped her become satisfied as she created her preferences and attitudes from her manifest brand satisfaction. It seemed that it was the satisfaction with each individual product, that lead her to become brand loyal and brand satisfied.

5.4 Leo

Leo demonstrates strong intentions to repurchase from a few chosen brands, is committed to them, purchases them frequently and identifies extensively with them. Therefore he showcased both behavioural and mental brand loyalty dimensions. However, Leo pointed out that he would change brands in accordance with his needs in terms of identification. Therefore it is difficult to define him as a true brand loyal consumer as he actively compares his needs to what the brands can offer him. His customer share was not extra-ordinary high either and evaluated each purchase. Although he showed nearly every sign of the mental brand loyalty dimension, he is not truly brand loyal due to his controlled buying behaviour and strong self defined identification.

Leo showed capacity and motivation by controlling that the brand delivered in accordance to what he expected from them, thereby keeping himself informed and highly aware of if and why the brands fulfilled his expectations. Furthermore he knew why he prefered the brands he chose to consume over others, as he had actively chosen them through a well contemplated proces. He thereby demonstrated a manifest brand satisfaction by creating his own opinion about the brands clothing pre-purchase and had an elaborate process when explicitly evaluating the brands clothing. Thus he had a well motivated set of expectations on not just the brands products, but on the brand as a whole, thereby classifying as manifestly satisfied.
Leo’s interplay between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty is however quite complex. Identification was a fundamental part in his mental brand loyalty dimension and as long as he remained satisfied with the quality and his ability to identify with the brand, he would remain brand loyal. But he continually evaluated each purchase and considered it important that they met his expectations. One could thus question whether it is indeed brand satisfaction he expresses, since his satisfaction seems to be aimed towards the product to a large extent, rather than the brand as a whole. Yet Leos identification with the brand could be considered as a criteria for brand satisfaction. Leo’s manifest brand satisfaction made him continue to be brand loyal both in the mental and behavioural brand loyalty dimension, since he did rather consume from brands he was brand satisfied with than actively find new ones. Brand satisfaction was thus important after the point where he had identified with a brand, which in turn could alter his expectations considerably, making it an important, though maybe not a fundamental part in his brand loyalty creation. But he seems to be influenced by more types of satisfaction, which we have not researched, since he aims it towards both products and the brand as a whole simultaneously.

5.5 Monique
Monique had a clear behavioural brand loyalty dimension. She did repetitive same brand purchases but they were not happenstance buying and she had been loyal during an extensive period of time and her word-of-mouth was positive. Her consumer share was also extensive. No signs of inertia was found. Instead her mental brand loyalty subdimensions were present, except the involvement. Her preferences were thoroughly motivated and she expressed that she found a level of comfort in repurchasing brands, as it felt safe. Therefore, both the behavioural and mental brand loyalty dimensions are strong. Furthermore, she showcased high commitment since she was not at influenced by the opinions of other people. Nonetheless she would not re-buy at any cost, however she did evaluate all her purchases and made clear that she would not rebuy if she were to be disappointed, thereby not qualifying for true brand loyalty.

Her brand satisfaction was mainly due to a brand's ability to fulfill her needs. She had a long pre-purchase period where she made explicit comparisons amongst brands products. This in turn served as a way to minimize risks and ensure that the products performance met
her expectations. This process was very thorough, making her manifest brand satisfied when her expectations were met.

When it came to the interplay, she was unlikely to take the risk of buying a product she did not know much about. As she did not relax these demands when it came to her favourite brands, although being brand loyal, it indicates that her manifest brand satisfaction did affect her brand loyalty in the way it was an important factor in her continuing consuming the brands she liked, but also kept her from becoming truly committed. In addition, she also seemed to be affected by more than one type of brand satisfaction, since it was dependent on the products she bought as well as the brand as a whole. Her brand loyalty in turn made her aware of which brands that previously had been good at meeting her expectations and therefore she kept on coming back and evaluating her favourite brands products. She expresses a will to be brand loyal as long as she is content with the brands performance. When she feels satisfied, it affected her brand loyalty by making her more convinced in why she prefers these brands over others.

5.6 Anna

Anna is strong in the behavioural brand loyalty dimension, both re-purchasing frequently, having a large consumer share and word-of-mouth. She also possesses all the mental brand loyalty dimensions. She is highly committed and involved when choosing to re-buy her products from a certain brand and her intention to continue doing it is clear. Negative external influence did not affect her and she explains that she makes up her own mind according to her own experience and the performance the brand has. Furthermore, she shows clear signs of being true brand loyal as she does not evaluate each purchase from her favourite brands, and trusts them fully to provide her with what she wants, indicating very high commitment.

In turn this is clearly linked to her brand satisfaction. She showed the capacity and motivation by having set expectation such as good quality and a certain feeling that only her favourite brands can grant her. Her satisfaction is also aimed towards the brand, thereby becoming manifest brand satisfied.

Both brand loyalty and her manifest brand satisfaction are of equal importance to her, although she clearly says she does not always need to evaluate the performance because she trusts the brand, as she trusts the performance of the brands products to be as expected. This
could be seen as an indication of thorough brand satisfaction. But since she could ignore occasional qualitative shortcomings from her favourite brands and seemed to trust them to a high extent, it seems like the brand itself was the center of her brand satisfaction. It is difficult to say which of her true brand loyalty or brand satisfaction that creates the other, but due to her high brand satisfaction, her satisfaction with each individual product seems to be of lesser importance. She is satisfied with what the brand gives her over all, making the occasional disappointing purchase less important. Her brand satisfaction thus maintains her brand loyalty, as it suppresses the influence of other types of satisfaction. She was satisfied with the overall image she associated with the brand, purchased almost exclusively from her favourites and did not put a considerable effort into researching products from those brands. Instead she trusts the brand to provide what she demands, thus not making an evaluation on every single product.

5.7 Oscar
Oscars demonstrates an extreme consumer share and strong word-of-mouth, indicating behavioural brand loyalty. He show clear signs of all the subcategories in the mental brand loyalty dimension. He does not evaluate his consumption, as he “already knows what he gets”, thereby showing strong commitment and trust towards the brand. Therefore he showed to have the criterias to become true brand loyalty. He does not consistently fulfill the time aspect however, since his brand loyalty comes in bursts of varying length. We do however think that his extreme consumer share outweighs this, as he shows extreme brand loyalty levels both in the way he repurchases brands and how he commits to them. This could make our choice to see him as truly brand loyal as a bit controversial, yet we do believe that he demonstrates the other criteria to such an extreme extent that it showcases the problem with relying to extensively on the time aspect. He was by far the strongest in both dimensions of behavioural and mental brand loyalty.

It was hard to find exactly what his expectations where. He did express that he wanted the quality and craftsmanship to be excellent. Oscar showed a deep knowledge and understanding of brands and clothes and his manifest brand satisfaction was built on this knowledge, extensive research and reflections on his preferences. He claimed he would be able to pay whatever price for a product he wanted when he was certain the brand would
perform, making him manifestly brand satisfied. But he maintained that he had no
expectations, since he researched his brands so thoroughly that he “knew exactly what he
would get”. He considered quality as something he took for granted rather than an
expectation, as he felt knowledgeable enough about the brand to know it would be good. Yet
he did not seem to understand that his lack of expectations due to knowledge could be seen as
an expectation in itself. We can not be certain that he did not evaluate his purchases, even if
he denied it, making it difficult to be completely certain, though we have no reason to assume
he was not telling the truth. As identification was very important to him, it could be
considered as the main predictor of his brand satisfaction.

When it comes to Oscar’s interplay he had a way of loosing interest in a brand, thus
not being brand loyal anymore. He did however not state that this was due to his brand
satisfaction lessening, but rather it seemed like he reached a higher brand satisfaction towards
another brand. So in this aspect brand satisfaction did not affect his brand loyalty. He would,
when he took a pause from a brand, still talk about it as if having all the subcategories of the
mentally brand loyalty dimension. Therefore, he could keep on consuming from that brand
because he was satisfied with its overall qualities, such as his ability to identify with it and
the story behind the brand, even though other things were more exciting at the moment. The
fact that he made no evaluations also implies that he did not get disappointed when buying
from a brand he was brand loyal towards, leading to his brand loyalty maintaining his brand
satisfaction. His satisfaction with the individual products was not be elaborated on at all. The
products therefore had a limited influence on his brand loyalty, whereas overall brand
satisfaction, which seems to maintain his brand loyalty, was a result of abstract components
rather than the products themselves.
5.8 Classification of the informants brand loyalty and brand satisfaction

This table summarizes the dimensions and subcategories found in each informant. The presumed brand loyal tendencies that was made before interviewing the informants are shown to be correct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informants</th>
<th>Brand loyalty</th>
<th>Brand Loyalty subdimensions found in the mental brand loyalty dimension</th>
<th>Brand satisfaction type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johan</td>
<td>Behavioural brand loyalty</td>
<td>Attitude, weak identification, weak preferences</td>
<td>Latent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emelie</td>
<td>Behavioural brand loyalty</td>
<td>Attitude, identification, weak preferences</td>
<td>Weak Manifest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>Behavioural and Mental brand loyalty</td>
<td>Attitude, preference, intention,</td>
<td>Manifest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leo</td>
<td>Behavioural and Mental loyalty</td>
<td>Attitude, identification, involvement, commitment</td>
<td>Manifest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monique</td>
<td>Behavioural and strong Mental loyalty</td>
<td>Attitude, identification, preference, intention, commitment, involvement</td>
<td>Manifest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>True brand loyalty</td>
<td>Identification, preference, intention, attitude, commitment</td>
<td>Strong Manifest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar</td>
<td>True brand loyalty</td>
<td>Identification, preference, intention, attitude, involvement commitment</td>
<td>Manifest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.9 Comparing the interplay of the informants

There are several common factors amongst the informants that we believe is explained by analyzing the context of clothing. First, each informant showcases behavioural brand loyalty, which can be explained by the fact that each one considered themselves interested in clothing. Furthermore, the identification subcategory was found in almost all informants. This is also probably partially a result of the informants considering themselves interested in clothing. Yet it also seems to determine their brand loyalty to a large extent, which could be
an effect unique to the clothing industry, since the informants motivated it with their interest in clothing as well as how clothing fulfilled such an important everyday way of expression to them. This points to the importance to further research the impact of each of the subdimensions, since they seems to influence the interplay of brand satisfaction and brand loyalty differently depending on the individual and their level of brand loyalty. However our assumption that the informants would have a contemplated process due to our choice of market segment did seem to be true, as each of the informants described themselves as interested, yet highly contemplated and reasoned around their purchases.

Most of the differences between our informants could be explained by our framework. Despite all of the informants having similarities amongst one another, in particular within their respective brand loyalty dimensions, there were still considerable differences between their interplay. Johan in particular stands out since he was willing to keep consuming a brand which did not maintain the quality he expected pre-purchase, but not as a result of him being loyal towards said brand. This was shown to be explain with our theoretical framework, as it seems to be the result of him being satisfied with a product without it leading to an increased level of brand loyalty. This points towards previous conclusions made by Oliver (1999) that brand satisfaction and brand loyalty does not necessarily have to have an interplay, but it might also be related to his lack of contemplation. If he really tried to argue as to why he was brand satisfied with a product, then he might turn brand loyal.

Emelie is also interesting, since she was influenced to such a large extent by others. This type of consumer is also very interesting for future research within the clothing industry, since they show the importance for brands to try to influence them by carefully choosing in which context they show their products. This was due to Emilies brand satisfaction being depended on her ability identify with the brand than rather than getting qualitatively superior product, but as identification was important to everyone it could probably affect them as well.

In the end, it was difficult to fully understand the interplay between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty for the informants only found in the behavioral brand loyalty dimension, which could be due to them lacking the mental dimension and thereby not being able to fully describe their reasoning. Their evaluations were also not consistent, their preferences seemed arbitrary and their brand satisfaction with a product did not necessarily lead to them turning more brand satisfied or brand loyal.
Both Sofie, Leo and Monique valued prior knowledge about the clothing products and saw it as important with certain satisfaction. But when it came to the influence of brand satisfaction on their brand loyalty, it was not as similar, despite all of them showcasing manifest brand satisfaction. All three of them fits into Oliver's (1999) statement that brand loyalty is built by brand satisfaction. Yet, Sofie appeared to be able to abandon favourite brands with less contemplation, indicating she developed lower levels of mental brand loyalty than the other two. Leo and Monique were very similar, but the higher importance of identification to Leo could lessen his brand satisfaction and thereby his brand loyalty. Monique on the other hand relied extensively on her expectations and evaluation, putting much more focus on each individual product than on the brand as a whole. Some sort of satisfaction seemed to be the only factor that influenced her brand loyalty, not necessarily brand satisfaction, whereas it was more complex for Leo. Leo had a rather well motivated set of expectations on not just the brands products, but on the brand as a whole, which made him stand out compared to Sofie and Monique, who both tended to direct their expectations and therefore also their brand satisfaction towards the product. Leo could thus have been truly brand loyal, though we found his brand commitment to low. He was also more clothing focused than brand focused when compared to the truly brand loyal consumers, had an extensive pre-purchase-process and put considerable effort into researching each clothing purchase.

When analysing the informants it became apparent that there are more types of satisfaction at play in affecting brand loyalty than just brand satisfaction. This was true in particular for the respondents that were mentally brand loyal, as they had an extensive focus on products as well as the brand as a whole. The satisfaction with the product contributed to the brand satisfaction, but it would be a stretch to say that it was a part of the concept of brand satisfaction. Had we looked at consumer satisfaction, both of these could have been combined and said to affect brand loyalty, but now it showcases the need to further investigate the interplay between brand loyalty and the different subcategories of consumer satisfaction. Over all, the mentally brand loyal consumers tended to make consistent evaluations of each purchase. If satisfied, their brand satisfaction would increase and in turn contribute to their brand loyalty.

The true brand loyal consumers trusted previous product evaluations extensively and felt certain that expectations and performance would be fulfilled by their favourite brands.
Therefore they were manifest brand satisfied due to their level of brand loyalty. However, Anna pointed towards the importance of being brand satisfied, which does not seem to fit in Oliver's (1999) conclusion on the lesser importance of brand satisfaction, indicating that the type of brand satisfaction might be central to his conclusion. The influence brand satisfaction had on Oscar brand loyalty was similar to that of Anna. It the product of him being satisfied with the brand as a whole, rather than a product. Satisfaction with products therefore had a limited influence on Oscars brand loyalty, whereas overall brand satisfaction, which seems to maintain his brand loyalty, was significantly influenced by identification. As identification seemed to be an important factor not only to his mental brand loyalty, but to his brand satisfaction as well, he showcases a clear link between the two concepts, thereby showcasing a complex interplay where it is difficult to say which one affects the other the most. The truly loyal consumers did not make repeated evaluations of products from a brand, thereby maintaining their brand loyalty through trust towards the brand. Satisfaction with the product did not seem to affect their brand satisfaction, it was rather their brand satisfaction that ensured they would be satisfied with the product. Yet the interplay between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty was highly complex, as in Oscar's case, since brand satisfaction seemed to maintain his brand loyalty, while simultaneously being highly affected by it.

6. Conclusion

We have found that the interplay between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction was highly complex, as in line with previous research. Each individual demonstrated very different reasoning to their behaviour and the mental brand loyalty subdimensions seemed to have their influence significantly altered from person to person. Identification in particular was shown to often influence both mental brand loyalty and brand satisfaction, indicating the strong link between the two.

While the framework could explain most of the individual differences, it was occasionally difficult to apply on the informants who were behaviourally brand loyal. We believe this was mainly due to their inability to motivate their actions, thereby showcasing a weakness in our framework as it seemed to be highly dependent on the consumers being able to contemplate their decisions. The mentally brand loyal consumers in turn fitted well into the framework, despite their individual differences. It was however apparent that their reasoning
was too complex to be fully explained by our framework, indicating that it could have been relevant to include more types of satisfaction. This was mainly due to their satisfaction with each purchase being highly important in maintaining their brand satisfaction.

In accordance with Oliver (1999), brand satisfaction did not seem to definitely affect the brand loyalty of the truly loyal consumers, although there was still interplay between them. They were also willing to ignore occasional disappointing purchases from their favourite brands and did not evaluate each purchase. Their individual differences could not be fully explained by the framework, in particular in Oscar's case, as he might not fit into the time aspect necessary for true brand loyalty.

The interplay between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty seems highly individual. Yet, similarities can be found between the respondents within their respective brand loyalty dimension.

7. Suggested further studies

Further studies should investigate the role of the individual subcategories of mental brand loyalty further, as they seem to be a strong link between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction. This should be done qualitatively both in the clothing industry, as well as in other contexts. If done in the clothing industry, the subcategory identification in particular should be investigated further. Service should also be investigated further, as it was a recurring influencer on the consumer's brand loyalty and brand satisfaction. The interplay between brand loyalty and brand satisfaction for behaviourally loyal consumers should also be investigated further, since those informants both showed behaviours that could not be fully explained by our framework. We also suggest further research into the importance of the time aspect to true brand loyalty, as we found it problematic when trying to explain one respondent's behaviour.
References


Appendix 1: Question guideline for semi-structured interviews

Intro
1. Hur brukar processen se ut när du köper kläder?
2. Hur tänker du kring varumärken när du gör dina inköp?

Brand loyalty
3. Hur ofta testar du nya varumärken?
4. Beroende på svar, varför tror du det är så?
5. Vad får dig att vilja prova nya varumärken?
6. Har du ett favoritmärke?
7. Vad värdesätter du hos ett varumärke?
8. Beroende på de egenskaper han/hon tar upp:
   - Vad får dig att känna att dessa egenskaper är viktigast för dig?
   - Har dom (egenskaperna) alltid varit det?
   - Har du ett “favoritmärke” som uppfyller majoriteten av dessa kriterier? Vilket?

Interplay with brand satisfaction
9. Vad fick dig att initialt bli intresserad av det varumärket?
10. Eventuella följdfrågor för att se förväntningarna som påverkat konsumenten varit
   - Hur länge har du hållit fast vid det varumärket?
   - Varför tror du det är så/varför tror du inte att det är så?
   - Vad skulle kunna få dig att överväga att sluta köpa detta varumärke?

Brand satisfaction
11. Om du skulle ge egenskaperna du nämnde tidigare en rankning, hur skulle den se ut tror du?
   - Vad får dig att ranka på detta sätt? (Erfarenhet, värderingar, sociala influenser)
12. Vad får dig att vilja ta steget och testa/köpa något nytt varumärke
   - Har du haft förväntningar när du tagit steget/blivit influerad?
   - Skulle du beskriva dem som stora/små? Varierar det mycke från gång till gång?
13. Anser du att ditt favorit varumärke/n står för något budskap?
   - Känner du att detta budskap är relaterbart?
14. Vad anser du om de sociala sammanhang man ser detta varumärke i?
15. Till vilken grad är det viktigt att varumärket tar socialt ansvar?
16. Anser du att du håller dig uppdaterad (engagerad) på något specifikt sätt gentemot ditt
    favoritmärke jämfört med de märken du handlar av mer sällan?
    - t.ex mail, kampanjer, lookbooks etc.
    - Följdfråga om liten engagemangsnivå: vad tror du det beror på?

Interplay with brand loyalty

17. Vad skulle krävas för att du skulle ge upp konsumtionen av ett “dyrare” varumärke, som du köpt i en större utsträckning, helt och hållet?
   - Har du något exempel på när detta skett? Vad hände?
18. Har du specifika förväntningar på varumärket som du konsumerar?