Sustainable fashion: towards a sustainability mind-set in the fashion industry

The case of ten Danish designers
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1. Introduction

1.1 Fields of interest

1st field of interest

The fashion industry is one of the most polluting and labour-intensive industries in the world. It has significant negative environmental impacts caused by the exploitation of natural resources, the pollution of air due to greenhouse gas emissions and the pollution of land and water due to the use of hazardous chemicals. In addition, the fashion industry has negative social impacts resulting from poor working conditions, low wages and a lack of employee rights. (Danish Business Authority [DBA], 2013; Pedersen, 2010) According to a global expert study on sustainable fashion conducted at the Copenhagen Business School (CBS) in May 2013, these impacts are enhanced by the dominant fast fashion model. Fast fashion is criticized by experts for making the industry unsustainable because of the large quantities and low prices of clothes, which result in unsustainable consumption levels and high amounts of waste (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). The Danish fashion industry is dominated by small and medium enterprises (SMEs), many of which are adopting responsible practices to address the issues facing the fashion industry related to the environmental and social impacts and the unsustainable fast fashion model (Miljøministeriet, 2000). In fact, Danish designers are frontrunners in responsible fashion as they were among the first to design their clothes with consideration of their environmental and social impacts (DBA, 2013). Additionally, a few designers launched innovative initiatives around the repairing, exchanging and renting of clothes, thereby countering the fast fashion model (Mosbech, 2013; Pasquinelli, 2013). Although according to Esben Rahbek Pedersen, Director of the centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) at CBS, Danish SMEs alone are not likely to transform traditional business practices and make the fashion industry more sustainable. Yet collectively the responsible practices adopted by Danish designers might increase the awareness of the issues facing the fashion industry and provide a stimulus to larger fashion firms to adopt similar practices (Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014; Mosbech, 2013). This leads me to the first field of interest concerning the responsible practices adopted by designers in Danish SMEs to address relevant issues of fashion.

2nd field of interest

According to a study by the Danish Business Authority (2013) on CSR in Danish SMEs, 72% of them were engaged in CSR for moral reasons. Moreover, the values of the founders were found to be an important driver for the implementation of CSR practices in the SMEs. Additionally, there is a growing interest in the fields of CSR and Corporate Sustainability (CS) to investigate the way managers think in order to understand what influences their CSR and CS practices. This involves looking at managers’ sense making and the underlying factors such as their personal and cultural values (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014; von Laskowski, 2012). Taking into account that a founder of a fashion firm is likewise the designer, the second field of interest concerns designers’ sense making and how it drives and restrains their responsible practices.
1.2 Research question

These two fields of interest lead to the following research question: “How does the sense making of Danish designers in small and medium fashion firms influence their choice of responsible practices?”

To answer the research question I choose to do a multiple case study with ten Danish designers and to conduct a content analysis in two parts.

- The first part of the analysis is aimed at describing the responsible practices adopted by designers and evaluating their level of responsibility based on the issues they aim to address with their practices. This part is deductive as it is based on a theoretical framework established from relevant theories.

- The second part of the analysis is inductive and is aimed at analysing how designers make sense of their responsible practices. I seek to do so by looking at the cues they draw when making sense and the underlying factors, including their culture, their personal values, beliefs, and experiences.

Relating the results of both analyses will allow me to understand how designers’ sense making positively or negatively influences their choice of responsible practices, thereby answering my research question.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured as follows: after the introduction in the 1st chapter, the subsequent chapter reviews the literature on CSR and CS and serves to develop a theoretical framework. It also presents relevant sense making theories and how they will be used for my thesis. The 3rd chapter describes the methods used to carry out my research. The 4th chapter presents the results of the deductive and inductive content analyses and is divided into two parts. The first part analyses the responsible practices adopted by the ten designers. The second part analyses how the designers make sense of their responsible practices. The 5th chapter presents and discusses the findings of my research by relating both analyses. It serves to understand how designers’ sense making positively or negatively influences their choice of responsible practices, thereby answering my research question. Finally, the last chapter concludes this thesis by giving a summary and providing an outlook for future research.
2. Literature review

This literature review starts with clarifying the concepts used in this thesis. It then goes on with presenting two different approaches used in the literature when investigating how CSR and CS are integrated within companies. The first part of the literature review takes a content driven approach. It describes the issues facing the fashion industry and presents three levels of responsible practices that serve to address these issues. This part ends with a theoretical framework. The second part looks at CSR and CS from a sense making perspective. It presents the relevant theories on sense making and shows how this approach is applied in my research. At the end of the literature review I present why the sense making perspective better informs how CSR and CS are integrated within companies and how this thesis contributes to fill a gap in the literature.

Fashion and the fashion industry

According to Kawamura (2004), fashion refers to an intangible, ephemeral and symbolic good that conveys a variety of social meanings. Fashion and clothes are closely related. Clothes are material objects and are the way through which fashion is expressed. (Kawamura, 2004) In this thesis both terms are used interchangeably.

To define the fashion industry, I refer to Hilger’s (2008) definition of the apparel industry which consists of the physical value chain of clothes and the related activities, starting from the design of a sketch, followed by the sourcing and manufacturing of fabrics, to the piece of clothes worn by the end consumer.

Distinguishing between CSR and CS

Over the last decades there has been a significant increase in interest in CSR and CS (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014). This research field is complex as there is no single definition of CSR or CS and both concepts are often used interchangeably (Schaltegger & Müller, 2008; Hockerts, Freeman, & Strand, 2014). In this thesis I make the distinction between CSR and CS.

First of ally, according to the European Commission, CSR can be defined as a “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society.” (European Commission, 2011, p.6) Moreover, it refers to as company’s effort “to integrate, social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into its business operations in close collaboration with its stakeholders.” (European Commission, 2011, p.6) CSR practices are aimed at mitigating a company’s negative environmental and social impacts as well as creating shared value for its stakeholders and society at large. To do so, companies should “explore the opportunities for developing innovative products, services and business models that contribute to societal wellbeing.” (European Commission, 2011, p.6)

Secondly, the concept of CS complements the concept of CSR as it helps to understand what is meant by ‘societal wellbeing’ and how companies can contribute to it. Sustainability ties together the main challenges of societal wellbeing, including the society, environment and future generations (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014). According to authors on sustainability, the main challenges concern the ability to enable human
development, well-being and social justice of a growing world population on a planet with limited carrying capacity (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002). Whiteman, Walker and Perego (2013) draw our attention to the fact that human development is threatened by the limited carrying capacities of the Earth’s systems. According to natural scientists, human activity and the related environmental degradation of land, sea and air and exploitation of natural resources, are threatening the ability of the Earth’s systems to provide a safe operating space for human development. Scientists have identified nine planetary boundaries under which humanity can develop, out of which three have already been crossed, namely climate change, the global nitrogen cycle, and the rate of biodiversity loss, while the others are under constant pressure (Whiteman, Walker, & Perego, 2013). Authors on sustainability argue that while being part of the problem, companies can also contribute to solve the challenges related to societal well-being. According to Doppelt (2009), the term corporate sustainability refers to the simultaneous integration of environmental, social and economic sustainability into a company’s business model. This way companies can contribute to restore and maintain environmental systems and have a positive impact on the well-being of society (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Doppelt, 2009; Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002).

I. The content driven approach

2.1 The issues facing the fashion industry

The fashion industry is one of the most polluting and labour-intensive industries in the world. It has significant effects on society and the environment on a local and global scale (DBA, 2013; Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014).

Social impacts of the fashion industry

According to Pedersen and Gwozdz (2014), social impacts of fashion stem from the fact that a major part of the production occurs in low-cost regions in Asia and Africa. Thus, social impacts arise such as poor working conditions due to a lack of employee rights, long working hours and low wages, poor health and safety standards, as well as child labour. Additionally, they add that social issues are amplified by the fact that the fashion supply chain is complex and involves many levels of suppliers. This makes it difficult for designers to trace back the origin of their clothes and to control the social conditions under which they have been produced. (Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014)

Environmental impacts of the fashion industry

According to a study by the Danish Ministry of the Environment (Laursen et al., 2007), fashion has negative environmental impacts all along its life cycle, starting from the material and production phases until the usage and disposal by the consumer. The main negative environmental impacts of clothes are caused by,

- The excessive exploitation of natural resources, including water and fossil fuels, that contributes to greater scarcity of finite resources. While cotton and polyester make up the majority of material used
in production of garment, they are particularly resource intensive as the growing of cotton requires high amounts of water and land and polyester is made from petrol. (Laursen et al., 2007; DK Lab, 2010)

- High levels of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) that contribute to climate change. And, the emissions of waste, such as wastewater and production waste. (Laursen et al., 2007)

- The use of hazardous chemicals in form of pesticides and fertilizers used to grow crops, and in form of dyers used for the production of the clothes. The use of chemicals contributes to the pollution of land and water, and poses a significant risk to the workers’ health. (Laursen et al., 2007; Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014)

**Issues related to the unsustainable fast fashion model**

Besides identifying environmental and social impacts of fashion, authors highlight the need to understand the downstream challenges which create these impacts in the first place and make the fashion industry unsustainable. According to the global expert study on sustainable fashion conducted at CBS, one of the first causes of unsustainability is linked to the amount of cloths produced and offered at low prices (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). In fact, the fashion industry is dominated by the fast fashion model which is based on large quantities, low prices, poor quality and fast changing trends. As a result, experts criticize fast fashion for creating overconsumption and high amounts of consumer waste. Overconsumption refers to a level of consumption that is environmentally and socially unsustainable and “that far exceeds human needs and planetary boundaries” (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013, p. 8). It is accused to worsen the environmental and social impacts described above as in fact, due to the low prices of fashion, consumers got used to be able to buy more and demand lower prices. This causes a high price pressure to the fashion firms. Yet because most companies seek to keep their margins high they put more pressure to their suppliers, which results in worse working conditions across the supply chain and further threatens the planetary boundaries. In addition, overconsumption of cheap and low quality clothes is also accused to create ever increasing amounts of consumer waste, which further imposes a significant load on the environment. Consequently, experts emphasize the need to challenge the fast-fashion model in order to effectively make the industry more sustainable. (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013)

**2.2 Three levels of responsibility applied to the fashion industry**

In this section I review theories of CSR and CS models, which lead me to identify three levels of responsibility. These levels are applied to the context of the fashion industry by identifying practices that help to address the issues of fashion mentioned above. Hence, this section contributes to answer the part of the research question regarding designers’ choice of responsible practices.
Over the past decades there has been extensive literature on CSR and CS concerned with the practices carried out by companies when integrating these concepts into their business. Authors who have studied CSR and CS this way agree that the implementation of CSR and CS can be seen as an evolution (Castelló & Lozano, 2009). More precisely, they describe how firms respond to, and integrate, societal issues into their business operations over time. This results in an extensive literature on models illustrating companies’ responsibilities towards society and the successive levels they go through when addressing societal issues (Pedersen, 2010).

When reviewing the literature on CSR and CS models, it is noticeable that the levels of corporate responsiveness show similarities. Zadek, (2007) describes the following five stages: defensive, compliance, managerial, strategic and civil. He further argues that this evolution requires a learning process, which eventually leads the company to reach the final level of civil learning. At this level companies address broader societal issues which are ignored or dismissed by the majority of companies. Similarly, Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths (2014) define the steps through which companies take responsibility and change from linear business models, which exploit natural and human resources, to models that contribute to environmental and social sustainability. They define the following six phases: rejection, non-responsiveness, compliance, efficiency, strategic pro-activity, the sustaining corporation.

Drawing from these models, I have identified three levels of company responses to societal issues: compliance, pro-active and corporate sustainability. In the following section I provide further clarification on each level, and apply them to the context of the fashion industry by describing responsible practices adopted by fashion firms seeking to address the issues facing the fashion industry.

2.2.1 Compliance

The level of compliance

Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths (2014) and Zadek (2007) suggest that this level is focused on minimizing the risk of sanctions for not complying with governmental regulations, and avoiding reputation loss due to the exposure from media and NGOs of non-compliance of the firm to the public. Consequently, compliance measures are aimed at guaranteeing the absence of environmental and human abuses. Both sources further state that companies at this stage adopt certificates to show they comply with environmental and social standards. And, set environmental and social guidelines for their suppliers to ensure these standards are met all along the supply chain. As a result, compliance measures are rather reactive and marginal to the core business strategies. (Benn, Dunphy & Griffiths, 2014; Zadek 2007)

Compliance practices in the fashion industry

Pedersen and Gwozdz (2014) states that at this stage fashion companies adopt fur free policies to ensure no harm is made to animals in the production of their clothes. Alternatively, they also introduce company specific guidelines for their suppliers or adopt certificates based on social and environmental criteria such as the
Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI), the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) and the Oeko-tex certificate. (GOTS, 2013; Oeko-Tex, nd)

2.2.2 Pro-active

The pro-active level

Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths (2014) and Zadek (2007) suggest that at this level companies go beyond adopting compliance measures towards pro-actively addressing their negative social and environmental impacts. They further mention that practices adopted by companies might include the reduction of resources used such as water, energy, or materials and the re-use of production waste. Both sources also agree that at this stage, a company’s CSR effort is part of its strategy.

Pro-active practices in the fashion industry

At this stage fashion companies produce socially and environmentally responsible clothes by taking the well-being of workers into account and considering the environment during all phases of the life-cycle (Laursen et al., 2007; Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014).

Firstly, when it comes to pro-active practices to reduce social impacts of fashion, Pedersen and Gwozdz (2014) states that pro-active designers reduce the complexity of their supply chain by choosing to have only a few suppliers and manufacturers. This enables them to have better control over the working conditions of the people involved in their supply chain. Secondly, to reduce environmental impacts of their clothes fashion firms perform a life cycle analysis to estimate the environmental impact of their clothes during all phases of the life-cycle. Drawing from studies by Pedersen and Gwozdz (2014) and the Danish Ministry of the Environment (Laursen et al., 2007), fashion companies at the pro-active level adopt several practices to reduce the negative environmental impact of their clothes at every phase of the life-cycle. At the material phase, companies use environmental safer and innovative materials which are less harmful for the environment than for instance cotton or polyester. They also reduce the use of materials and use waste materials for producing clothes. It is worth noticing that the impact of clothes largely depends on the type of material used. Therefore, the material phase is where the company has the biggest potential to reduce the environmental impact of its clothes. When it comes to the production phase, companies avoid using harmful chemicals for dying or printing their clothes. They also reduce their emissions through cleaner energy and reduce waste water through clarification systems. Additionally, they reduce their production waste by re-using their own production waste to make new clothes. Regarding the transport phase, fashion companies avoid polluting transportation means by favouring shipping over transport by plane or improve the product packaging by for instance substituting plastic bags with recycled or FSC certified paper. Lastly, companies reduce the negative impacts of their clothes at the usage phase by promoting minimal use of washing powder, no use of fabric softeners, no tumbler drying and no ironing. (Laursen et al., 2007; Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014).
2.2.3 Corporate sustainability

The level of corporate sustainability

At this level companies find new ways of making profit by developing business models, which are decoupled from environmental degradation, social inequalities and poverty (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Doppelt, 2009). These business models integrate all three aspects of sustainability. Besides guaranteeing economic sustainability by improving corporate profitability, they contribute to social and environmental sustainability. First of all, they can contribute to social sustainability by improving well-being, human fulfilment and reducing poverty and inequalities (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Wilson, 2013). Secondly, companies contribute to environmental sustainability through business models that replace linear production processes with circular ones, and support the dematerialization of production (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Doppelt, 2009). Thirdly, companies at this stage also voluntarily go beyond the quest for economic sustainability “by actively promoting ecological sustainability values and practices in the industry and society generally.” (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014, p.19) On the one hand, they develop products and services aimed at improving the sustainable behaviour of consumer. On the other hand, they transform the industry through the sharing and promotion of sustainability values and practices (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014). This view is supported by Zadek (2007) who claims that at this level, companies promote collective action and contribute to a more sustainable society and industry.

Corporate sustainability in the fashion industry

First of all, when it comes to contributing to social sustainability, fashion firms enhance quality of life, wellbeing and reduce poverty by building capacities through skill formation, and providing equal opportunities both within the organization and the broader society (Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths, 2014; Wilson, 2003). Secondly, drawing from Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths (2014) and Doppelt (2009) sustainable fashion companies contribute to environmental sustainability by replacing linear production process with circular ones. They do so by developing clothes that can be recycled by using recycled materials, and ensuring that at the end of its life-cycle the clothes are recycled or return to nature in a form that is not harmful. Alternatively, at this stage fashion firms support the dematerialization of fashion by offering services based on the remanufacturing, repairing, re-selling of old clothes, thereby using consumer waste for new business activities. In addition, they adopt business models around the sharing or renting out of clothes. (Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths, 2014; Doppelt, 2009)

Thirdly, fashion companies at the level of corporate sustainability contributing to a more sustainable society and industry. As argued by experts who participated at the global study on sustainable fashion at CBS, consumers play a major role in bringing about a change towards more sustainability in the clothing industry (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). They argue that consumers should adopt more sustainable
behaviour, instead of buying always more clothes and throwing them away after a short usage. Companies can improve the sustainable behaviour of consumers by offering trainings and awareness raising initiatives. Alternatively, they can develop services that improve the sustainable behaviour of consumers, such as services around the reparation and remanufacturing of clothes, thereby promoting a longer usage of clothes (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). Additionally, companies at this stage also promote sustainability values and practices with other companies to actively create the change towards a more sustainable clothing industry (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014).

2.3 Reasons for companies to engage in responsible practices

Besides focusing on the CSR and CS practices, the content driven approach also looks at the reasons for companies to implement these practices (Castelló & Lozano, 2009). This section reviews the literature on the reasons for companies to take responsibility for their impacts. Hence, it contributes to answer my research question by identifying factors that might influence designers’ choice of responsible practices.

There is a general agreement in CSR literature on the distinction between the business and the moral case (Morsing, Midttun, & Palmaas, 2007). The business case refers to responsible practices driven by corporate self-interest and the quest for maximizing corporate profitability. The moral case refers to responsible practices motivated by values and the desire to do good (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Morsing, Midttun, & Palmaas, 2007).

Business case

First of all, in the business case managers adopt responsible practices because they are facing pressure from stakeholders such as governments, NGOs, media, or consumers. In addition, managers can also be driven by the opportunity to increase their corporate profitability through cost savings, the attraction of new consumers or by becoming niche specialists in growing markets, thereby gaining first mover advantages. (Benn, Dunphy & Griffiths, 2014; Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014; Zadek, 2007)

Moral case

Secondly, responsible practices can also be driven by moral reasons, that is the desire to do good “because it is the right thing to do” (Morsing, Midttun, & Palmaas, 2007, p.87). A study by the Danish Business Authority (2013) about CSR practices in Danish SMEs found that 72% of the companies were engaged in CSR for moral reasons. Additionally, values of SME founders were found to play an important role in the implementation of CSR practices in SMEs (DBA,2013).

Nevertheless, Morsing, Midttun and Palmaas (2007) claim that the implementation of responsible practices is often driven by a combination of moral and business reasons.
2.4 CSR and CS framework

This chapter results in a CSR and CS framework in appendix B that combines the responsibility levels (on the top) and the issues facing the fashion industry (on the left columns). Within each level of responsibility, I have listed the responsible practices available to designers according to the issues they aim to address. On the one hand, compliance and pro-active practices are aimed at reducing social and environmental impacts of fashion. On the other hand, besides contributing to social and environmental sustainability, sustainable practices also address the issues of the unsustainable fast fashion model and its large quantities and low prices of clothes, which result in overconsumption and high amounts of waste. This CSR and CS model will be used in the subsequent analysis chapter as an analytical framework.

2.5 Strengths and limitations of the content driven approach

**Strengths**

This approach gives a clear outline of the different levels of responsibility and lists the practices in each level. This way it is useful for my research as it enables me to identify and describe the responsible practices adopted by designers, and evaluate their level of responsibility based on the issues they aim to address with these practices. Additionally, it allows me to compare the level of responsibility of different designers by looking at their practices. Lastly, it enables me to identify ways to improve practices towards the level of corporate sustainability. In fact, as stated by Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths (2014, p.29) “If we are to move corporations towards full sustainability, we must be able to identify the stage where they are now so that we can determine how to move forward.”

**Limitations**

However, this content driven approach has at least two limitations. The first limitation concerns the fact that frameworks are very generalized and oversimplify reality (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014). In fact, they do not reflect the complexity of corporate life as they do not consider the variety of practices within and among companies (Basu & Palazzo, 2008). On the one hand, a company might not only adopt practices belonging to one level of responsibility, but also adopt practices from other levels. On the other hand, different companies might have different practices and levels of responsibility even though they are facing the same societal issues. Considering this limitation, simply describing the practices based on a theoretical framework bears the risk of oversimplifying corporate reality. Instead, my research should also seek to understand the complexity of corporate life and understand why they are differences in responsible practices.

Secondly, this approach focuses on the levels of responsible practices and the reasons for companies to adopt them. Yet it does not explain what triggers an evolution from one level to another in first place (Castelló & Lozano, 2009). As pointed out by Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths (2014, p. 30) “A firm does not necessarily progress through the phases step by step on an ‘improving’ trajectory.” Instead, a firm might skip over levels,
regress to lower levels or remain within one level. Interestingly, Benn, Dunphy, and Griffiths (2014) further argue that this evolution might be triggered by managers’ commitment, which is their determination behind a certain practice. Managers’ commitment is argued to influence the successful integration of responsible practices into a companies’ business operations (Pedersen, 2010). Moreover, managers’ commitment also influences their predisposition to improve these practices in the future towards a greater level of responsibility, or in contrast to remain in the same level or even regress (Basu & Palazzo, 2008). Consequently, this limitation reveals the importance to study the factors that trigger an evolution in levels of responsibility in order to understand why some companies are more likely to improve their practices than others. This is especially important in order to avoid the risk that companies remain in the same level and do not seek to improve their practices.

II. CSR and CS from a sense making perspective

Another more recent stream of research investigates CSR and CS from a sense making perspective by studying the sense making process that influences managers’ decisions with regards to their responsible practices. This view stems from the recognition that decisions regarding responsible practices are made by managers, and that their decisions are influenced by the way they think of the world (Basu & Palazzo, 2008; Pedersen, 2010; Pfeffer, 2005). In addition, Lindell et al. (as cited in von Laskowski, 2012) argue that managers’ way of thinking is influenced by underlying factors including their culture, as well as their personal beliefs, values and experiences. This perspective is relevant for my research because, as shown by the study from the Danish Business Authority (2013), in a majority of Danish SMEs the decision to engage in CSR practices was driven by moral reasons, precisely the values of the founder. Murillo and Lozano (2006) agree that values of SME founders are key factors in explaining the reasons behind CSR practices in SMEs. Consequently, taking into account that a founder of a fashion firm is likewise the designer, looking at the values and beliefs that influence designers’ sense making helps to understand how their sense making influences their choice of responsible practices.

This section starts with a definition of the process of sense making. Then, I draw from existing theories to explain this process in greater detail by describing the interpretative process and the link between sense making and action.

2.6 Individual sense making

Sense making has received a lot of attention in the field of organizational study. Especially, the works of Karl Weick have increased the understanding of sense making within organizations. However, scholars have used sense making perspective in different ways, resulting in a variety of sense making definitions (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). Maitlis and Christianson (2014) have identified two recurrent themes within sense
making literature and differentiate between organizational and individual sense making. Given the aim of my thesis, this literature review focuses on the study of individual sense making of managers. Despite important differences in definitions and meanings given to sense making, Maitlis and Christianson (2014) identified features of sense making which are recurrent in the sense making literature and which lead them to build the following definition: “A process (...) that involves attending to and bracketing cues in the environment, creating intersubjective meaning through cycles of interpretation and action, and thereby enacting a more ordered environment from which further cues can be drawn.” (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014, p.67).

**Sense making as an interpretative process**
This section helps to understand how people make sense and how this process is influenced by underlying factors including their environment and cultural context, identity, values, beliefs, and experiences. It therefore contributes to answer the part of the research question regarding designers’ sense making. Sense making is commonly understood as an interpretative cognitive process through which people give subjective meaning to situations and actions that are novel, complex, uncertain and ambiguous (Weick, as cited in Castelló, 2010). In addition, cues play an important role in this process because they enable and influence people’s sense making.

On the one hand, cues enable the creation of meaning. Cues are simple, pre-existing notions people draw upon their environment in order to understand and explain ongoing actions Helms-Mills, Dye, & Mills, 2008; Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). Consequently, when making sense, people “interpret and explain set of cues from their environments” (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014, p.66). On the other hand, sense making is influenced by the environment from which people extract cues. The concept of environment can be defined as the broader context, including social and cultural contexts, in which a person is embedded and which influence their choice of extracted cues (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). According to Williams (2004) culture influences a person’s sense making and contributes to enable or constrain what individuals think. By definition culture refers to the “beliefs and values widely shared in society at a particular point in time.” (Raltson, Holt, Terpstra & Kay-Cheng, as cited in Morsing, Midttun, & Palmaas, 2007, p.88)

Further on, various authors argue that identity also influences a person’s sense making (Weick, as cited in Castelló, 2010). Especially, an individual’s “experiences, values and beliefs which form an integral part of his or her identity.” (Weick, as cited in Helms-Mills, Dye, & Mills, 2008, p.16)

**The relation between sense making and action**
This section serves to understand how managers’ sense making influences their practices and vice versa. Thus, it contributes to answer the part of the research question regarding how designers’ sense making influences their choice of responsible practices.
Another feature of sense making concerns the link between the interpretative process and action. In fact, it has been argued that sense making is an ongoing process which involves an interplay between cognition and action (Weick, as cited in Helms-Mills, Dye, & Mills, 2008). Following the definition of Maitlis and Christianson (2014), this interplay has been described as “cycles of interpretation and action”, which “occur repeatedly as people construct provisional understandings that they continuously enact and modify.” (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014, p. 67)

First of all, sense making enables and influences people’s actions. According to the definition by Maitlis and Christianson (2014), sense making enables action. They claim that people construct a provisional sense of a situation, which enables them to act and adapt to specific situations according to the sense they have developed of it. In accordance, Weick et al. (as cited in Linnenluecke and Griffiths, 2015, p. 142) state that sense making “serves as a springboard into action.” Furthermore, sense making influences people’s actions, as “what we do comes from what and how we think” (Pfieffer, 2005, p.6).

Secondly, people’s actions also influence their sense making, as sense making occurs in retrospection. In fact, authors also claim that people only understand what they think and make sense of a situation once they have acted (Weick, as cited in Helms-Mills, Dye, & Mills, 2008). Consequently, Maitlis and Christianson (2014) argue that action plays an important role in the sense making process as it is only once people have acted that they make sense of a situation. Thereby, enacting and making their environment more understandable to them.

The following section describes how the sense making perspective is used when studying the integration of CSR and CS in companies and how it is used in this thesis.

2.7 Sense making in the fields of CSR and CS

As mentioned previously, sense making occurs when people face situations that are novel, complex, uncertain and ambiguous (Weick, as cited in Castelló 2010). Additionally, Castelló (2010) points out that CSR is as a complex, uncertain and ambiguous process. Consequently, managers need to construct their own sense of what responsibility means for them in order to act accordingly (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). Furthermore, because sense making occurs in retrospection, it is only once managers have acted that they make sense of their responsible practices.

As a result, studying CSR and CS from an individual sense making perspective is concerned first of all with uncovering how managers’ make sense of their responsible practices (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014; Pedersen, 2010). This involves looking at the underlying factors that influence their sense making, including the cultural context from which they draw cues, as well as their personal values, beliefs, and experiences (Helms-Mills, Dye, & Mills, 2008; Maitlis & Christianson, 2014; von Laskowski, 2012). Secondly, this perspective investigates how managers’ sense making positively or negatively influences their choice of practices (Linnenluecke & Griffiths, 2015; Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). In other words, what sense making drives or restrains managers’ their responsible practices.
2.8 Strengths and limitations of the sense making perspective

This literature review has presented two ways of investigating how CSR and CS are integrated within companies. Below I present why the sense making perspective better informs how CSR and CS practices are integrated within companies, while also presenting limitations in the way the sense making approach is used in this thesis.

**Strengths**

First of all, this perspective serves to explain the variety of responsible practices among companies who are facing the same societal issues. Thereby, responding to the first limitation of the content driven approach regarding its inability to reflect the diversity and complexity of corporate life (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014). This is because the sense making perspective assumes that people create their own sense of CSR and CS and the related societal issues, as they draw from different underlying factors when making sense. This way managers might have different sense making, which in turn results in different choices of responsible practices (Basu & Palazzo, 2008; Pfeffer, 2005).

Secondly, the sense making perspective also serves to explain what triggers an evolution from one responsibility level to the other, as opposed to the purely content driven approach (Basu & Palazzo, 2008). In fact, studying the way managers’ sense making positively or negatively influences their choice of responsible practices and their commitment behind these practices helps to understand what triggers an evolution in responsible levels. That is what drives or restrains managers to successfully integrate their practices into their operations and to improve their practices towards a greater level of responsibility in the future.

Thirdly, considering that responsible practices can either be driven by moral or business reasons, the sense making perspective allows me to investigate which reasoning leads to a higher commitment. As argued by Weaver et al. (as cited in Basu and Palazzo, 2008, p. 130), normative commitment derived from internal moral factors is essential “for the integration of responsible corporate processes into organizations’ everyday activities”. On the opposite, a purely instrumental commitment derived from external factors is likely to result in responsible practices which are less integrated into a firm’s operations (Basu & Palazzo, 2008).

Fourthly, having identified which sense making negatively influences their choice of responsible practices, I can suggest ways for designers to improve their practices, by adopting new ways of making sense which would lead to more integrated and advanced responsible practices. Thereby, overcoming the risk that designers remain in the same level or even regress. In fact, authors argue that the sense making perspective also enables to improve people’s behaviour by changing their sense making (Cramer, van der Heijden, & Jonker, 2006).
**Limitations**

Sense making is a highly complex concept (Castelló, 2010). Given the complexity and depth of this concept, this thesis mainly focuses on the cues as enabling and influencing the sense making process. However, the process of sense making also involves mental frames in which cues are embedded. Frames are more abstract words which determine the meaning of cues, and cues only make sense in the context of these frames (Weick, as cited in Helms-Mills, Dye, & Mills, 2008; Catelló, 2010). Hence, I need to acknowledge that my research only focuses on cues and does not study mental frames of designers. However, because mental frames are more abstract and inclusive than cues, it is a challenging and complex endeavour to investigate them.

2.9 **Gap in the literature**

This literature review revealed a growing interest in investigating CSR and CS by looking at managers’ sense making in which responsible practices are embedded (Basu & Palazzo, 2008; Cramer, van der Heijden, & Jonker, 2006; Pedersen, 2010). Paradoxically, there is few research on sense making within the field of CSR and CS, and the existing studies focus on large companies. For instance, a study by Pedersen (2010) looks at how managers in eight large international firms make sense of societal responsibilities. Likewise, a study by Cramer, van der Heijden and Jonker (2006) investigates organizational sense making of CSR within eighteen large firms. However, researching CSR and CS from a sense making perspective is particularly relevant for SMEs because the latter require tailored ways of integrating responsibility into their business, as compared to the more formalized and established practices used by large companies (DBA, 2013; Murillo & Lozano, 2006).

Consequently, managers in SMEs need to create their own sense of their societal responsibilities and how they can best address them (Murillo & Lozano, 2006). As a result, Murillo and Lozano (2006) reveal the need for further studies on how managers in SMEs make sense of their responsibilities towards society and how it influences the way they integrate CSR and CS into their business. They recommend a “*careful analysis of the underlying language*” in order to discover the meanings, motivations and difficulties surrounding CSR in SMEs (Murillo & Lozano, 2006, p.228).

This chapter reviewed the literature on CSR, CS and sense making and presented relevant theories that structure my thesis and help to answer my research question. The literature review is followed by the methodology chapter.
3. Methodology
This chapter describes and discusses the methods used to carry out my research. It starts with a presentation of the philosophical assumptions underpinning my research. Subsequently, it defines the deductive and inductive research approach and the multiple case study strategy. This chapter goes on with a presentation of the methods used for the collection and analysis of the data. Lastly, the criteria for evaluating qualitative research work are presented.

2.1 Research philosophy
This research uses qualitative data in order to gain insights into the perceptions of designers (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008). While acknowledging that qualitative research is used within several research paradigms, I place my research within the social constructionist paradigm. This choice contains important ontological and epistemological assumptions which I will outline in the following section.

Ontological and epistemological assumptions
The social constructionist research philosophy is based on the assumption that people construct their reality in a process of social interaction during which they exchange meanings by means of written or spoken language (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008; Schwandt, 2000). Thus, this paradigm assumes that reality is socially constructed and rooted in cultural, social and historical context (Gergen, as cited in Schwandt, 2000). From this follows the epistemological assumption that the researcher should study how research participants give meaning to the phenomenon of interest (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008). Hence, the researcher should interpret this phenomenon through the use of specific interpretive practices, thereby making people’s reality visible (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Strengths and limitations of using a social constructionist paradigm
On the one hand, the social constructionist philosophy and its focus on people’s sense making is useful to answer my research question for the following reasons. First of all, this research philosophy enables me to investigate the underlying factors that influence designers’ choice to adopt certain responsible practices by considering their sense making process (Basu & Palazzo, 2008; Pfeffer, 2005). Secondly, it enables me to take into account the cultural, historical and social context in which their sense making is embedded and appreciate the similarities and differences in designers’ sense making (Gergen, as cited in Schwandt, 2000). On the other hand, there are certain drawbacks associated with the use of qualitative data informed by a social constructionist paradigm, as the data collection is rather time and resource consuming. In addition, the analysis of the data might be difficult and dependent on the researcher’s knowledge and theoretical background. (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008)
2.2 Research approach

The research approach consists of an analysis in two parts.

- The first part of the analysis is aimed at describing the responsible practices adopted by designers and evaluating their level of responsibility based on the issues they aim to address with their practices. This part is deductive as it is based on a theoretical framework I established from relevant theories.
- The second part of the analysis is inductive and is aimed at analysing how designers make sense of their responsible practices. I seek to do so by looking at the sense making cues they draw from when making sense and the underlying factors, including their cultural context, as well as their identity, values, beliefs, and experiences, which influence their sense making.

This analysis allows me to relate the results of both analyses in the findings and discussion chapter in order to understand how designers’ choice of responsible practices is influenced by their sense making, thereby answering the research question.

2.3 Multiple case study

There are several research strategies from which qualitative researchers can choose (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In my research I choose to do case study research, precisely multiple case study defined by Stake (1994; 2000). This is because it is informed by a constructionist paradigm, as opposed to other case study approaches used by positivistic and relativistic researchers (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008). In the following section I present the different types of case study research as defined by Stake (1994; 2000) and argue why I have chosen multiple case study for my research. Then, I identify the unit of analysis.

Constructionist multiple case study

Stake (1994; 2000) differentiates between three types of case study strategies. The intrinsic and instrumental case studies are concerned with investigating in depth into a single case. In contrast, the multiple case study is useful when investigating about a specific phenomenon within a number of cases (Stake, 1994; 2000). I choose multiple case study as I seek to explore and compare how the phenomena of interest for my thesis are expressed across various cases. There are two phenomena of interest in my research.

1. The responsible practices adopted in each case to address relevant issues of fashion
2. The sense making process, that is how designers make sense of their responsible practices

On the one hand, the choice of multiple case study for my research, rather than the analysis of a single case, is supported by the studies by Murillo and Lozano (2006) and the Danish Business Authority (2013). In fact, both studies reveal the importance of values of the founder in the implementation of responsible practices in SMEs. Considering that in small fashion companies the founder is likewise the designer, I am interested to investigate the responsible practices and sense making process across cases, rather than studying how these phenomena are constructed within a single organization. On the other hand, exploring these phenomena across
cases enables me to get a richer and better understanding of the phenomena of interest by taking into account the variety of contexts of each case (Paterson, Krupa, & Lauckner, 2012; Stake, 1994; 2000). This allows me to appreciate the various ways in which the phenomenon occur across cases and make comparisons between cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

**Unit of analysis**

According to Baxter and Jack (2008) defining a unit of analysis serves to determine what the cases of my research are. In other words, what or who do I want to analyse. In my research the unit of analysis is the designer of a small and medium Danish fashion company and I seek to compare ten cases. The cases have in common that they are all Danish and have implemented CSR or CS practices. The cases also show some differences regarding the kind of fashion they offer and the size of their company. In three cases (H, I, J) the designers are producing kids’ clothes. The other 7 cases offer womenswear and/or menswear, from which five cases (C, D, E, F, G) are high end fashion designers, which means that they produce expensive clothes in high quality. In addition, in eight cases the firms are small sized with between 1 until 25 employees, while in cases H and I the companies have more than 50 employees, thus are medium sized companies (European Commission, n.d.). Nevertheless, according to Stake (1994;2000) having similarity in the cases is not crucial. More important is the meaning that they provide, thereby bringing valuable information to my research.

**2.4 Methods for data collection**

Prior to data collection, I identified which information I need to gather in order to explore the phenomena of interest. The information I need to collect consists of

- The responsible practices the ten designers adopt today and the issues of the fashion industry they aim to address with these practices. The practices the designers plan to adopt in the future.
- The reasons that motivate them to adopt responsible practices.
- The challenges they encounter today when doing so and the barriers that prevent them from doing more.

In order to gather the above mentioned information I used natural language data as opposed to interactive and ethnographic approaches to collect qualitative data. This approach is appropriate for my research as I seek to explore managers’ perceptions by analysing the language they use. Two methods allow for this kind of data to be gathered: interviews and textual data. (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008)

**Textual data and semi-structured interviews**

I used a combination of the two methods. First of all, I collected textual data from the companies’ homepage in order to get an insight into the responsible practices of each designer. The second phase of data collection involved a round of semi-structured interviews which allowed me to clarify and complete the information on
the practices adopted today, as well as to gather information regarding the practices they plan to adopt in the future, their motivation behind these practices, the challenges they encounter and the barriers that prevent them from doing more. I conducted 10 interviews which lasted between 30 minutes and 1 hour each. All interviews were audio recorded and partly transcribed. More precisely, when transcribing the interviews, I transcribed the parts that best described the designers’ perceptions regarding what he or she is doing in terms of responsible practices, as well as his or her motivations and perceived challenges when doing so.

**Strengths and limitations of semi-structured interviews**

One the one hand, semi-structured interviews are useful for my research as they enable me to guide the interviews by having pre-determined lines of questions. This is in line with the case study approach by Stake (2000) who emphasizes the need to identify a structure prior to data collection in order to ensure the researcher gathers all the information needed to investigate the phenomena of interest. Consequently, I have defined six lines of questions which serve as loose structure for the interviews (see appendix C). On the other hand, semi-structured interviews bear the risk that I am too tied up by the theories that influence my research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008). In order to avoid this, I adjusted the lines of question to each participant and was open to additional information which emerged during the interviews and which gave additional insights related to the phenomena of interest.

2.5 Methods for data analysis

After having collected the relevant data for my research the next step consists of choosing a method for analysing and summarizing the data. However, there are important factors to consider when analysing data from multiple case study informed by a constructionist paradigm, which I elaborate on hereafter.

**Capturing complexities of individual cases**

When doing multiple case study informed by a constructionist paradigm it is important to consider that the aim is to examine the complexities of each case (Lincoln & Guba, as cited in Stake, 2000). Therefore, I need to be aware of the fact that the results of my analysis should capture the complexities of each case and not reduce the complexity of individual cases by focusing on the few phenomena being compared (Paterson, Krupa, & Lauckner, 2012; Stake, 1994; 2000). According to Stouffer (as cited in Stake, 2000, p. 447), “*Case research seek out both what is common and what is particular about the case, but the end product of the research portrays more of the common.*” Capturing the complexity of individual cases is done by taking into account the various contexts in which each case is embedded (Stake, 1994; 2000). Consequently, in order to stay true to my choice of constructionist multiple case study I have first analysed each case independently in order to identify what is particular about each case. This enables me in the subsequent analysis chapter to present the
results of my analysis by comparing the cases and presenting the similarities between cases as well as the particularities of individual cases.

**Content analysis**

I chose the content analysis method to analyse the collected data. The aim of this method is to attain a condensed description of the phenomenon in form of categories of codes (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Qualitative content analysis involves the careful examination of qualitative data by the use of “systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, as cited in Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009, p.1). This method of data analysis can be used for both deductive and inductive research, and includes three main phases: preparation, organizing and reporting (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). However, the analytical process, especially the definition of coding schemes and categories, is different in deductive and inductive content analysis (Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). Considering my two-parted research approach, the following section explains how I used content analysis for both the deductive and the inductive part of the analysis, and how I condensed and summarized the data in order to identify the main results of my analysis.

3.1.1 Deductive analysis of responsible practices

I used a deductive approach for the first part of my analysis aimed at analysing the practices adopted by the designers when addressing relevant issues of fashion.

1st step: Preparing the data

For this part of the analysis the phenomena of interest were the responsible practices adopted by each designer. Therefore, I looked for expressions or sentences that described the responsible practices in each case and which constituted the codes that will be used for my analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). This information was collected on the designers’ homepages as well as in the interviews when the designers were talking about their responsible practices.

2nd step: Organizing the data

In deductive content analysis, coding schemes and categories are based on existing (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). I used the theoretical framework I constructed in the literature review as coding scheme which consists of,

- Three main categories representing the three levels of responsibility: “compliance”, “pro-active” and “corporate sustainability”
- Initial list of codes representing responsible practices available to designers. Each code belongs to either one of the three categories. For example, code “GOTS certificate” represents a practice which belongs to the category “compliance”.

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First of all, I analysed each case individually. For each of them, I identified codes and assembled them according to the category they belong to. This resulted in 10 individual frameworks of responsible practices (see appendix D). When identifying and grouping the codes, I looked for accordance with initial codes. The latter were the specific responsible practices previously identified in my theoretical framework. Whenever I identified new codes which emerged from the data within the course of the analysis, and which I had not included in the framework, I extended the framework with the new practices (Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). For instance, “Policies to ensure no harm is made to animals in the production of leather and fur”. Furthermore, when identifying the responsible practices adopted by each designer, I paid attention to what is uncommon and different from one case to another. This approach is in line with Stake’s constructionist case study strategy and allows me to identify what are particular and unique responsible practices in every case (Stake, 1994; 2000).

Secondly, in order to condensate the data, I grouped the codes from all cases into one framework. This means that for every responsible practice I named the cases which have adopted it. For instance, for the practice “GOTS certificate” I referred to cases B, H, J who have adopted this practice. Please refer to appendix E to view the framework after analysis. The underlined codes represent the new codes which were not included in the initial list of codes but emerged from the data.

3rd step: Reporting the research results on responsible practices

The new framework after analysis assembles all responsible practices adopted by the designers into the three main categories “compliance”, “pro-active” and “sustainable”. Based on this framework I describe the responsible practices adopted by the ten designers in the subsequent analysis chapter.

Strengths and limitations of deductive content analysis to study responsible practices

On the one hand, using deductive content analysis for this part of the analysis allows me to get an understanding of what each designer is doing to address relevant issues of fashion and evaluate their level of responsibility according to the issues they are addressing. Additionally, it enables me to compare between cases and identify differences between designers in their choice of responsible practices, thus illustrating what is particular in each case (Stake, 1994; 2000). On the other hand, the deductive approach makes it difficult to capture the complexities given by the different contexts in which each case is embedded (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008; Stake, 1994; 2000). Nevertheless, while this part of the analysis is aimed at getting an overall understanding of the practices, the second part of the analysis allows me to consider the context in which the designers’ sense making is embedded.
3.1.2 Inductive content analysis of designers’ sense making

I used inductive content analysis for the second part of my research aimed at investigating how designers make sense of their responsible practices. This type of content analysis suggests a more inductive reasoning since codes and categories emerge from the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009).

1st step: Preparing the data

The phenomenon of interest for this part of the analysis was the designers’ sense making of their responsible practices. As defined in the literature review, when making sense, people “interpret and explain set of cues from their environments” (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014, p.66). Cues are simple, pre-existing notions that people draw on from their environment in order to understand and explain ongoing actions (Helms-Mills, Dye, & Mills, 2008; Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). Consequently, the codes for this part of the analysis were the sense making cues, namely words, expressions and simple phrases mentioned by designers when talking about their motivation to adopt responsible practices. And, the cues related to the challenges they face when doing so and that prevent them from doing more. This data was collected during the interviews and transcribed in ten individual interview transcripts which are to be found in appendix F.

2nd step: Organizing the data

Since this part of the analysis is inductive, the aims are to condensate and simplify data in a way that categories emerge from the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). Hence, I first identified codes in the interview transcripts and then organized them into a coding manual. Subsequently, I assembled the codes into categories. To guarantee rigor of the analysis I used specific analytical processes to condensate the data as defined by Corbin and Strauss (2008) as well as the constant comparison technique by Glaser and Strauss (as cited in Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). These are inspired by grounded theory which informs about how to interpret qualitative data inductively. In the following section I describe how I identified the codes, grouped them into categories as well as the reasoning that led me to identify the categories.

Coding the data

As mentioned above, the codes used for this part of the analysis were sense making cues mentioned by designers when making sense of their responsible practices. When coding the data, I reviewed all the interview transcripts and extracted in-vivo codes, meaning that I used the actual words and expressions used by designers rather than naming the codes myself (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Subsequently, I developed a coding manual which illustrates the codes I identified for each case (Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). In order to guarantee coding consistency, I read the transcripts several times to ensure that no code has been overlooked and additional reading failed to reveal new cues (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). Please refer to appendix G to view the coding manual. In order to stay true to my choice of constructionist case study approach defined
by Stake (2000), when analysing each case, I paid close attention to the context in which the designers’ sense making is embedded. This enabled me to take into account the complexity surrounding each case and identify what is particular about each of them (Stake R., 2000). After having coded the entire transcripts I grouped the codes from all cases into categories.

**Grouping the codes into categories**

The constant comparison technique Glaser and Strauss (as cited in Elo and Kyngäs, 2008) enables to group codes into higher level categories. This technique consists of comparing the codes for similarities and differences and grouping those codes which have a similar meaning under one category (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Corley & Gioia, 2004). Consequently, in my analysis I identified categories by comparing the codes that emerged from the data. When doing so, I noticed that some codes were similar. For instance, when talking about what motivates them, some designers mentioned, “It gives us peace of mind” (Case A) or “It’s really with our heart we do it” (case C). On the opposite, other designers mentioned “if we can tell a story around sustainability then we brand it like that” (Case F). So I grouped those codes with a similar meaning under the same category.

This way 9 sense making categories emerged which best describe the motivations, challenges and barriers for more sustainable practices. More precisely, when deriving the categories which describe designers’ motivations, I based my reasoning on the argument mentioned in the literature review, that people’s sense making is influenced by underlying factors including the cultural context, as well as their values, beliefs, and experiences. Hence I identified categories, such as “identity factors”, “cultural context” and “business context”. Finally, these categories were grouped into three main categories (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Here again I based my reasoning on the argument put forth in the literature review, namely that sense making influences action. Thus, designers’ sense making can either positively or negatively influence their decision to adopt certain responsible practices. Accordingly, I have grouped all categories into three main categories:

- “Driving categories”, consists of three sense making categories which describe designers’ motivations and positively influence their commitment and choice of responsible practices.
- “Restraining categories - present” consists of two sense making categories, which describe the challenges faced by designers today and negatively influence their responsible practices.
- “Restraining categories – future” gathers four sense making categories, which describe the barriers that prevent them from adopting sustainable practices in the future.

Please refer to appendix H to view the list of categories and the cues that constitute each of them.

**3rd step: Reporting the research results on designers’ sense making**

This analytical process for coding the sense making cues, and for identifying sense making categories allows me to represent the phenomenon in a reliable manner. Thereby, providing a means to describe how designers
make sense of their responsible practices (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). In the subsequent analysis chapter, I describe the three main categories, by presenting the sense making categories and the cues which constitute them.

**Strengths and limitations of using deductive content analysis to study sense making**

On the one hand, the inductive content analysis approach is appropriate for this part of my analysis for at least two reasons. First of all, even though there is previous knowledge on sense making in the field of CSR and corporate sustainability, there is no research on the particular phenomenon of sense making of Danish designers in small and medium firms. And, according to (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 113) “The use of inductive content analysis is recommended when there are no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon or when knowledge is fragmented.” Secondly, since sense making is context dependent phenomenon, inductive content analysis is especially appropriate because it enables to reveal the meanings underlying physical messages by appreciating the context in which the meaning embedded (Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009).

On the other hand, inductive content analysis also suggests a high degree of interpretation in the analysis and development of research results (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008). When identifying categories, “the researcher comes to a decision, through interpretation, as to which things to put in the same category” (Dey, as cited in Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 111). Consequently, I need to acknowledge that the interpretation of the codes and categories is subjective and represents my “personal and theoretical understanding of the phenomenon under study.” (Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009, p. 5). However, the fact that I influence the research results is consistent with the chosen research philosophy. In fact, the social constructionist paradigm recognizes that the researcher plays an active role in constructing the interpretations of the collected data. (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008; Stake, 1994; 2000)

**3.2 Criteria for evaluating qualitative research**

In the following I present three criteria for judging my qualitative research work and present the extent to which I meet or do not meet these requirements. According to Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009), these criteria serve to evaluate qualitative research: credibility, confirmability and transferability.

**Credibility**

Credibility involves that the results adequately represent the phenomena of interest. In the context of my research the phenomena are the responsible practices adopted and the constructions of meanings of the designers. Ensuring credibility of results from qualitative research can be difficult given the high degree of subjective interpretation of the results. While acknowledging that the participant are the only ones who can
judge the credibility of my results, the following processes enabled me to improve the credibility of my qualitative research. (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009)

Wildemuth and Zhang (2009) and Stake (1994;2000) recommend the triangulation of methods to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation. Triangulation consists of using multiple methods to clarify meaning of participants by identifying different perceptions of meanings within one case. In my research, credibility of the results is facilitated by the triangulation of methods used for data collection. I am using textual data to get information on responsible practices and complement this information with interview data, thereby getting a richer and more diverse understanding of the multiple meanings each designers makes of his or her responsible practices. However, I acknowledge that because my research is limited in time I was not able to verify the repeatability of my results during an extended period of time as it is suggested by Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009).

To facilitate credibility researcher should also be transparent about the analytical processes used to collect and interpret the data. In my research I aim to ensure transparency at every step of my analysis so that the reader has a clear understanding of how I carried out my analysis and how I identified the results of my analysis. (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009) First of all, I meticulously managed the textual and interview data collected for each case. More precisely, I organized the textual data collected on the homepages and in the interviews into ten individual frameworks (appendix D). Additionally, I documented the data gathered in the interviews by writing interview transcripts (appendix F). Secondly, when it comes to the analysis, I present in details the analytical methods used for both the deductive and inductive content analysis and describe the coding rules and procedures used to condensate the data. In addition, I use authentic citations to illustrate the codes from which categories are formulated.

**Confirmability**

Confirmability refers to the degree of consistency of the research results by other researchers (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008). However, I did not engage other researchers to critically assess my results and to agree or disagree with the codes I identified in the data and the way in which I grouped the codes into categories. (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) Consequently, because of the subjective interpretation of qualitative data, different researchers might have alternative interpretations of my data.

**Transferability**

Transferability refers to the extent to which the concepts and constructs derived from my research are relevant to other research contexts and settings (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). While considering that my research is context specific as it is embedded in the Danish context and focused on the fashion industry, I argue that the coding process which led me to identify six main categories can be applied to other contexts. First of all, the theoretical framework I established can be adapted to other contexts besides
the fashion industry and can be used in research that seek to evaluate a company’s responsibility level. Likewise, the inductive coding process used for identifying the sense making categories can be used in other studies, when researching about the link between responsible practices and managers sense making. In contrast, the particular sense making categories are specific to the ten Danish designers as they constitute the codes that emerged inductively from the data.

To conclude, this chapter has outlined the methodology underpinning my research, including the methods used for analysing the qualitative data collected from the ten designers. The next chapter presents the research results from the deductive and inductive content analysis of both phenomena of interest.
4. Analysis

This chapter reports the research results of the multiple case study analysis. The 1\textsuperscript{st} part shows the results of the deductive content analysis of the responsible practices adopted by the ten Danish designers. The 2\textsuperscript{nd} part presents the results of the inductive content analysis on how the designers make sense of their responsible practices.

I. Deductive content analysis of responsible practices

This part of the analysis is a deductive content analysis and is based on the theoretical framework I established. Using the analytical process described in the methodology part, I identified codes, representing the responsible practices adopted by each designer, and grouped them into the three main categories of the framework, namely “compliance”, “pro-active” and “sustainable”. This resulted in a framework after analysis, to be found in appendix E. Based on this framework I will now describe the responsible practices adopted by designers in each level of responsibility. On the one hand, compliance and pro-active practices are aimed at reducing environmental and social impacts. On the other hand, besides contributing to social and environmental sustainability, sustainable practices also address the issues of the unsustainable fast fashion model and its large quantities and low prices of clothes, which result in overconsumption and high amounts of waste. This analysis contributes to answer the part of the research question regarding the designers’ choice of responsible practices.

4.1 Compliance practices

Compliance practices to reduce negative social impacts

Cases D, E, F expect their manufacturers and material suppliers to meet their national employment laws. They choose to produce their clothes in countries which are less subject to human right abuses, mainly inside the EU. Moreover, they state that they are in direct contact with their manufacturers and go there regularly to control the working conditions inside the factories. To illustrate this point, case E mention on their homepage that they expect their suppliers to, “protect their employees’ health and safety and basic human rights” and further mention, “we will never knowingly source stock from countries which are in breach of these principles”. And, to control the working conditions within the factories in the EU and Pakistan, case E told me during the interview, “we are in contact via mail and phone and also go there regularly”. Cases F and G, who are more high-end designers produce parts or all of their collections in their atelier in Copenhagen. This way they can ensure that their working conditions comply with the Danish employment laws. Cases B, H, J use GOTS certified organic materials. This way they can certify that their suppliers and manufacturers comply with social standards defined by GOTS to ensure safe and healthy working conditions, living wages, freedom of association, no forced labour and no discrimination. Since, case H also uses other materials besides GOTS certified materials the participant told me that “for other material suppliers our suppliers must comply with the BSCI.”
Compliance practices to reduce negative environmental impacts at the material phase
Case E and F use fur and leather from animals that are not killed only for their fur or skin and without harming the animals. To illustrate this point, case F said “The seals are hunted because of their meat and not because of their fur, so no baby seals are hunted”. He also told me that he is in relation with the intuits in Greenland, and went to a seal hunt with them to verify that there is no animal torture. Additionally, case H has no fur and down policy. Cases B, H, J have GOTS certified organic materials, which sets environmental criteria for organic fibres to material suppliers, prohibiting the use of harmful chemicals such as fertilizers and pesticides and genetically modified organisms (GMO) to grow the materials. Cases B and H have also adopted the Oekotex certification, which prohibits the use of harmful chemicals in all phases of the life-cycle, including the material phase.

Compliance practices to reduce negative environmental impacts at the production phase
Cases B, H, J have adopted the GOTS standard, which also prohibits the use of harmful chemicals and toxic heavy metals during the production phase. Case B and H, have also adopted the Oeko-tex certificate ensuring that no harmful substances are used in the production of their clothes. However, because case H uses only 40% of certified materials, precisely 35% Oeko-tex and 5% GOTS, the firm has its own code of conduct to ensure that no dangerous chemicals are used during the production of clothes made from non-certified materials.

4.2 Pro-active practices
Moreover, my analysis indicates that some of the cases have a more pro-active approach when addressing social and environmental impacts.

Pro-active practices to reduce negative social impacts
Cases A, C, I take measures to increase the transparency of their supply chain by reducing the amount of suppliers and manufacturers involved. This allows them to have greater control over the working conditions of the people involved in the production of their clothes. Case A, has recognized that “the bigger you get the more complicated your supply chain and then it gets more difficult to produce in a responsible way.” Instead, they collaborate with two small private owned manufacturers in Peru and Nepal who collect the materials and produce the final clothes. Likewise, case C told me in the interview that “a majority of our clothes are handmade in the homes of women's knitters on the Faroe Islands as well as in our ateliers in Jordan and Peru. We have a very close relationship with them and I can assure the conditions are good.” Similarly, case I opened her own fabric in the Ukraine and told me, “we own the fabric so we know all production steps from the production of the material until the finite clothes. I go there every four weeks and I can guarantee everything is alright there.”
**Pro-active practices to reduce negative environmental impacts at the material phase**

Interestingly, case D did a life cycle analysis to estimate the environmental impacts of her collection during all phases of the life-cycle and to be able to efficiently reduce the negative impacts of her clothes. Further on, to ensure environmental friendly materials used for their clothes, cases A, C, I told me they are in close contact with their material suppliers and can ensure their materials are organic and have not been in touch with any chemicals. Case A for instance uses organic pima cotton which is hand-picked in Peru close to the production site. In the interview she told me, “I can assure that the grass is not treated”. Case A has also reduced the variety of materials used and only uses three materials, namely pima cotton, alpaca wool and cashmere in order to have less impacts. She told me, “We design our clothes with the few materials as possible, the simplest possible. Our products don’t have zippers or buttons.” Moreover, case D also uses innovative materials and is “experimenting with hemp because it uses less land and water than cotton”. Interestingly, case G is using antique fabrics, laces and beads from other designers, thereby minimizing the material waste of other designers.

**Pro-active practices to reduce negative environmental impacts at the production phase**

Since cases A, C, I have their own production, they can verify that no harmful chemicals are used in the production of their clothes. Case C mentioned during the interview that “the wool we use has a range of wonderful natural colours and doesn’t need to be dyed”. Additionally, cases C, E, F, G are taking measures to reduce their production waste. Case E for instance re-uses leftover fabrics to create new collections, “because we often have material stocks and production waste we reuse it for new seasons or mid-season collections”. Cases C, F, G also produce tailored clothes. This way they only produce once a client has put an order, which allows them to only use the exact amount of material needed. Case F has an interesting approach as he buys his fabric used from a furniture store, thereby allowing him to “order the right quantity of fabric (...) to make sure we use only what we need.”. Moreover, case H also reduces the emissions of GHG and the amount of waste water by reducing the consumption of electricity and water used for the production of her clothes.

**Pro-active practices to reduce negative environmental impacts at the transport phase**

Case E is working to avoid polluting transportation means and told me, “If we have time we choose slow transportation, [shipping] which is less polluting.” And, he is also improving the product packaging by using recyclable plastic bags. Additionally, case H reduces the GHG emissions by ensuring that the majority of her clothes are transported by sea to Europe. According to the CSR report of case H, the brand aims to limit the transport by plane to less than 5% of the total buying volume.
**Pro-active practices to reduce negative environmental impacts at the usage phase**

Case E recommends hand wash and no dryer. In addition, case C uses wool from the Faroe Islands, which “is very resistant to dirt and therefore doesn’t need to be washed frequently. In any case we recommend cold hand-wash and no drying.”

**Pro-active practices to counter the fast fashion model**

First of all, all cases produce clothes made from high quality materials, thereby enabling a longer usage phase. To illustrate this point, case I mention on their homepage, “Our clothes are of the very best quality, made to be worn and washed again and again”. Likewise, case F, who uses materials from a furniture store, told me in the interview, “These fabrics are also used in cars, for the sofas and are very resistant. They can last a lifetime with minimal care”. Furthermore, cases D and J also did durability tests in order to ensure their clothes can stand as many washes as possible without changing their shape and colour.

Secondly, by offering timeless designs cases A, E, F also enable a longer usage phase and counter the fast changing trends that characterize the fast fashion model. For instance, case E mentioned in the interview, “we don’t work with seasons, we try to make all collections timeless so you can combine pieces from different collections, and don’t wear one piece only for one season.” Interestingly, case E is also promoting multiple usage of one piece, “some of our pieces can be worn in multiple ways as a skirt or as shirt, and also our collections are unisex, they can be worn by men and women.”

Thirdly, cases C, F, G are tailoring unique, customized pieces for their clients, thereby producing fewer quantities for a higher price. Case F is specialized in tailoring and his aim is “to re-establish a sense of respect for tailoring and timeless silhouettes”. Case G explicitly mentioned that when she started her brand, many designers moved their production to China to produce higher quantities for a lower price. However, as she said “I didn’t want to be one of them, so I decided to stay in France, I kept the 10 best people and we produced less. Now it’s better, more fun. It’s not all about being big.”

**4.3 Sustainable practices**

My results indicate that besides adopting compliance and pro-active practices, some cases also adopt sustainable practices. They contribute to social and environmental sustainability, and effectively address the issues of the fast fashion model by improving the sustainable behaviour of their consumers and contributing to more sustainability in the industry.

**Social and environmental sustainability**

On the one hand, case C contributes to social sustainability by reducing poverty and inequalities of minority groups. She has developed a women empowerment project in Jordan aimed at giving women the opportunity to earn money and ensure them steady employment. In the interview she told me, “most of them have been
working there since the beginning seven years ago.” Furthermore, she added that “a lot of Syrian refugees are being employed in this project.” On the other hand, when it comes to contributing to environmental sustainability, cases E and I use recycled materials, such as recycled polyester. Case E mentioned he prefers recycled fabrics over organic materials and argued that “organic is not very sustainable, because it has its side effects; it takes a lot of water and land”. In addition, case B gives her production left-overs to recycling firms “when we have too much clothes we deliver them to the Red Cross”. Moreover, cases C, G, J offer services around the remanufacturing and repairing of their old clothes. Cases C and J offer reparation services and case C offers a long warranty period of 2 years with reparation service within the warranty. Case G is remanufacturing old clothes from her brand and giving them a new design. During the interview, when talking about brides’ wear, she told me that “the women can come back if she wants changes on her wedding dress to use it after the wedding for other occasions.” Case J is the only designer who developed a circular business model focused on renting out of kids’ clothes. The idea of this concept is that parents buy a monthly subscription fee for a set of high quality, GOTS certified organic kids’ clothes. And, as their child grows and requires a bigger size the parents return the set and receive another set of clothes in a bigger size.

**Improving sustainable behaviour of consumers**

Cases C, D, G, J have sustainable practices in place which also improve the sustainable behaviour of their consumers. Thereby, effectively addressing the issues of fast fashion. First of all, cases D and G are changing consumer behaviour towards “buying less, but better clothes”. They do so through awareness raising initiatives and trainings. Case G mentioned in the interview, “I opened the berlin fashion week and people were asking me, ‘what would you recommend for people to be sustainable’ and I said: ‘buy less’.” Case D has a blog to increase consumer awareness about sustainability issues in fashion. Furthermore, she offers lectures and workshops for sustainable consumption and has an education program for kids. During the interview she told me, “I teach 8th grade children in Denmark about sustainability, about not buying things that they will only wear for 2-3 times.” Secondly, by offering services around the reparation and remanufacturing of their old clothes, cases C, G, J are promoting sustainable behaviour of their consumers towards wearing their clothes for a longer time instead of throwing them away after a few seasons. Thirdly, case J who focuses her business on renting out kids’ clothes is actively encouraging parents to rent out clothes for their kids instead of buying them. This way she enables multiple usage phases of clothes.

**Contributing to a more sustainable industry**

Cases D, G, J also contribute to a more sustainable industry by increasing awareness about sustainability within the fashion industry and sharing best practices with other designers. On the one hand, case G is known throughout the fashion industry for being a leader in responsible high-end fashion. She uses her reputation for raising awareness about the importance of sustainability within the industry. For instance, when she opened
the fashion week in Paris in 2005 with a large ethical show, it was the first time that Paris introduced Ethical Fashion as “The fashion industry’s most important element of the future.” On the other hand, case D developed a research project with scientists and performed a life-cycle assessment for her clothes which resulted in the production of a responsible clothing line. This project was also aimed at improving knowledge about how to reduce the negative impacts of clothes and sharing it with the industry. In the interview she mentioned, “I think it is important to keep on researching about new materials and know the science behind it. Otherwise we could just blindly pick up materials for example based on certificates such as GOTS, but it wouldn’t change anything.” She openly documents her findings about sustainable materials and practices on her blog and is regularly meeting with other designers, including case J, to exchange best practices. Additionally, she told me, “I can only hope that the project will break down the barrier between the fashion industry and sustainability so that we may begin sharing knowledge about materials and production and make sustainable initiatives more of a reality.”

4.4 Summary of the main research results on responsible practices

First of all, my results show that all designers reduce the negative social and environmental impacts of their clothes. Yet some are using compliance practices, while others have more pro-active measures in place. On the one hand, at the compliance level, designers expect their suppliers to comply with their national laws and choose to produce in the EU to avoid human abuses (D, E, F, G). Cases B, H, J comply with social standards such as the GOTS or the BSCI to ensure their suppliers meet the social criteria regarding working conditions defined by both standards. When it comes to reducing their negative environmental impacts at the material phase, designers at the compliance level choose GOTS and oeko-tex certified materials which prohibit the use of harmful chemicals in the production of the material (B, H, J). Cases E and F ensure no harm is made to animals and case H has a no fur policy. When it comes to reducing their negative environmental impacts at the material phase cases B, H, J comply with the environmental standards defined by GOTS and oeko-tex, thereby ensuring that no harmful chemicals are used in the production of their clothes. Case H has a company specific environmental code of conduct for suppliers.

On the other hand, at the pro-active level, designers reduce the negative social impacts of their clothes by having their own production sites or collaborating with small private owned manufacturers (A, C, I). This allows them to reduce the complexity of their supply chain and ensure greater control of the working conditions of the people involved in the production of their clothes. Regarding the reduction of their environmental impacts at the material phase, pro-active designers use innovative materials, reduce the amount of materials used or use production left-overs from other designers (A, C, D, G). When it comes to reducing the negative environmental impacts at the production phase, cases A, C, I forbid the use of harmful chemicals in their own factories. In addition, cases C, E, F reduce their own production waste by producing tailored pieces once ordered or re-using their own production waste. Case H also works to reduce the consumption of electricity

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and water. Additionally, cases C, E, H adopt pro-active measures to reduce the negative environmental impacts of their clothes further down the life cycle, at the transport and usage phases.

Secondly, all cases have pro-active measures in place that counter the model of fast fashion by producing high quality clothes, thereby enabling a longer usage phase for the consumers. Cases A, E, F also have timeless designs which enables a longer usage phase and goes against fast changing trends. Cases C, F, G are tailoring clothes thereby countering the high quantities and low prices that characterize fast fashion.

Lastly, some cases adopt more sustainable practices aimed at social sustainability and environmental sustainability. Case C is contributing to social sustainability with her women empowerment project. Cases B, E, I, J have adopted environmentally sustainable practices by replacing linear production processes with circular ones. Cases B, E, I are using recycled materials and giving their left-over fabrics to recycling firms. Cases C, G, J are supporting the dematerialization of fashion by offering services around the reparation or the remanufacturing of their old clothes, next to their normal business operations. Case J is the only case which has developed a new business model based on circular processes by offering parents the possibility to rent out kids’ clothes instead of buying them. Furthermore, with their sustainable practices, cases C, D, G, J are improving the sustainable behaviour of their consumers towards buying less, but better clothes, wearing their clothes longer and renting out clothes. By this means, they effectively address the issues linked to the fast fashion model and the related overconsumption and increased levels of waste. Cases D, G, J also contribute to a more sustainable clothing industry by increasing the awareness about sustainability within the industry and sharing best practices with other designers.

To conclude with the analysis of responsible practices, all cases are typically found on the left-hand side of the framework, adopting a mix of compliance and pro-active practices. However, it is worth mentioning that case F adopts mainly compliance measures. Moreover, besides adopting compliance and pro-active practices, cases B, C, D, E, G, I, J also adopt more sustainable practices, thus can also be found on the right side of the framework.

II. Inductive content analysis of designers’ sense making

In the 2nd part of the analysis I analysed how designers make sense of their responsible practices by studying the cues they mentioned when talking about their motivations, the challenges faced today and the barriers that prevent them from adopting more advanced practices. This analysis contributes to answer my research question by investigating how designers make sense of their responsible practices. Using the analytical processes for coding and building sense making categories described in the methodology chapter, I have identified three main categories, “driving”, “restraining-present” and “restraining-future”. In the following section I describe the main categories by presenting the sense making categories which constitute them and by referring to the cues mentioned by designers. Please refer to appendix H to view the main categories and the respective sense making categories.
4.5 Driving categories

In this main category I have assembled the three categories which describe designers’ motivations and positively influence their choice of responsible practices. When analysing the cues mentioned by designers when talking about their motivations, I found that most of the cues were related to the values, beliefs and experiences of the designers. This led me to build the two categories “identity factors” and “cultural context”. Additionally, some designers also mentioned cues from a business context, which represents the third driving category.

Identity factors

First of all, when asked about the motivations behind their responsible actions, cases A and C mentioned cues related to their personal beliefs such as, “it gives us peace of mind,” and “we want to be able to look at ourselves in the mirror” (case A) or, “It was just very natural for us. It’s really with our heart we do it” (case C). Secondly, cases B, C, D also gave insights into their personal experiences that made them want to take responsibility. Case B for instance mentioned, “It has been in me since I was a teenager, reading about Greenpeace campaigns, getting aware of the issues linked to global warming. During the design school I would always work with this idea in my mind – ’I want to do things better’”. Case C also described a personal experience that made her want to be a responsible brand, “We noticed that people were buying a lot of things not really considering natural materials and nobody cared anymore about the wool on the Faroe Islands anymore. We saw a big bone fire of wool, people were just burning it because there was no use for it...and it really broke our heart to see that and we thought we have to do something about it and that’s actually how the company started”. Likewise, case D told me, “When I pass by a fast fashion shop it breaks my heart when I think about how it has been produced. It is really a personal matter for me to try to change something about it”.

Thirdly, cases A, B, E, G, H expressed the value of responsibility over profit when they mentioned they are willing to pay the higher price for responsible production as long as they feel they are doing the right thing. To illustrate this point, case A said “we do it for our own feeling of doing something that is a good product. If we would look at the profit first, we wouldn’t be importing organic pima cotton from Peru but from America because it’s cheaper.”. And, case E mentioned, ”it is costlier to produce this way but we still do it”. To further illustrate how this value is expressed, some cases said they are willing to pay the higher price for responsible products, even though they do not think there is a consumer demand for responsible clothes. Case B said she pays a higher price for her GOTS certified materials, ”we are working with lower minimums and higher prices.” Although she also said, ”I don’t think there is a particular demand for organic clothes. People buy clothes first because of the look”.
The cases which expressed personal beliefs, experiences and the value of responsibility over profit stated that these were the main drivers for them to start their responsible brand. In fact, they said they created their brand with the desire to produce in a responsible way. For instance, case H said, “We wanted to have a supply chain we are not ashamed of – where no one is threatened or abused”. Among these cases, case A, G, J previously had another brand, but thought it was too difficult to change it to become more responsible. Consequently, they created a new, more responsible brand. Case A described her motivation as follows, “We decided to start with the new brand to make it simpler, because before we had another brand and it was difficult to keep all materials organic.” Similarly, case J said, “With my previous brand I realized that even though our clothes were sustainable, the way consumers were using them wasn’t. For me it was clear that the only way to ensure that clothes get enough use is through sharing. I tried the concept in my previous brand but I noticed that the quality was still good enough to survive several usage phases as it is necessary in the concept of leasing.”

However, while most of the designers started their brand with the desire to produce in a responsible way, cases D and J were also driven by the desire to create a greater change in the behaviour of consumers. To illustrate this point, case D stated, “I wanted to be able to make people change their mind about consuming with my brand.” Likewise, case J mentioned, “when I started my new brand I wanted to make sure that we make the most out of a piece – so that clothes are not just worn for one season and I wanted to get the customer on board, to change the way people consume clothes.”

**Cultural context - the value of humility**

During the interviews cases A, B, C, I also expressed the importance of not talking too much about how responsible their clothes are. Instead, they promote the design, the quality of their clothes first, before talking about their environmental friendly choice of materials and production. This is closely linked to the value of humility which plays an important role in the Danish culture (Hockerts, Freeman, & Strand, 2014). To illustrate this point case C told me during the interview, “I think designers should talk less and do more. Look at H&M for example, they do maybe 1% of their production in a responsible way and everyone talks about it, but what about the 99%? I want people to buy the product because they are beautiful, and then when consumer sees what is inside, how it is produced, they think it’s good.” Similarly, case I said “We do it for us. That’s also the reason why we don’t talk so much about it or promote how sustainable we are in the newspaper or in advertisement.”

Consequently, the results on these two driving categories show that designers’ expressed cues related to their personal and cultural values, beliefs and experiences. Thus, they are mainly driven by moral reasons. Yet some of the designers also mentioned cues from a “business context”. This shows that they are also driven by business reasons.
Business context

First of all, besides being driven by moral reasons cases A, C, E, H I also perceive a consumer demand (C, I), communicate about their effort in a CSR report (H) and perceive the responsibility and high quality of their clothes as an added value (A, E). However, they explicitly stated that these business factors were not the main driver for them to start a responsible brand. To illustrate this point, case I mentioned, “I think people already pay more and more attention to how it is produced, what is inside the clothes, the chemicals that are used that could be bad for the child”. However, she also told me, ”I don’t think so much about it [what the consumer wants], I think it’s about being able to look at myself in the mirror”. Likewise, case H explicitly mentioned, “this was actually something we did because we thought it was important, not because there was a lot of demand.” Paradoxically, case H is the only case with a CSR report aimed at, “spreading the word that the firm is a responsible brand of kids’ clothing.” This shows that the firm actively communicates about its CSR engagement with stakeholders, including their consumers. Additionally, while the responsible practices adopted by cases A and E are driven by moral reasons first, they also perceive the responsibility and high quality of their clothes as an added value. For instance, case A who told me, “We were not thinking about the consumer. More about our own feeling of doing something that is a good product.” But she also states on her homepage that “it is also an added value to our product to use high quality materials.”

Secondly, despite being driven by moral reasons, case J also explicitly mentioned business reasons behind her practices. She thinks there is a demand from parents for organic kids’ clothes as she said, “Parents would like to buy the highest quality for their kids, with no harmful chemicals. However, they often cannot afford it because organic baby clothes are too expensive”. Based on this she created a business based on sharing kids’ clothes, hence enabling parents to have high quality for a low price. In addition, she mentioned, “We estimate that our revenues can be 50 percent higher than normal, if we would just sell the clothes. With the subscription model we have a more stable cash flow than within a normal fashion brand which is subject to the seasonal trends.”

Thirdly, case F only expressed cues from a business context. The main reason why he chooses responsible materials such as seal is because he likes the materials. Then, he uses the responsibility aspect of it to tell a story. Consequently, for him the choice of seal as ‘responsible’ material was “mainly a coincidence. We take materials we like and if we can tell a story around sustainability then we brand it like that”. Furthermore, when talking about the reasons for him to order fabric from a furniture store he stated, “It is good for us because we are a small company sometimes it’s difficult to get small amounts of fabric. That way we don’t have to buy more than what we need.”
4.6 Restraining categories – present

This main category consists of two sense making categories which describe the challenges faced by designers today and which negatively influence their responsible practices.

**Challenges linked to the responsible practices**

First of all, cases A, C, E, J mentioned the compromise they sometimes have to make between responsible and less responsible practices. Precisely, they have to choose transportation by plane in order to get more responsible materials with a longer durability, which in return they perceive as being ‘more responsible’. For instance, case A said “The transport is not particularly eco-friendly. It would be possible to get responsible materials from closer locations but then the quality is not as good”. Secondly, another challenge faced by the cases B, E, I is linked to the limited choice of organic and recycled materials. For instance, case E said “there are only some fabrics that can be recycled and reused.” Case I also finds it hard to find recycled materials “because the fibres of the cotton are too short once they have been recycled.” Thirdly, case E mentioned the lack of power in the supply chain as a challenge for ensuring good working conditions or environmental friendly production. In the interview he told me, “We don’t have the power or the money to ask our producers to do things another way. We’re always put behind because we are less important and bring less money.” Fourthly, another challenge faced by case J is linked to the lack of awareness of the concept through which parents can rent out high quality organic kids’ clothes. In her words, “People are not familiar with this concept... We need to make more people aware of the concept. It only happens on a very small scale.”

**Compromise between responsibility and profit**

Furthermore, when talking about their challenges, a majority of designers A, B, C, D, G, H mentioned the compromise between being responsible and making profit. This presents a barrier for designers because they are only able to take responsibility as long as they generate enough profit to finance their responsible practices. To illustrate this point, case A perceives that ”There is always a compromise to make if you want to survive as a responsible designer. We need to make profit because otherwise we die”. In the same way, case D revealed that ”it is very hard to generate enough money for a living from responsible products. In the end I have to pay my bills.” In addition, case H said “we do everything possible to act in a responsible way. You can only do it step by step. If you would try to do everything from day one you would kill yourself”

4.7 Restraining categories – future

This main category consists of four sense making categories which describe the barriers that prevent designers from adopting more sustainable practices in the future.
Awareness of sustainability issues of fast fashion

On the one hand, when talking about the sustainability issues of the fashion industry, cases A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J mentioned problems linked to non-responsible designers who value profit more than responsibility. To illustrate this point, Case H mentioned, “Producers want to make always more money. If everyone would be willing to pay more, the industry wouldn’t be that unsustainable.” In a similar way, case I criticized the fact that “Clothes are produced in a way that doesn’t take into account the conditions under which employees are working and the consequences on the environment.” Furthermore, some of these cases also criticized the fact that consumers do not make conscious buying decisions and are not ready to pay a higher price for responsible clothes. To illustrate this point, case A mentioned, “The unsustainability of clothing comes from the consumer, they don’t think of the consequences behind cheap products.” Likewise, case I criticized the fact that “people don’t want to pay too much for the clothes and that’s the reason why the textile industry is so bad.”

On the other hand, cases G and J criticized the fact that producing in a responsible way is not enough. Instead they stated that what matters is the consumption behaviour and that consumers should buy less and keep their clothes for a longer time. Case G expressed this point by saying, “What is really sustainable is a piece that is not fashion, you can wear it today you can wear it in 10 years. It doesn’t really matter what it is made off, but about how you use it. People should start buying less and use longer”. A similar problem was mentioned by case J as she argued the problem is that “clothes do not get enough use and are either put away in cupboards or thrown out. When you think of little baby pants, if it is only used seven times it almost doesn’t matter how sustainable it has been produced, because it still has an impact.”

Awareness of sustainable practices

Furthermore, cases A, D, E, H also mentioned sustainable practices to address the issues of the unsustainable fast fashion model, such as services whereby designers take back old clothes from their brand and repair or remanufacture them, and are aware of new business models around the sharing or renting out of clothes. This indicates that they know how to effectively address issues of fast fashion. Case A for instance said, “there are so many possibilities, taking clothes back and do something new with it, rent out clothes”. Interestingly, cases D, E, H have thought about adopting sustainable practices. For instance, case D told me “I have thought about renting out my clothes.” Likewise, case E said, “we have thought of taking back old clothes, sell them second hand or redesign them.” However, they did not adopt any of these practices in the end.

Barriers for sustainable practices

When asked about what prevents them from adopting more sustainable practices the designers mentioned several cues to explain why they cannot or do not want to. First of all, they mentioned the lack of resources as a barrier for adopting sustainable practices. When talking about the idea of offering reparation services or taking clothes back and redesigning them, cases A, B, E, H mentioned they could not do it because they lack
personnel and financial resources for doing it. Case A for instance said, "It’s only the two of us, then we would need a collaboration with other companies or so". Similarly, case E mentioned both, the lack of human and financial resources, “we would need to employ more people that can do that and also the money to have that business running so you need to take it step by step”.

Secondly, another barrier that prevents cases B, D, I from adopting more sustainable practices is linked to the fact that they think their business is too small. For instance, case B mentioned, "if I take back the few clothes people do not want to wear anymore, it wouldn’t make that big of a difference. In order to make a difference you have to think big." Case D thinks her company is too small and she produces too few quantities to rent out. Consequently, she added that “I don’t think it would be the right business model for me.” Moreover, case I believes she can only make changes within her company, but not make a greater change. In her own words she said, “We can only make a solution for our own company but we cannot change the industry”. It is worth mentioning that case I, who has a long tradition in producing responsible kids’ clothes, recently took over a kids’ clothes company which initially was founded by case J and went bankrupt. Interestingly, the previous founder tried to implement more sustainable practices by organizing “swap parties” where parents could exchange their children’s used clothes, thereby ensuring a longer usage of clothes. When I asked case I, if they were still doing it, she said, “that was before, we’re not doing it anymore.”

Thirdly, another barrier that seem to prevent cases B and E from adopting more sustainable practices is linked to the fact that they are waiting for other actors to find innovative solutions that would allow them to recycle their production waste or using recycled materials. To illustrate this point, case E mentioned, "it depends on the industry, if there are companies in the future that make it possible". Likewise, case B “apparently, Danish fashion institute is investing in a factory that would take back textiles.”

Fourthly, other cases mentioned they see that consumers are already re-selling and buying second hand kids’ clothes from their brand on the internet. As a consequence, they do not perceive a need to change their business model towards selling second hand clothes, or offering services whereby parents could rent out kids’ clothes. To illustrate this point, case H told me “we don’t see a need to go into that business, because it is already happening. We see five-year-old clothes of our brand on second hand sites, so people re-use them. We are just not a part of it”. Similarly, case I said “I can see from our customers that they are sharing and giving their clothes to their neighbours and family. I think they are already doing it.”

**The role of other actors in improving sustainability in consumers’ behaviour and in the fashion industry**

Moreover, cases G and F believe that designers on their own cannot contribute to a more sustainable consumer behaviour, nor can they make the industry more sustainable. They believe that besides designers adopting more sustainable practices, other actors are needed to create a greater change towards sustainability. On the one hand, case J points to the role of government in improving sustainability in consumers’ behaviour. She said, “We cannot force them [consumers] to not buy clothes in a shop, we can just offer them our service and hope
they continue renting our clothes.” And she added that “It would take more to change the industry and make it more sustainable. It would take action from politics and regulations.”

On the other hand, case G highlighted the role of fashion institutions to make the fashion industry more sustainable. She believes that more designers would be sustainable if they would know the rules about how to be a sustainable brand and what sustainability means in the fashion industry. In order for this to happen, she said that actors within the fashion industry should collaborate more. Designers should create a group and, “explore possibilities, to become more sustainable.” But she also mentioned that “we [designers] need an organization to hold all designers together, to give us the knowledge and the rules of what sustainability is.”

This is especially important because, according to her, there is a misunderstanding among designers about what sustainability actually means, “Every designer is inventing their own rules or definitions of sustainability. But is it really sustainable? the rules need to be defined, so we know when can you call yourself sustainable.”

She further argues that even though there would be institutions such as the Danish Fashion Institute and the Danish Textile Union., “nothing is happening, to support designers to take the ‘right way’ of sustainability and everything is done in a very individualistic way.”

4.8 Summary of the main research results on designers’ sense making
First of all, the results on the “driving categories” indicate that in all cases, except case F, designers expressed cues from the sense making categories “identity factors” and “cultural context”. Thus, their sense making is derived from moral factors such as personal and cultural values, beliefs and experiences, and they are mainly driven by moral reasons. In fact, some designers’ mentioned that they were doing it because of their personal belief that it is the right thing to do (A, C), and others also talked about their personal experiences that made them want to take responsibility (B, C, D). Cases A, B, E, G, H value responsibility over profit which is shown by their readiness to pay a higher price for producing in a responsible way because they think it is the right thing to do. Furthermore, cases A, B, C, I mentioned the importance of not talking too much about the responsibility aspect of their clothes, thereby expressing the value of humility which is characteristic of the Danish culture. My results also show that for all cases, except case F, moral reasons were an important driver for creating a responsible brand. While most of the cases created their responsible brand with the desire to produce in a responsible way, cases D and J were also driven by the desire to create a greater change in the behaviour of their consumers. Additionally, cases A, C, E, F, H, I, J also mentioned cues from the sense making category “business context”. While, cases A, C, H, I explicitly mentioned that their moral reasons were the main driver for them to create a responsible brand, they also perceive a consumer demand for responsible clothes, an added value from producing in a responsible and communicate about their effort. Interestingly, case J is driven by a combination of both moral and business reasons. In contrast case F, is the only case which is not driven by moral reasons, but only by business reasons.
Secondly, my results on the main category “restraining category – present” show that cases A, B, C, E, I, J are facing challenges linked to the compromise they have to make between responsible and non-responsible practices, the limited choice of organic and recycled materials and the lack of power in the supply chain. My findings further indicate that A, B, C, D, G, H have to make a compromise between being responsible and making profit. This finding supports the previous finding that a majority of the designers are driven by moral reasons first, rather than business reasons. Thus, they perceive responsibility as an investment they do for themselves, rather than something that pays off.

Thirdly, my results on the “restraining category – future” suggest that cases A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J believe that the issues that make the fashion industry unsustainable stem from non-responsible designers who value profit over responsibility and consumers who are not ready to pay the higher price for responsible clothes. In contrast, cases G and J are criticizing the fact that producing in a responsible way is not enough to address the issues of the unsustainable fast fashion model. Instead, they argue that what matters is to change consumption behaviour towards buying less, using longer and sharing clothes. My results also show that cases A, D, E, H know about sustainable practices such as the services whereby designers take back old clothes from their brand and repair or remanufacture them, and are aware of new business models around the sharing or renting out of clothes. From these cases, cases D, E, H thought of implementing similar practices, but eventually did not do it. When asked about what prevents them from adopting more sustainable practices, cases A, B, D, E, H, I mentioned barriers such as the lack of resources both human and financial, that their business is too small, or that they are waiting for innovations which would enable the close-loop recycling of fabrics. Others also believe that consumers are already sharing and buying second hand clothes, thus do not see a need for changing their business model and offering these kind of services. Cases G and F, believe that other actors are needed to improve sustainability in consumers’ behaviour and make the fashion industry more sustainable.

To conclude the analysis, I have grouped together the results of the deductive and inductive content analysis into one model that illustrates the six main categories and respective categories of codes. Please refer to appendix I to see the model of categories. This model illustrates,

- The three main categories of responsible practices: “compliance”, “pro-active” and “sustainable” as well as the respective categories of practices.
- The three main sense making categories “driving”, “restraining-present” and “restraining-future”.
  And, the respective sense making categories which positively or negatively influence designers’ choice of responsible practices.

This analysis allows me in the subsequent discussion chapter to relate the research results of both analyses, thereby answering my research question.
5. Findings and discussion

In this chapter I relate both the responsible practices and designers’ sense making in order to identify the main findings and answer the research question, “How does the sense making of Danish designers in small and medium fashion firms influence their choice of responsible practices?”

In order to do so, I have first identified three patterns of responsible practices by assembling the designers with similar practices. Then, I related each of the patterns with the designers’ respective sense making.

This chapter begins with a presentation of the three patterns of responsible practices, followed by a description of the related sense making. Then, for each pattern I discuss the findings by evaluating the extent to which designers’ sense making positively or negatively influences their choice of responsible practices. Subsequently, I make propositions for each pattern on how to improve the respective practices. Lastly, this chapter ends with a summary of the main findings and propositions.

5.1 Three patterns of responsible practices

5.1.1 Pattern 1 – Mainly compliance practices

The first pattern represents the practices adopted by case F, which mainly consist of compliance measures. As seen in the analysis part 4.1, he ensures the working conditions of his manufacturers in Poland and China “live up to the requirements” and also produces tailored pieces in his atelier in Copenhagen to ensure the working conditions comply with the Danish employment laws. Regarding the choice of environmentally responsible materials, he ensures to only use seal from responsible sources which are not killed only for their meet and without harming the animals. The sole practice adopted by case F which I categorized as pro-active consists of reducing his production waste by buying the exact amount of fabric he needs for a single tailored piece from a furniture store so that he does not have to order high quantities and create waste (analysis 4.2). In this case responsibility is perceived as marginal. As opposed to all other cases were responsibility is an integrated part of the design process, meaning that they design their clothes with consideration of their environmental and social impacts. These cases constitute the 2nd pattern.

5.1.2 Pattern 2 – A mix of compliance and pro-active practices

This pattern reflects the responsible practices adopted by cases A, B, E, H, I who adopt a mix of compliance and pro-active practices, as opposed to cases C, D, G, J in pattern 3 who also adopt more sustainable practices. In pattern 2 responsible practices are aimed at producing clothes in a social and environmental responsible way. As seen in the analysis parts 4.1 and 4.2, designers in this pattern seek to ensure good working conditions of workers along their supply chain and comply with the social standards defined by GOTS or the BSCI. Other more pro-active designers collaborate with private owned manufacturers or have their own production sites to ensure greater control over the working conditions in their factories. When it comes to reducing the negative environmental impacts of their clothes designers comply with GOTS and oeko-tex certificates to ensure no
harmful chemicals are used in both the material and production phases. Other more pro-active designers reduce the variety of materials used for their clothes, reduce the consumption of electricity and water, and reduce their production waste. In addition, some designers work to reduce their negative impacts at the transport and usage phase. Moreover, designers in this pattern have measures in place that go against the fast fashion model by producing high quality materials, timeless designs or tailored pieces.

5.1.3 Pattern 3 – Sustainable practices
Besides adopting compliance and pro-active practices, cases C, G, J also adopt sustainable practices which support the dematerialization of fashion by offering services around the reparation and the remanufacturing of their old clothes, next to their normal business operations. As seen in the analysis part 4.3, case J has developed a new business model based on circular processes. Moreover, cases C and G are improving the sustainable consumption of their consumers by enabling them to repair their clothes, thereby having a longer usage of their clothes. Cases D and G, are raising awareness about the importance of buying less, but better clothes through awareness raising initiatives and trainings. In addition, case J is changing the behaviour of consumers towards renting out clothes instead of buying their own. Further on, these designers are also contributing to more sustainable fashion industry by raising awareness and sharing best practices around sustainable clothing.

5.2 Findings and discussion
After identifying the three patterns I have related them to the results on the sense making categories in order to see how the practices in each pattern are influenced by designers’ sense making. Interestingly, when relating the patterns with the sense making categories, I found that all designers within one pattern share a similar sense making. Consequently, my findings show that similarities in designers’ sense making lead to a similar choice of responsible practices. From this follows that differences in sense making lead to different patterns of responsible practices.

This enables me to identify the specific sense making categories that relates to each pattern. These findings will be presented in the following section. Additionally, I discuss the findings by evaluating the extent to which designers’ sense making positively or negatively influences their choice of responsible practices in each pattern. Specifically, I critically discuss the practices by looking at how they are integrated within business operations, how efficiently and effectively they address the issues facing the fashion industry. Lastly, I make propositions for each pattern on how to overcome sense making barriers in order to improve the respective practices.
5.2.1 Findings and discussion - Pattern 1

Findings

In the following section I describe the specific sense making categories which are related to pattern 1 in order to understand how the designer’s sense making influences his choice of compliance practices. In other words, what drives him to adopt compliance practices and what prevents him from adopting pro-active or sustainable practices?

These findings are illustrated in the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance practices</th>
<th>Driving categories</th>
<th>Business context</th>
<th>Only business context (?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What drives the designer in pattern 1 to adopt compliance practices?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

First of all, the results on the “driving categories” show that the sense making of case F is derived from a business context (analysis 4.5). He perceives his compliance practices as something he does to promote his brand and save costs, rather than to reduce the negative impacts of his clothes. On the one hand, the main reasons why he chooses ‘responsible’ seal skin is because he likes the material. Thus, the responsibility aspect is more coincidental and serves to promote the brand as ‘responsible’. This clearly shows when considering the philosophy of the brand as it is stated on the homepage “to create beautiful and responsible clothes made of quality.” On the other hand, the first reason why he buys fabric from a furniture store is because it allows him to not having to buy more fabric than he needs. Thus, this practice can be seen as driven by the opportunity to reduce costs, rather than the willingness to reduce his negative impacts on the environment by reducing his production waste. Consequently, there is no driver for case F to reduce the negative social and environmental impacts of clothes, except if it serves to promote the brand or if it saves costs.

Secondly, his sense making does not provide him with sufficient incentives to reduce his negative impacts by adopting more pro-active practices, nor to adopt more sustainable practices in the future. This is shown when asked about his plans for the future, as he said he wanted to “grow bigger, making bigger collections” and increase the amount of cheaper clothes produced in Poland rather than more expensive, tailored pieces in the atelier in Copenhagen.

After having identified the specific sense making categories which relate to pattern 1, I will now discuss these findings by evaluating the extent to which the way case F makes sense of his compliance practices positively or negatively influence designers’ his choice of practices by critically discussing these practices.

Discussion

The findings on pattern 1 show that the way this designer makes sense of his compliance practices is derived from a business context. Thus, he is driven by business reasons. First of all, this sense making seems to negatively influence the designer’s choice of responsible practices because it leads to compliance practices that are not an integrated part of the design process but remain marginal and coincidental. This finding confirms
what Basu and Palazzo (2008) pointed out, namely that a purely instrumental commitment derived from external incentives is likely to result in responsible practices which are less integrated into a firm’s operations. In addition, the practices adopted by this designer do not contribute to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of clothes in the first place. This becomes clear when considering that the only factor that makes his choice of seal skin a ‘responsible’ choice is that no seals are killed for their fur only and that no animal are harmed. Likewise, the practice by which case F reduces his production waste by ordering the right amount of fabric from a furniture store only accounts for the tailored clothes produced in the atelier in Copenhagen, which is the minority of the clothes of this brand. Secondly, the sense making of case F makes it unlikely that he will adopt pro-active practices and efficiently work to reduce the negative impact of clothes in the future, unless he can see an economic benefit for his firm. Moreover, responsible practices which are only motivated by business reasons are not enough to contribute to corporate sustainability. As argued by Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths (2014, p. 33), such practices are “motivated by intelligent corporate self-interest” and are primarily concerned with increasing economic sustainability first, before environmental and social sustainability. However, according to Gladwin et al. (as cited in Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002, p. 132) “economic sustainability alone is no sufficient condition for the overall sustainability of a corporation.”

To conclude, the findings and discussion on pattern 1 show that the designer whose sense making is derived from a business context perceives his compliance practices as something he does to promote his brand and save costs, rather than to reduce the negative impacts of his clothes. This sense making seems to negatively influence his choice of practices as it leads the designer to adopt compliance practices which remain coincidental and marginal, and do not contribute to reduce the negative environmental and social impact of clothes. Moreover, the fact that the designer is only driven by business reasons, makes him less predisposed to improve his practices in the future. Yet for this designer to adopt more pro-active practices presents a challenge because it seems as if he only takes responsibility if he can reap an economic benefit from it. At the same time, there is no apparent business incentive for fashion companies to be responsible, because consumers are still focused on the price, and only a few consumers demand responsible clothes (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). Therefore, for this designer to adopt more pro-active practices and avoid staying at the compliance level, he should adopt a sense making derived from moral factors. Nevertheless, adopting a moral reasoning presents a challenge for this designer since it would require a change in his mind in order for him to voluntarily go beyond his focus on profit and be willing to pay the higher price for responsible production.

5.2.2 Findings and discussion - Pattern 2

Findings

In the following section I describe the specific sense making categories which are related to pattern 2 in order to understand how designers’ sense making in this pattern influences their choice to adopt compliance and pro-
active practices. In other words, what drives designers to adopt compliance and pro-active practices and what restrains them from improving their practices and adopt sustainable practices? These findings are illustrated in the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern 2</th>
<th>Driving categories</th>
<th>Identity factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mix of compliance and pro-active practices</td>
<td>What drives designers in pattern 2 to adopt compliance and pro-active practices?</td>
<td>Personal beliefs (A, C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal experiences (B, C, D)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Value responsibility over profit (A, B, E, G, H)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Created responsible brand with the desire to produce in a responsible way (A, B, C, E, G, H, I)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Value of humility “talk less, do more” (A, B, C)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identity factors first before business context (A, C, E, H, I)</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Restraining categories – present</th>
<th>Challenges linked to the responsible practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What prevents them from improving their practices?</td>
<td>Compromise between responsible practices and less responsible practices (A, C, E, I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited choice of organic and recycled materials (B, E, I)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of power in the supply chain (E)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Restraining categories – future</th>
<th>Awareness of sustainability issues of fast fashion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What prevents them from adopting sustainable practices?</td>
<td>Awareness of sustainable practices to address them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of resources (A, B, E, H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The size of their company is too small (B, D, I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Waiting for other actors to find innovative solutions (E, I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-responsible designers who are too focused on profit and consumers who do not want to pay higher prices (Cases A, B, C, E, G, H, I)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Barriers for sustainable practices</th>
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First of all, the results on the “driving categories” suggest that designers’ sense making in this pattern is derived from moral factors, including cultural and personal values, beliefs and experiences (analysis 4.5). Consequently, they perceive their practices as something they do because they think it is the right thing to do, rather than something that pays off.

Secondly, regarding the results on “restraining categories-present”, besides concrete challenges designers mentioned such as the limited choice of organic and recycled materials or the lack of power in the supply chain, another important challenge is the compromise they have to make between being responsible and making profit (analysis 4.6).

Thirdly, regarding the results on “restraining categories – future”, designers in this pattern believe the issues that make the fashion industry unsustainable are linked to non-responsible designers and consumers who are not ready to pay the higher price for responsible clothes. They, also know about sustainable practices such as the services whereby designers repair or remanufacture clothes from their brand, as well as new business models around the sharing or renting out of clothes. Yet they do not plan to implement any sustainable practice, because they lack the resources, or think that their business is too small. In addition, some cases are waiting for other actors to find innovative solutions that would enable closed-loop recycling of fabrics. Moreover, some designers believe that consumers are already sharing and buying second hand clothes so that they do not see a need to make a business out of it.
Having identified the specific sense making categories which relate to pattern 2, the following section discusses these findings, by evaluating the extent to which these sense making categories positively or negatively influence the practices of pattern 2 and by critically discussing these practices.

**Discussion**

The findings on pattern 1 show that the way designers in this pattern make sense of their compliance and proactive practices is mainly derived from moral factors, including their personal values, beliefs and experiences. Thus, their practices are driven by moral reasons. This sense making seems to positively influence their choice of responsible practice. Firstly, because it leads them to adopt practices that are integrated in the way they do business and that more efficiently reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of clothes, compared to pattern 1. This finding confirms what Weaver et al. (as cited in Basu & Palazzo, 2008) claimed, namely that normative commitment derived from moral factors is essential for the integration of responsible practices within business operations. Additionally, this finding is in line with the study by the Danish Business Authority (2013) who found that moral reasons are the main driver for most of Danish SMEs who engage in responsible practices.

Secondly, their sense making represents a good point of departure for adopting further responsible practices. In fact, when asked about the responsible practices they seek to adopt in the future, their responses indicate that they are willing to keep on improving their responsible practices and do more to reduce the negative impacts of their clothes. To illustrate this point, case A for instance told me, “we are trying to get some recycled plastic bags and promote washing at low temperatures.”

Nonetheless, the fact that they are driven by moral reasons presents a barrier for improving their practices. First of all, this is because they value responsibility over profit, which lead them to pay a higher price for responsible production because they feel they are doing the right thing and not because they think it pays off. In addition, the value of humility leads them to not promote the responsibility aspect of their clothes. Hence, they do not gain the potential economic benefit of being a responsible brand. Consequently, sense making derived from moral reasons leads designers to face the compromise between being responsible and making profit. This in return prevents them from improving their responsible practices, since they can only take responsibility up to a certain extent, as long as their financial situation allows them to. And, they might reach a point where they cannot do more than what they are already doing. Interestingly the study by the Danish Business Authority (2013) also found that moral reasoning constitutes a barrier for combining responsibility and profit and from reaping economic benefits from adopting responsible practices. This study explicitly mentions the value embodied by the Jantelov which is inherent in the Danish culture and which I refer to as the value of humility. In fact, like my research, the study by the Danish Business Authority shows that the Jantelov presents a barrier for a more business driven approach to CSR, as Danish managers do not want to communicate too much about their responsible practices.
This discussion on “driving categories” and “restraining categories-present” has shown that moral reasoning presents a barrier for further improvement. However, improving the practices of designers in pattern 2 is especially relevant considering the drawbacks of compliance and pro-active measures. In the following I critically discuss these practices and show that there is still room for improvement for these designers to reduce the negative social and environmental impact of their clothes.

i. Critical discussion of compliance and pro-active practices – room for improvement
First of all, designers in pattern 2 all have measures in place to control the working conditions of the people involved in the supply chain of their clothes. However, even though they ensure good working conditions in the factories of their manufacturers, it remains questionable if they all know about the conditions of their material suppliers further down the supply chain. Case E for instance recognizes the complexity of their supply chain and said that “it is not possible to monitor the conditions of each individual involved”. Secondly, although cases A, B, I use exclusively environmental friendly materials, for cases E and H the later only constitute a part of the total material used. Taking into account that the material phase is where the designer has the greatest potential to reduce the environmental impact of his or her clothes, there is still room for improvement for these designers to reduce their environmental impacts, by using exclusively environmental friendly materials for all their clothes. (Laursen et al., 2007)
Thirdly, while cases A, E, H, I pro-actively reduce their negative environmental impacts in the production phase, case H is the only case which is working to reduce its emissions and water consumption. However, according to the expert study on sustainable fashion conducted at CBS, reducing energy and water use ranks third among ten sustainability issues which deserve the most attention by the fashion industry (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). Another critique concerns the use of hazardous chemicals in the production phase. In fact, even though I categorized case E as having pro-active practices because he reduces his production waste, he still uses chemicals for dying his leather in a factory in Pakistan, and did not mention having any regulation in place to avoid the use of harmful chemicals. However, the use of hazardous chemicals constitutes a major environmental issue in fashion (Laursen et al, 2007; Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014). And, according to the expert study on sustainable fashion, reducing chemical impacts is the fourth issue which deserves the most attention by the fashion industry (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013).
Fourthly, my research results also show that only cases E and H adopt measures to reduce the impact of their clothes at the transport and usage phases. While, at first sight it might appear out of designers’ influence sphere, promoting environmental friendly washing during the usage phase is an important step in order to reduce the overall negative environmental impacts of clothes. As argued Laursen et al. (2007, p.175), “the consumer holds the best possibilities for influencing the product’s overall environmental profile.”
To continue with the discussion, my findings on “restraining categories-future” show why cases in pattern 2 do not adopt more sustainable practices. In fact, the designers in this pattern associate the issues of the unsustainable fast fashion model with non-responsible designers and consumers. This bears the risk that they think they do enough to counter the fast fashion model by producing high quality clothes in a responsible way. This risk becomes clear when designers mentioned for instance that “ensuring high quality and timeless designs is a big step towards more sustainable consumer behaviour because then they don’t have to buy new things every season” (Case A). Case I stated, "For me it is more important to ensure good quality of the products I produce and thereby I ensure that customers can exchange them or give them away to friends or family members.”

The results on “driving categories - future”, further show that the cases in this pattern know about sustainable practices such as the services whereby designers repair or remanufacture their old clothes, as well as new business models around the sharing or renting out of clothes. Most of them also thought of implementing them but eventually did not do it. They mentioned concrete barriers that prevent them from adopting sustainable practices and which explain why they cannot or do not see the need to adopt sustainable practices. These perceived barriers, combined with the feeling that they do enough, do not provide designers with the necessary incentive to adopt more sustainable practices in the future. This becomes obvious when asked about the responsible practices they seek to adopt in the future. As mentioned previously, in the future most designers seek to improve their compliance and pro-active practices instead of adopting sustainable practices.

This section has discussed the barriers that prevent designers in pattern 2 to adopt more sustainable practices in the future. Nevertheless, adopting sustainable practices is especially relevant considering the limits of compliance and pro-active practices in their ability to contribute to corporate sustainability which I elaborate on in the hereafter.

ii. Compliance and pro-active practices are unsustainable

First of all, authors on corporate sustainability draw our attention to the fact that practices focused on increasing efficiency by reducing the negative impacts of products does not sufficiently contribute to corporate sustainability. On the one hand, compliance and pro-active practices are focused on eco-efficiency by avoiding environmental abuses and reducing negative environmental impact of their clothes. On the other hand, they are aimed at socio-efficiency by avoiding human abuses and ensuring good working conditions (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002). However, according to Doppelt (2009), measures aimed at greater efficiency are still embedded in a linear production system, which is unsustainable by nature. Consequently, even though these practices help responsible designers to be less bad, they are not sustainable because they still have a negative impact on the environment and do not contribute to improve well-being and social justice of workers and society at large. This finding is in line with a study by Pedersen (2010) according to which CSR efforts today are focused on developing high-quality products, ensuring good working conditions and minimizing
environmental impacts. This implies that firms mainly address primarily narrow issues concerning “people, products and planet”, instead of integrating all three aspects of sustainability “profit, people, planet” (Pedersen, 2010, p.161).

Secondly, practices adopted by designers in pattern 2 do not address the issues that make the fashion industry unsustainable, namely the overconsumption and high levels of consumer waste. As argued by Dyllick and Hockerts (2002, p. 137), “efficiency gains are frequently undone by simple consumer choice”. Thus, even though practices aimed at greater efficiency are “an important step towards corporate sustainability, it is unfortunately not enough” (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002, p.135). In a similar way, by offering high quality clothes and timeless designs, designers do not sufficiently contribute to improve the consumers’ sustainability behaviour. In fact, their efforts to enable longer usage of their clothes are made redundant when consumers have unsustainable consumption levels and buy more clothes than they need and throw them away after a short usage phase. This reveals the importance of improving the sustainable consumption of consumers. Experts on sustainable fashion share this view and state that “promotion of sustainability thinking among consumers” represents the challenge which deserves the most attention by the fashion industry and which needs to be addressed by fashion companies to make industry more sustainable (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013, p.9).

Consequently, compliance and pro-active practices fail to effectively address broader issues linked to environmental and social sustainability, as well the issues which make the fashion industry unsustainable. This critical discussion also shows the importance of adopting more sustainable practices to contribute to greater environmental and social sustainability and changing unsustainable consumer behaviour.

To conclude, the findings and discussion on pattern 2 have shown that designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors, including cultural and personal values, belief and experiences perceive their practices as something they do because they think it is the right thing to do, rather than something that pays off. This sense making seems to positively influence their choice of practices as it leads them to adopt compliance and pro-active practices which are integrated within their business and more efficiently reduce the negative impact of clothes compared to pattern 1. Furthermore, this sense making also provides designers with a good point of departure for further improving their practices and adopting more sustainable practices in the future (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014). Yet the sense making derived from moral factors also seem to negatively influence their practices since they face a compromise between responsibility and profit that prevent them from improving their practices as. However, the critical discussion on the practices adopted in this pattern, has shown that there is still room for the designers to improve to reduce the negative impacts of their clothes. As a result, one proposition for these designers would be to also adopt a business oriented approach. By doing so, they would perceive their responsible practices as means to make profit, rather than as an investment they do because they think it is the right thing to do. However, it is questionable if these designers would be ready to
adopt a business approach considering that it would go against their values of “responsibility over profit” and the value of humility, which is opposed to talking and promoting the responsibility of one’s actions. Moreover, my findings indicate that designers in this pattern believe their practices sufficiently counter the fast fashion model by offering high quality clothes and producing in a responsible way. In turn this prevents them from adopting sustainable practices in the future. However, the critical discussion on compliance and pro-active practices has revealed their inability to contribute to corporate sustainability. Consequently, another proposition would be for them to realize that their compliance and pro-active practices are not enough to contribute to environmental and social sustainability, nor that they effectively address the issues of the unsustainable fast fashion model.

5.2.3 Findings and discussion - Pattern 3

Findings

In the following I describe the specific sense making categories which are related to pattern 3 in order to understand how designers’ sense making in this pattern influences their choice to adopt sustainable practices. In other words, what drives designers to adopt sustainable practices, and what challenges do they face? These findings are illustrated in the following chart.

To start with, the results show that the sense making of the designers in this pattern is mainly derived from moral factors. However, unlike pattern 2, besides being driven by the willingness to produce in a responsible way, when creating their brand cases D and J were also driven by the desire to change the unsustainable
behaviour of their consumers (analysis 4.5). Additionally, my results indicate that cases G and J have a different perception of the issues that make the fast fashion unsustainable. As opposed to the 2nd pattern, they believe that producing clothes in a responsible way is not sufficient because it still has a negative impact on the environment. The believe that instead what matters is how many clothes people buy and how long they wear them (analysis 4.7). Lastly, besides being driven by moral reasons, case J is also driven by business reasons (analysis 4.5). Thus, she is the only designer who is driven by a combination of both, moral and business reasons. On the one hand she is driven by identity factors as she for instance mentioned her personal experience and that it was not possible for her to implement a new business model based on the sharing of clothes within her previous brand. On the other hand, she also perceives a demand from parents for organic kids’ clothes and created her business model based on the renting of organic kids’ clothes to meet this consumer demand.

Regarding the results on the “restraining categories” and the challenges these cases are facing today, cases C, D, G, like pattern 2, mentioned the compromise between being responsible and making profit (analysis 4.6). On the contrary, case J, who is combining responsibility and profit by adopting a circular business model is not facing this challenge. Instead, she mentioned the lack of awareness and possible reluctance of consumers towards renting out clothes. Moreover, cases G and F, believe that other actors are needed to improve sustainability in consumers’ behaviour and make the fashion industry more sustainable (analysis 4.7).

After having identified the specific sense making categories which relate to pattern 3, the following section discusses these findings, by evaluating the extent to which these sense making categories positively or negatively influence the practices of pattern 3.

**Discussion**

First of all, the findings on “driving categories” show that the sense making is different in this pattern compared to the other patterns. The only exception is case C, whose practices I categorized as more sustainable as she has reparation services in place for her clothes and contributes to social sustainability with her empowerment project. However, her sense making is still similar to the one in pattern 2 as she is driven by moral reasons and shows no particularities in her sense making. Thus, she is the only designer which has more sustainable practices even though she is influenced by the same sense making categories than pattern 2.

For the other cases, D, G, J my findings show that they have a more forward sense making than patterns 1 and 2. This sense making seems to positively influences their choice of responsible practice as it leads them to choose practices that more effectively address issues linked to environmental sustainability as well as the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste. On the one hand, when it comes to effectively contributing to environmental sustainability, cases G and J are facilitating a longer usage of clothes by offering services around the reparation and remanufacturing of old clothes from their brand. In addition, case J enables multiple usage phases of a garment, by developing circular business models directed at offering parents to rent out kids’
clothes. In fact, offering services around the remanufacturing, repairing and renting of clothes is particularly important taking into account the limits of recycling in its ability to contribute to environmental sustainability. This is because today the close-loop recycling of textile materials such as cotton and wool is not 100% possible yet as the extracted fibres are not long enough to be re-used for the production of new clothes (Bach, 2013). Consequently, until no further technological innovation enables closed-loop recycling, practices focused on the recycling of clothes still have negative environmental impacts. This reveals the importance of offering services and supporting the dematerialization of fashion in order to decouple profit form environmental degradation. This view is shared by the experts who participated at the study on sustainable fashion conducted at CBS. They argue that the development of new systems and services such as the leasing, sharing and repairing of clothes deserves more attention by the fashion industry than the recycling of old fabrics (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013).

On the other hand, when it comes to addressing the issues of fast fashion, cases D, G and J effectively address the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste by means of their repARATION, remanufacturing services as well as awareness raising initiatives. This way they contribute to change consumers’ behaviour towards buying less, but better clothes, wearing their clothes longer and renting out clothes. Promoting sustainable thinking and consumption is particularly relevant. As mentioned previously, the promotion of sustainable thinking and consumption is argued by experts as deserving the most attention by the fashion industry (Andersen & Pedersen, 2013).

My findings on “driving categories” also show that case F is driven by a combination of moral and business reasons. This sense making seems to positively influence her choice of practices. In fact, from all ten designers, case F is the only case who developed a circular business model which successfully combines environmental and economic sustainability. In contrast, cases D, G also contribute to environmental sustainability and effectively address the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste. However, these designers, who are only driven by moral reasons, have not integrated these sustainable services into their business model. And, these services remain marginal to their business model, which is still linear and based on producing and selling clothes. This shows the importance of integrating sustainable services to the core of the brands’ business model to ensure greater corporate sustainability.

Secondly, my findings on “restraining categories - present” indicate that because case J is driven by both moral and business reasons and has made the renting of clothes to her core business model is not facing the compromise between responsibility and profit and is planning on increasing her business and penetrate other markets in the future.

Lastly, my results on “restraining categories –future” also indicate that cases G and J believe that their sustainable actions are not enough and that it takes action from other actors, including the government and fashion institutions to contribute to more sustainable consumption behaviour as well as a more sustainable fashion industry. This is particularly interesting taking into account that cases G and J are among the most
advanced designers who participated in my research. This reveals the need for further research on how government and fashion institutions can contribute to a change towards greater sustainability within the fashion industry and society at large.

To conclude, the findings and discussion of pattern 3 show that the designer whose sense making is derived from a combination of moral and business factors perceives her sustainable practice has something she does because she wants to change consumers’ unsustainable behaviour and be a sustainable brand, while making profit. This sense making seems to positively influence her choice of practices, as she successfully combines environmental and economic sustainability, and effectively addresses the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste.

Other designers in this pattern have adopted sustainable practices, which also contribute to environmental sustainability and effectively address the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste. However, even though they are show a more advanced sense making that designers in pattern 2, they are still driven by moral reasons, and adopt sustainable services aside their normal business activities. Yet their business models are still linear. Therefore, these designers should combine their moral reasoning with a business approach in order to integrate their sustainable services into their business model. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that corporate sustainability requires all three aspects of sustainability to be combined, including social sustainability (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014). However, none of the cases I interviewed have developed such a business model. Case J could improve her business model by integrating aspects of social sustainability. Case C, who is the only case to contribute to social sustainability with her women empowerment project in Jordan, fails to contribute to environmental sustainability, as her business model is still linear in nature.

5.3 Summary of the main findings

In this chapter I assembled all the similar practices adopted by the ten designers into three patterns of responsible practices. Subsequently, I related each pattern with the respective sense making categories in order to explain how designers’ sense making influences their choice of practices. This way I was able to identify three main findings which serve to answer my research question.

First of all, the designer whose sense making is derived from a business context is driven by business reasons and perceives his practices as something he does to promote his brand and save costs, rather than to reduce the negative impacts of his clothes. This sense making seems to negatively influence his choice of practices as it leads the designer to adopt compliance practices which remain coincidental and marginal to his business, and do not contribute to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of his clothes in the first place. Moreover, this sense making makes it unlikely that the designer will adopt pro-active practices in the future. Consequently, to avoid that this designer remains at the compliance level, he should adopt a sense making derived from moral factors. Especially, because there is no apparent business incentive for him to adopt pro-
active practices since consumers are still focused on the price and only a few demand responsible clothes (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). However, adopting a moral reasoning presents a challenge for this designer since it would require a change in his mind-set in order for him to voluntarily go beyond his focus on profit and be willing to pay the higher price for a responsible production.

Secondly, designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors, including personal and cultural values, beliefs and experiences perceive their practices as something they do because they think it is the right thing to do, rather than something that pays off. On the one hand, this sense making seems to positively influence designers’ choice of practices, as they adopt a mix of compliance and pro-active practices that are more integrated in the firms’ business operations and more efficiently reduce the negative impact of their clothes, compared to designers whose sense making is derived from a business context. Additionally, this sense making makes it more likely that designers will improve their current practices and adopt more sustainable practices in the future. On the other hand, this sense making seems to also negatively influence designers’ choice of practices, as it leads them to having to choose between responsibility and profit. This in turn prevents them from improving their practices towards greater efficiency, even though there is still room for improving their practices. Consequently, these designers should also adopt a business oriented approach. However, this goes against their values and would require a change in designers’ mind-set. Moreover, designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors also tend to perceive they do enough to counter the fast fashion model by offering high quality clothes and producing in a responsible way. This in turn prevents them from adopting more sustainable practices. Consequently, designers need to realize that their practices do not sufficiently contribute to environmental and social sustainability, nor that they effectively address the issues of the unsustainable fast fashion model. Although other designers, whose sense making is also derived from moral factors, have adopted sustainable practices and offer services around the remanufacturing and repairing of clothes. Yet these services are marginal to their business models, and the latter remain linear. Consequently, in order to integrate their sustainable services into their business model and make their business models more sustainable, these designers should also adopt a business approach.

Thirdly, the designer whose sense making is derived from a combination of moral and business factors perceives her practices as something she does in order to change consumers’ unsustainable behaviour and be a sustainable brand, while making profit. This sense making seems to positively influence her choice of practices, as she successfully combines environmental and economic sustainability, and effectively addresses the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste. Yet she could improve her business model so that it also contributes to social sustainability.
Conclusion
To close off this thesis, I first summarize the way I carried out my research, as well as the main findings. Then, I present potential future research topics that arise from my study.

This thesis was based on a two parted analysis of ten designers. The first part was a deductive content analysis, based on a theoretical framework I established. This analysis led me to identify the responsible practices adopted by the ten designers. For the second part I performed an inductive content analysis to reveal how designers’ make sense of their responsible practices. I identified three main sense making categories that assemble the cues mentioned by designers when talking about their motivations, the challenges they face today and the barriers that prevent them from adopting sustainable practices. Subsequently, to identify the main findings and answer the research question, I combined the results of both analyses to understand how designers’ sense making influences their choice of responsible practices. To do so, I identified three patterns of responsible practices, which assemble designers with similar practices. Then, I related each pattern with the specific sense making of designers in this pattern and evaluated the extent to which their sense making positively or negatively influences their choice of responsible practices.

First of all, the designer whose sense making is derived from a business context perceives his practices as something he does to promote his brand and save costs, rather than to reduce the negative impacts of his clothes. This sense making seems to negatively influence his choice of practices as it leads the designer to adopt compliance practices which remain coincidental and marginal to his business, and do not contribute to reduce the negative environmental and social impact of his clothes. In addition, this sense making makes it unlikely that the designer will adopt pro-active practices in the future.

Secondly, designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors, including personal and cultural values, beliefs and experiences perceive their practices as something they do because they think it is the right thing to do, rather than something that pays off. On the one hand, this sense making seems to positively influence designers’ choice of practices, as they adopt a mix of compliance and pro-active practices that are more integrated into the firms’ business operation and more efficiently reduce the negative impact of their clothes, compared to the designer whose sense making is derived from a business context. Additionally, this sense making makes it more likely that designers will improve their current practices and adopt more sustainable practices in the future. On the other hand, this sense making seems to also negatively influence designers’ choice of practices, as it leads them to having to choose between responsibility or profit. This in turn prevents them from improving their practices towards greater efficiency, even though there is still room for improving their practices. Moreover, designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors also tend to perceive they do enough to counter the fast fashion model by offering high quality clothes and producing in a responsible way. This in turn prevents them from adopting more sustainable practices. Although some designers, whose sense making is derived from moral factors, also adopt sustainable practices, by offering services around the
re-manufacturing and repairing of their old clothes. These services are marginal to their business and their business models remain unsustainable.

Thirdly, the designer whose sense making is derived from a combination of moral and business factors perceives her practices as something she does in order to change consumers’ unsustainable behaviour and be a sustainable brand, while making profit. This sense making seems to positively influence her choice of practices, as she successfully combines environmental and economic sustainability, and effectively addresses the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste.

To conclude, my findings reveal the importance for designers to combine both moral and business factors. On the one hand, this would enable designers who are only driven by business reasons to adopt pro-active practices. On the other hand, it would allow designers who are mainly driven by moral reasons to be more efficient in reducing their negative impacts, adopt sustainable practices and integrate them into their business models. In fact, contributing to social and environmental sustainability is increasingly important if we are to enable human development on a planet with limited carrying capacities (Dyllick and Hockerts, 2002; Whiteman, Walker, & Perego, 2013). Likewise, effectively addressing the issues of fast fashion is increasingly important because, as argued by experts, “sustainable fashion is growing at a much slower pace than fast fashion and overall consumption. Therefore, the industry is heading for a hard landing, sooner or later.” (Andersen & Pedersen, 2013, p. 8)

In light of these findings, future research is recommended on how to change designers’ sense making towards a sustainability mind-set that combines moral and business factors, and the realization that current practices are no enough to make the fashion industry more sustainable.

Moreover, my thesis calls for future research on business factors which might drive Danish designers to adopt responsible practices. Although my analysis shows that a majority of designers are mainly driven by moral reasons, it also suggests that some designers might also be driven by business factors. In fact, some of them think there is a demand for responsible clothes and actively communicate about the responsibility of their clothes. Likewise, some designers mentioned that producing responsible clothes with high quality materials adds value to their clothes. Hence they might also be driven by business factors and perceive their responsible practices as means to differentiate from non-responsible brands and justify a higher price.

Furthermore, the increasing awareness and criticism regarding the negative impacts of the fashion industry, which especially came to light after the Rana Plaza incident in Bangladesh, might be an implicit driver for small fashion firms to differentiate themselves from traditional fast fashion brands. Consequently, this confirms a study by Morsing, Midttun and Palmaas, (2007) which indicates an existing trend within Scandinavian companies from a moral to a business reasoning behind CSR practices. Yet, further research is needed to investigate the extent to which business factors play a role in the implementation of responsible practices within Danish small and medium fashion firms.
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Appendices

Appendix A – Executive Summary

The fashion industry is one of the most polluting and labour-intensive industries in the world. It has significant negative environmental impacts, caused by the pollution of air, land and water, as well as social impacts resulting from poor working conditions (DBA, 2013; Pedersen, 2010). According to experts, these impacts are enhanced by the dominant fast fashion model, which is criticized for making the industry unsustainable because of the large quantities and low prices of clothes, which result in unsustainable consumption levels and high amounts of waste (Gjerdrum Pedersen & Reitan Andersen, 2013). The Danish fashion industry is dominated by SMEs, many of which are adopting responsible practices to address the issues facing the fashion industry related to the environmental and social impacts and the unsustainable fast fashion model (Miljøministeriet, 2000). Consequently, the first aim of my research was to identify the responsible practices adopted by ten Danish designers in SMEs and evaluate their level of responsibility according to the issues of the fast fashion industry they are addressing with their practices.

In addition, a study by the Danish Business Authority (2013) on CSR in Danish SMEs found that a majority of them were engaged in CSR for moral reasons, and that the values of the founders were an important driver for their engagement with CSR. Additionally, there is a growing interest in the fields of CSR and CS to investigate the way managers think in order to understand what influences their CSR and CS practices. This involves looking at managers’ sense making and the underlying factors such as their personal and cultural values (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014; von Laskowski, 2012). Taking into account that a founder of a fashion firm is likewise the designer, the second research aim was to investigate designers’ sense making in order to understand how it drives and restrains their responsible practices. Consequently, my research question was: “How does the sense making of Danish designers in small and medium fashion firms influence their choice of responsible practices?” To answer the research question I chose to do a multiple case study with ten Danish designers. My study was informed by a social constructionist research philosophy. Hence, I investigated how designers give meaning to their responsible practices by looking at the language they use and the cultural context in which they are embedded.

In order to collect data related to the designers’ responsible practices, I used textual data from the company homepages, as well as semi-structured interviews to collect information about their current practices and the ones they plan to adopt in the future. In addition, to collect data related to the designers’ sense making, I used semi-structured interviews to gather information about the reasons that motivate them to adopt responsible practices, the challenges they encounter when doing so and the barriers that prevent them from adopting more advanced practices in the future.

The research approach consisted of an analysis in two parts. The first part was a deductive content analysis and was based on a theoretical framework consisting of three main categories of responsible practices that illustrate the three levels of responsibility: “compliance”, “pro-active” and “corporate sustainability”. This analysis served to describe the responsible practices adopted by the ten designers and compare them according to their level of responsibility. The second part of the analysis was inductive and served to analyse how the ten designers make sense of their responsible practices. I did so by looking at the sense making cues they draw from when talking about their motivations, the challenges faced today and the barriers that prevent them from adopting more advanced practices. This way several sense making categories emerged, which I grouped into three main categories. First, the main category “driving categories” describes designers’ motivations derived from their identity and cultural context, which positively influence their choice of responsible practices. Secondly, the main category “restraining categories - present” describes the challenges faced by designers today, which prevent them from improving their practices. Thirdly, the main category “restraining categories – future” describes the barriers that prevent designers from adopting sustainable practices in the future.
Both analyses enabled me to relate the results of designers’ responsible practices and their sense making in order to understand how their sense making influences their choice of responsible practices, thereby answering my research questions. To do so, I have first identified three patterns of responsible practices which assemble designers with similar practices. This resulted in the following patterns: “compliance”, “a mix of compliance and pro-active” and “sustainable practices”. Then, I related each pattern with the specific sense making of designers in this pattern and evaluated the extent to which it positively or negatively influences their choice of responsible practices, by critically discussing the practices adopted in each pattern. This way I was able to identify three main findings which serve to answer my research question, as well as to make propositions to the designers on how to improve their practices.

First of all, the designer whose sense making is derived from a business context is driven by business reasons and perceives his practices as something he does to promote his brand and save costs, rather than to reduce the negative impacts of his clothes. This sense making seems to negatively influence his choice of practices as it leads the designer to adopt compliance practices which remain coincidental and marginal to his business, and do not contribute to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of his clothes. Moreover, this sense making makes it unlikely that the designer will adopt pro-active practices in the future.

Secondly, designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors, including personal and cultural values, beliefs and experiences perceive their practices as something they do because they think it is the right thing to do, rather than something that pays off. On the one hand, this sense making seems to positively influence designers’ choice of practices, as they adopt practices that are more integrated into the firms’ business operations and more efficiently reduce the negative impact of their clothes, compared to designers whose sense making is derived from a business context. Additionally, this sense making makes it more likely that designers will improve their current practices and adopt more sustainable practices in the future. On the other hand, this sense making seem to also negatively influence designers’ choice of practices, as it leads them to having to choose between responsibility or profit. This is turn prevents them from improving their practices towards greater efficiency, even though there is still room for improving their practices. Moreover, designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors also tend to perceive they do enough to counter the fast fashion model by offering high quality clothes and producing in a responsible way. This in turn prevents them from adopting more sustainable practices. Although some designers whose sense making is derived from moral factors also adopt sustainable practices, by offering services around the re-manufacturing and repairing of their old clothes. These services are marginal to their business and their business models remain unsustainable.

Thirdly, the designer whose sense making is derived from a combination of moral and business factors perceives her practices as something she does in order to change consumers’ unsustainable behaviour and be a sustainable brand, while making profit. This sense making seems to positively influence her choice of practices, as she successfully combines environmental and economic sustainability, and effectively addresses the issues of overconsumption and consumer waste.

To conclude, my findings reveal the importance for designers to combine both moral and business factors. On the one hand, this would enable designers who are only driven by business reasons to adopt pro-active practices. On the other hand, it would allow designers who are mainly driven by moral reasons to be more efficient in reducing their negative impacts, adopt sustainable practices and integrate them into their business models.
Appendix B – CSR and CS framework

1st level: Compliance

| Level of responsibility | Issues facing the fashion industry | 1st level: COMPLIANCE
Compliance measures are aimed at guaranteeing the absence of environmental and human abuses.
> At this stage companies adopt certificates to show they comply with environmental and social standards. And, set environmental and social guidelines for their suppliers to ensure these standards are met along the supply chain.
> Compliance measures are rather reactive and marginal to the core business strategies. (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Zadek, 2007)

| Negative Social impacts | Poor working conditions
> No employee rights
> Long working hours and low wages
> Poor health and safety standards
> Child labour | COMPLIANCE PRACTICES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS
> Compliance with social standards
- Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) certifies that suppliers and manufacturers of organic fabrics comply with social and environmental criteria. Social criteria is aimed at ensuring safe and healthy working conditions, living wages, freedom of association, no forced labour, no discrimination. (GOTS, 2013)
- Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) provides a common Code of Conduct for suppliers to improve working conditions in the supply chain. (Pedersen & Gwоздz, 2014)

| Material phase | Exploitation of natural resources (petrol for production of polyester and water for growing cotton)
> Emissions of GHG and waste water
> Use of dangerous chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers for growing cotton)
> Animal torture | COMPLIANCE PRACTICES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS
> For free policies and policies (Pedersen & Gwоздz, 2014)
> Introduction of company specific social and environmental guidelines for their suppliers (Pedersen & Gwоздz, 2014)
> Compliance with environmental standards regarding the use of chemicals in material and production phases
- GOTS certificate defines environmental criteria for organic fibre to material suppliers and manufacturers including the prohibition of harmful chemicals, toxic heavy metals and genetically modified organisms (GMO) in material phase (pesticides, pesticides to grow crops) and during production (dying and printing of garment) (GOTS, 2013)
- Oeko-tex certificate is the largest health certification for textile certification system for textile, including raw materials, intermediate and end products. It ensures that no harmful substances and chemicals are used in any phases of the life-cycle of textiles (Oeko-Tex)

| Production phase | Emissions of GHG and waste water
> Production waste
> Use of dangerous chemicals (dye, softener) | Transport
> Emissions of GHG

| Usage Phase | Emissions of GHG
> Waste water
> Consumer waste at the end of the usage phase |

Issues related to the unsustainable fast fashion model

- Issues related to unsustainable fast fashion model based on large quantities, low prices, poor quality and fast changing trends

Fast fashion model
- Causes overconsumption and high amounts of waste
- Enhances the social and environmental impacts of fashion
### 2nd level: Pro-active

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues facing the fashion industry</th>
<th>Level of responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor working conditions</td>
<td>2nd level: PRO-ACTIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beyond compliance: companies pro-actively address their negative social and environmental impacts.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- At this stage companies adopt responsible practices concerned with:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- The redesign of their products, by reducing the use of resources such as water energy, or reducing the use of materials and reusing production waste.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- The development of new innovate products which are environmentally safe.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- A company's CSR effort is part of its strategy (Benn, Dumphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014) (Zadlec, 2007)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Negative Social Impacts</th>
<th>Negative Environmental Impacts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reducing the complexity of supply chain by having only a few suppliers and manufacturers (Pedersen &amp; Gwozdz, 2014)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Material phase</th>
<th>PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICES TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AT MATERIAL PHASE</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Life cycle analysis to estimate environmental impact of collection during all phases of the life-cycle (Pedersen &amp; Gwozdz, 2014)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Use of environmental safer materials</td>
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<td>- Use of innovative materials</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Reducing the use of materials and re-using production waste (Benn, Dumphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Laursen et al., 2007; Pedersen &amp; Gwozdz, 2014)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Exploitation of natural resources (petrol for production of polyester and water for growing cotton)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Emissions of GHG and waste water</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Use of dangerous chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers for growing cotton)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Animal torture</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No use of chemicals for dying and printing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Reduce consumption of electricity and water</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Reduce production waste by for instance re-using leftover fabrics from production (Laursen et al., 2007; Pedersen &amp; Gwozdz, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Emissions of GHG and waste water</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Use of dangerous chemicals (dyer, softener)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Avoid polluting transportation means by favoring shipping over transport by plane</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Improving product packaging by for instance substituting plastic bags with recycled or FSC certified paper (Pedersen &amp; Gwozdz, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Emissions of GHG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Waste water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage Phase</th>
<th>PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICES TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AT USAGE PHASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Introduce labels on the cloths that promote environmentally friendly washing (minimal use of washing powder, no use of fabric softeners, no tumble drying, no ironing) (Laursen et al., 2007; Pedersen &amp; Gwozdz, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Emissions of GHG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Waste water</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Consumer waste at the end of the usage phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues related to the unsustainable fast fashion model</th>
<th>Fast fashion model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>based on large quantities, low prices, poor quality and fast changing trends</td>
<td>- Causes overconsumption and high amounts of waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Enhances the social and environmental impacts of fashion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3rd level: Corporate Sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of responsibility</th>
<th>3rd level: CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Companies develop new business models decoupled from environmental degradation, social inequalities and poverty. The new business models integrate all three aspects of sustainability. Besides guaranteeing economic sustainability by improving corporate profitability, they also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Contribute to social sustainability by improving well-being, human fulfilment and reducing poverty and inequalities (Benn, Dunphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Wilson, 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Contribute to environmental sustainability by through business models that replace linear production processes with circular ones, and support the dematerialization of production. (Benn, Dunphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Doppelt, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Promote sustainability within industry and society at large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop products and services aimed at improving the sustainable behaviour of consumer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transform the industry through the sharing and promotion of sustainability values and practices (Benn, Dunphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Zadik, 2007)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Issues facing the fashion industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Social Impacts</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor working conditions</td>
<td>&gt; No employee rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Long working hours and low wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Poor health and safety standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Child labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex supply chain</td>
<td>characterized by lack of transparency and control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Negative Environmental Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material phase</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploitation of natural resources (petrol for production of polyester and water for growing cotton)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emissions of GHG and waste water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of dangerous chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers for growing cotton)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal torture</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production phase</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emissions of GHG and waste water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production waste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fast fashion model</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Causes overconsumption and high amounts of waste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhances the social and environmental impacts of fashion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues related to the unsustainable fast fashion model</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Based on large quantities, low prices, poor quality and fast changing trends</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### PRACTICES CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Enhance quality of life, wellbeing and reduce poverty by building capacities through skill formation, and providing equal opportunities both within the organization and the broader society. (Wilson, 2003; Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014)

#### PRACTICES CONTRIBUTING TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Replace linear production processes with circular processes
  - Develop clothes that can be recycled, by using recycled materials and ensuring that at the end of its life-cycle the garment is recycled or returns to nature in a form that is not harmful (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Wilson, 2009)
  - Support the dematerialization of fashion
    - Services based on remanufacturing, re-selling, repairing of old clothes thereby using consumer waste for new business activities
    - Business models, around the renting and sharing of clothes (Benn, Dunphy, & Griffiths, 2014; Doppelt, 2009)
Appendix C – Interview questions

1. Which responsible practices do you adopt? What makes your brand responsible?
2. What motivates you to be a responsible brand? Do you think there is a demand for responsible clothes?
3. What challenges did you encounter since you started to implement these practices?
4. In your opinion, why is the fashion industry unsustainable?
5. What are you doing to change it? What more could you do?
6. What are your plans for the future?

Appendix D – Coding responsible practices – 10 individual frameworks

Case A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro-active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Reducing Social impacts** – Reducing the complexity of supply chain by opening own production sites or collaborating with small private owned manufacturers. Collaboration with small private owned manufacturers in Peru and Nepal who produce only for them. “which is the same or close by where the material is collected”
  - Close relationship “We believe that long-standing and close relationships provide the best products”
  - Manufacturers in Peru are often consulted, contribute with ideas to improve product

Reducing Environmental impacts
> **Organic materials**
  Organic pima cotton (hand picked in Peru) “not certified but I can assure you that the grass is not treated”)
  alpaca wool (Peru) cashmere (Nepal) - no chemicals used
  >Reducing the use of materials
  “we design our clothes with the few materials as possible, the simplest possible.. our products don’t have zippers or buttons something like that”
  >Transport
  - Plane from Peru/Nepal to Denmark
  - Truck from Denmark to consumers in EU

Countering fast fashion
By producing high quality clothes to enable long usage phase
High quality, long lasting fabrics “Pima cotton from Peru has long fibers, it doesn’t change it can last for many seasons”
By offering timeless designs
“timeless in order for consumer to want to wear for long time”
**Case B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Pro-active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Social impacts - compliance with GOTS</strong>&lt;br&gt;“for a majority of our production we use organic cotton certified by GOTS.”&lt;br&gt;“you get a lot of control, guarantee for consumer that the product is indeed organic”</td>
<td><strong>Countering fast fashion</strong>&lt;br&gt;By producing high quality clothes to enable long usage phase&lt;br&gt;“we use organic cotton and durable wool because we to ensure that cloths last for a long time”&lt;br&gt;Replacing linear production processes with circular processes&lt;br&gt;by giving production waste, left-over clothes to recycling firms&lt;br&gt;“when we have too much clothes we deliver them to H&amp;M or the red cross”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Environmental impacts - compliance with GOTS and oekotex</strong>&lt;br&gt;OEKO-TEX – “for our clothes made from linen and wool are certified by oeko tex to ensure no chemicals are used”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case B is not in contact with their material suppliers just with GOTS, who has a list of GOTS certified material suppliers to choose from material suppliers (cotton) from all over the world. Then materials get shipped to production site (Lithuania)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Case C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Pro-active CSR</th>
<th>Sustainable</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Machine knitted clothes (10-20%) are produced in EU to assure decent working conditions. “We know the philosophy of our suppliers, and they all follow environmental and ethical rules set by the European Union”</td>
<td><strong>Reducing Social impacts - Reducing the complexity of supply chain by having only a few suppliers and manufacturers</strong>&lt;br&gt;by opening own production in the homes of women’s knitters on the Faroe Islands, in ateliers in Jordan, Peru in order to enable greater control - “a majority of our clothes are hand-made in the homes of women’s knitters on the Faroe Islands as well as in our ateliers in Jordan and Peru. We have a very close relationship with them. I know the face of each women that I am working with and can assure the conditions are good”&lt;br&gt;<strong>Reducing Environmental impacts</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Use of environmental safer materials&lt;br&gt; &gt; use of organic wool from Faroe Islands,&lt;br&gt; “I use organic wool from the Faroe islands and I can assure you that the grass there is 100%untreated”&lt;br&gt; Mohair (from angora goats) Alpaca (from lamas in Peru), not chemically treated or dyed&lt;br&gt;Other: polyester, cotton&lt;br&gt;-No chemicals used in production&lt;br&gt; &gt; “the wool we use (Mohair and angora) wonderful natural colours, doesn’t need to be dyed”&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reducing production waste:</strong> for some of the collections only producing when ordered / customization “Some of the pieces are only produced when a client puts an order online”</td>
<td><strong>Social sustainability</strong>&lt;br&gt;Women empowerment project in factory in Jordan, contributing to reduce inequalities by giving women opportunity to earn money and ensure them steady employment -“most of them have been working their since the beginning – 7 years ago”&lt;br&gt;Give work to refugees - “a lot of Syrian refugees are being employed now”&lt;br&gt;<strong>Environmental sustainability</strong>&lt;br&gt;Contributing to the dematerialization of fashion through services based on repairing of old clothes&lt;br&gt;Offering long warranty (2 years) – with reparation service within warranty period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
> Usage Phase: promote environmental friendly washing
- Wool dirt resistant – “the wool form Faroe islands is very resistant to dirt- doesn’t need to be washed frequently and we tell that to our customers. In any case we recommend cold hand-wash and no drying”

> Reduce transport
- by producing in Europe
- opened fabric in Peru because have the expertise in alpaca, can do the yarn there and knit the clothes there (before wool was shipped to Italy to make the yarn, then sent back to Peru/Faroe for knitting) – reducing transport

Countering fast fashion
- High quality materials using high quality wool and knitting expertise of women in Peru, Jordan, Faroe island
- Timeless classic designs
- Fewer quantities through customization – to ensure women who buys it keeps it - “wear them and use them and then they can become ‘so you’”

Thereby also contributing to Improve sustainable behaviour of consumers
By Encouraging consumers to wear their clothes longer, by offering reparation services for their old clothes

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**Case D**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Pro-active CSR</th>
<th>Sustainable</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Reducing Social impacts**
  Raw material suppliers in EU
  Close collaboration with material suppliers in Austria and Italy – they can trace back origin of all materials (wool..)
  Production: Estonia
  > direct contact with sewing company /Know the conditions | **Reducing Environmental impacts**
  LCA (life cycle assessment) did a life cycle analysis as part of research project to create an environmentally responsible clothing line | **Improve sustainable behaviour of consumers**
  > Training and awareness raising initiatives towards "buying less, but better clothes"
  - blog to increase consumer understanding within the fashion industry
  - offers lectures and workshops for responsible consumption
  “education programs for kids. I teach 8th grade children in Denmark about sustainability about having better consumption levels- about not buying things that you will only wear for 2-3 times”

| **Countering fast fashion**
  Time less /classic design | **Use of innovative material**
  Experimenting with hemp:” hemp as a good alternative to cotton because it requires less land to grow, no pesticides “ | **Contribution to a more sustainable industry**
  Launched her own research project with scientists “We did a life cycle assessment to learn more about the environmental impact of my clothes so to improve the fibers and use the knowledge it for future collections”
  - to develop a sustainable and environmentally responsible clothing line (incl life cycle assessment)
  - To find alternative materials (hemp because uses less land and water than cotton) |
Durability test: “I test my fabrics/samples for 2-3 months to make sure they will stay the same for many years without losing their colour or changing its shape.”

“I think it is important to keep on researching about new materials and know the science behind it. Otherwise we could just blindly pick up materials for example based on certificates such as GOTS. but I wouldn’t change anything”

“I can only hope that the project will break down the barrier between the fashion industry and sustainability so that we may begin sharing knowledge about materials and production and make sustainable initiatives more of a reality.”

Sharing and promoting sustainability values and practices with other
Openly documents the findings about sustainable materials and practices on her blog + in meetings with other designers

“I regularly meet with other designers (Case J) I think it is becoming more common that we share our knowledge a lot “most of the time we talk about our suppliers and where to buy sustainable fibers and share other ideas about in order to find good solutions”
In order to “increase awareness and make sustainable initiatives more of a reality.”

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**Case E**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Pro-active CSR</th>
<th>Sustainable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Social impacts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reducing Environmental impacts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Environmental sustainability - Use recycled materials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Except their suppliers</strong></td>
<td>“we think about our impact when choosing the materials” we try to choose the ones with the lowest impact, and think about where does it come from, how can we transport It, what washing instructions”</td>
<td>“We think that we don’t necessarily have to buy organic if we want to be sustainable, because it has its side effects, it takes a lot of water and land and the employees do not make much money out of it” “we try to use more recycled fabrics”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to protect health, safety and human rights of workers</td>
<td>Reducing production waste by re-using leftover fabrics from own production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to comply with their national employment laws and regulations</td>
<td>“because we often have stocks and production waste” we reuse the pieces for new seasons, mid-seasons. we can colour them, redesign them”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; we recognize our obligation to ensure that suppliers are operating ethically. We will never knowingly source stock from countries which are in breach of the above principles”</td>
<td>BUT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, recognizes complexity of supply chain – “it is not always possible to monitor and control the conditions of each individual involved in the production of our products”</td>
<td>Many materials, changes every collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They are in direct contact and go there regularly to control</td>
<td>&gt;using chemicals - dying</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; producers in Pakistan (leather clothes): “we go there regularly” “they are doing what they can”</td>
<td>Environmental friendly transport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid polluting transportation means by favouring shipping over transport by plane</td>
<td>“If we have time we choose slow transportation (shipping) which is less polluting, otherwise by plane but instead of cargo (just products) rather passenger flights which would fly anyways”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rest in EU: “we are in contact via mail and phone and also go there”

**Policies to ensure no harm to animals is made in the production of leather and fur**

- Cow leather supplied by food industry

**Improving product packaging by substituting plastic bags with recycled or FSC certified paper**

“Recyclable plastic bags”

**Usage phase: Promote environmental friendly washing**

“Recommend hand wash and no dryer”

**Counter fast fashion**

- Enable long usage phase by high quality collections are timeless

> ”we don’t work with seasons. We have 2 every year but we don’t frame them in seasons, we give our collections numbers. For women it’s 22, for men 4 now. And we try to make all collections timeless so you can combine pieces from different collections, and don’t wear one piece only for one season.”

**Designing multifunctional and unisex clothes enabling multiple usage of a garment**

-Multiple usage: so that you use it more

“some of our pieces can be worn in multiple ways as a skirt or as shirt. That’s part of our brand DNA. And also our collections are unisex, they can be worn by men and women”

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**Case F**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Pro-active CSR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Reducing Social impacts**  
Expect their suppliers to comply with national employment laws. Locate production in countries which are less subject to social and abuses. They are in direct contact and go there regularly to contray  
“We know the producer—we have a close relationship and can trace everything back- they are living up to the requirements “ | **Reducing Environmental impacts**  
> Reducing production waste,  
- by producing tailored, unique pieces, only once ordered  
- order fabric’s from furniture store to reduce own waste in order to not having to order to high quantities, just what they need  
> “when a client comes in and orders one piece – we order the right quantity of fabric from a furniture store, to make sure we use only what we need”  
“it is not leftover fabrics” only helps to reduce own production waste “  
**BUT,**  
- do not know where fabric from furniture store comes from for some of the collections  
- only for some of the collections  
- other materials – not responsible (50%- depends on collection) Silk (from China), Seal skin (Greenland) |
| **Production in Copenhagen to ensure working conditions comply with the Danish employment law**  
produces some of its pieces in atelier in Copenhagen | |
| **Policies to ensure no harm to animals is made in the production of leather and fur**  
Production of skin and fur in a responsible manner.  
>seals live in the wild (not kept in captivity)  
>they are hunted because of their meat and not because of their fur (no baby seals, because they do not have sufficient meat) – “otherwise they would just throw the skin out in the water” | |
“the designer is in relation with inuits and went to a
seal hunt with them to check that there is no animal
torture.”

Majority of production
> Silk produced in China.
> Rest: Poland

Counter fast fashion
Enable long usage phase through high quality &
durability of materials “can last a lifetime with
minimal care “
> silk – best quality
> seal - Greenlandic Seal is easy to maintain and has
great longevity.
> fabrics from furniture store (fabrics used in cars, for
sofas – very resistance)
-Timeless design: “intentionally blurs the distinct
boundaries between summer and winter collections to
erase the limitations of seasonal wear.

Few quantities (tailoring) - “ tailoring in atelier in
Cph- aim is to re-establish a sense of respect for
tailoring and timeless silhouettes”

Case G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Pro-active CSR</th>
<th>Sustainable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reducing Social impacts</td>
<td>Reducing Environmental</td>
<td>Environmental sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production in Copenhagen</td>
<td>impacts - Re-using production waste -</td>
<td>Contributing to the dematerialization of fashion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to ensure working conditions</td>
<td>&gt; Use of left-over fabrics from other designers</td>
<td>(Service/Product)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comply with the Danish</td>
<td>”using antique fabrics, laces, beads and unique</td>
<td>-Services based on remanufacturing, and repairing of old clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment law</td>
<td>embroideries from designers in EU, France,</td>
<td>Enabling redesign: &quot;women can come back if she wants changes on her</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Italy. Thereby minimizing the waste of materials</td>
<td>wedding dress to use it after the wedding for other occasions - And I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and excess production”</td>
<td>tell that to my clients when they come and buy it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>→ don’t know where fabrics have been produced</td>
<td>Thereby also improving sustainable behavior of consumers by encouraging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BUT, Production -Hand-died (chemically)</td>
<td>consumers to wear their clothes longer and repair them</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>And through awareness raising initiatives towards “buying less, but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>better clothes”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I opened the Berlin fashion week and people were asking me, what would</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>you recommend to people to be sustainable .. and I said: buy less”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transforming the industry</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase awareness within fashion industry about sustainability</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>“I opened the fashion week in Paris in 2005 with a large ethical show. It</td>
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<td>was the first time that Paris introduced Ethical Fashion as “The fashion</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>industry’s most important element of the future”.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“We need a new message for fashion- and the new message should be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sustainability: this whole mentality that we have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the industry to change it requires change in designers mindset/behavior to more uniqueness, (not choosing easy way out, but make things differently) “they should create something new, become more of a specialist, do what they are good at”

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### Case H

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance CSR</th>
<th>Pro-active CSR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CSR strategy:</strong> Communication via CSR report to show engagement, goals and measuring CSR performance</td>
<td><strong>Reducing Environmental impacts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Social impacts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with social standards</td>
<td>&gt; Reduce emissions through cleaner energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; GOTS “our suppliers organic materials (5%) comply with criteria by GOTS”</td>
<td>+ Reduce waste water through clarification systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; For other material suppliers and manufacturers need to comply with the BSCI</td>
<td>Monitor their consumption of resources, e.g. heating, electricity, water and cardboard, and have set goals and identify new areas for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“for other material suppliers our suppliers must comply with the BSCI. We make annual visits to selected factories to ensure standards are met.”</td>
<td>&gt; transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with environmental standards regarding the use of chemicals</td>
<td>Reduce their CO2 emissions by ensuring that the majority of products are transported by sea to Europe. Reduce transport by plane (not more than 5% of total buying volume)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Oeko tex certified materials “35% of our materials are certified by Oeko-tex to ensure that the clothes don’t threaten the health of the children”</td>
<td>&gt; Promote environmental friendly washing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Introduction of company specific environmental guidelines for suppliers</td>
<td>we recommend 30 ° washing “we have thought about for ex recommending hand drying instead of tumbl drying, still just an idea”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“We have developed their own Code of Conduct prohibits the use of PVC, phthalates, nickel, DMF and the 22 forbidden azo dyes in our productionsto ensure that no dangerous chemicals are used during the production of clothes made from non-certified materials”</td>
<td><strong>Counter fast fashion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regular visits to selected factories</strong></td>
<td>Enable longer use though high quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“you can never be 100% sure that standards are met. Our co-operation relies on communication and mutual trust. that’s why we make annual visits to selected factories to ensure standards are met”</td>
<td>“the quality of our products is very good. That’s also an important issue when we test the clothes that the product has a long durability, doesn’t lose its colour, changes its shape”</td>
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</table>

| **Fur and down free policy** |  |

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### Case I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro-active CSR</th>
<th>Sustainable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Social impacts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Environmental sustainability</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Pro-actively take measures to reduce complexity and increase transparency in the supply chain by having only a few suppliers and manufacturers</td>
<td>Using recycled polyester “We work on a number of recycling projects”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; by opening their own production sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production in own fabric in Ukraine - “we own the fabric so we know all production steps and it is very important for us to guarantee good conditions” – I go there every four weeks for one week and I work under the same conditions as the other people in the fabric and I like to work there.. so I can guarantee everything is alright there“</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Environmental impacts</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use of environmental safer materials - Organic cotton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no use of chemicals in production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I can ensure you that no harmful chemicals are used during the production in our factory”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Transport is reduced as production is occurring in Europe (transport occurs by truck from Ukraine to Germany-storage)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counter fast fashion</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producing high quality clothes to enable long usage phase “Our clothes are of the very best quality, made to be worn and washed again and again”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Case J

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Sustainable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing social and environmental impacts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Counter fast fashion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with social and environmental standards</td>
<td>Ensuring high quality of materials for longer durability “before doing the production we have made several tests to ensure the fabrics can hold hundreds and thousands of washes without changing their colour or shape”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; GOTS “All the clothes are made from GOTS certified organic cotton”</td>
<td><strong>Environmental sustainability. Contributing to the dematerialization of fashion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One time production (about 100 pieces of each collections – unisex for new born, girls: 5 sizes, 2 collections each - boys: 5 sizes, 2 collections each</td>
<td>&gt; New business model based on renting out kids’ clothes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ more sizes to come in 2016 Made in India</td>
<td>Parents by a monthly subscription fee and every three months (in average) as the size of the kid changes, they get another set of kids clothes in one size bigger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&gt; Reparation service</strong></td>
<td><strong>&gt; Reparation service</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“in case one piece breaks, the parents can repair it or we repair do it”</td>
<td>“in case one piece breaks, the parents can repair it or we repair do it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thereby improving sustainable behaviour of consumers</td>
<td>Thereby improving sustainable behaviour of consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Encourage consumers to wear their clothes longer, by offering reparation services</td>
<td>- Encourage consumers to wear their clothes longer, by offering reparation services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Changing consumer behaviour towards renting out clothes instead of buying their own</td>
<td>- Changing consumer behaviour towards renting out clothes instead of buying their own</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix E – CSR and CS framework after analysis

### 1st level: Compliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of responsibility</th>
<th>Issues facing the fashion industry</th>
<th>COMPLIANCE PRACTICES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS (B,D,E,F,G,H,I,J)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor working conditions</td>
<td>&gt; Expect their suppliers to comply with national employment laws. Locate production in countries which are less subject to social and abuses. Direct contact and go there regularly to control (Cases D,E,F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Production in Copenhagen to ensure working conditions comply with the Danish employment laws (Cases F,G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complex supply chain</td>
<td>&gt;Compliance with social standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) (Cases B,H,I,J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) (Case H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Material phase</td>
<td>COMPLIANCE PRACTICES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AT MATERIAL PHASE (B,E,F,H,I,J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Policies to ensure no harm to animals is made in the production of leather and fur (Cases E,F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Fur free policies (Case H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; GOTS certified organic materials prohibits the use of harmful chemicals in material phase (Cases B,H,I,J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Oeko-tex certification prohibits use of harmful chemicals (Cases B,H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Production phase</td>
<td>COMPLIANCE PRACTICES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AT MATERIAL PHASE (B,H,I,J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; GOTS certified organic materials prohibits the use of harmful chemicals in production phase (Cases B,H,I,J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Oeko-tex certification prohibits use of harmful chemicals (Cases B,H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Introduction of company specific environmental guidelines for their manufacturers regarding the use of chemicals (Case H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usage Phase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issues related to the unsustainables fast fashion model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fast fashion model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Issues related to unsustainable fast fashion model based on large quantities, low prices, poor quality and fast changing trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Causes overconsumption and high amounts of waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Enhances the social and environmental impact of fashion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2nd level: Pro-active

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of responsibility</th>
<th>PRO-ACTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor working conditions</td>
<td>Beyond compliance: companies pro-actively address their negative social and environmental impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No employee rights</td>
<td>- At this stage companies adopt responsible practices concerned with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Long working hours and low wages</td>
<td>- The redesign of their products, by reducing the use of resources such as water energy, or reducing the use of materials and reusing production waste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Poor health and safety standards</td>
<td>- The development of new innovate products which are environmentally safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Child labour</td>
<td>- A company’s CSR effort is part of its strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex supply chain</td>
<td>(Benn, Dunphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Zadek, 2007)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Negative social impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material phase</th>
<th>PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS (A,C,I)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Exploitation of natural resources (petrol for production of polyester and water for growing cotton)</td>
<td>&gt; Reducing the complexity of supply chain by having only a few suppliers and manufacturers by opening own production sites or collaborating with small private owned manufacturers (Cases A,C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Emissions of GHG and waste water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Use of dangerous chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers for growing cotton)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Animal torture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production phase</th>
<th>PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICES TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AT MATERIAL PHASE (A,C,D,G,I)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Emissions of GHG and waste water</td>
<td>&gt; Use of environmental safer materials (Cases A,C,I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Production waste</td>
<td>&gt; Use of innovative materials (Case D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Use of dangerous chemicals (dye, softener)</td>
<td>&gt; Reducing the use of materials (Case A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Use of left-over fabrics from other designers (Case G)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICES TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AT TRANSPORT PHASE (E,H)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Emissions of GHG</td>
<td>&gt; Avoid polluting transportation means by favoring shipping over transport by plane (Cases E,H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Improving product packaging by for instance substituting plastic bags with recycled or FSC certified paper (Case E)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage Phase</th>
<th>PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICES TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AT USAGE PHASE (E,C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Emissions of GHG</td>
<td>&gt; Introduce labels on the clothes that promote environmentally friendly washing (minimal use of washing powder, no use of fabric softeners, no tumble drying, ironing) (Cases E,C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Waste water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Consumer waste at the end of the usage phase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues related to the unsustainable fast fashion model</th>
<th>PRACTICES TO COUNTER FAST FASHION MODEL (A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Issues related to unsustainable fast fashion model</td>
<td>&gt; Producing high quality clothes to enable long usage phase (Cases A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on large quantities, low prices, poor quality and fast changing trends</td>
<td>&gt; Durability tests for longer usage phase (Cases D,I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Offering timeless design, breaking with the seasonal trends and favouring long usage phase (Cases A,E,F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Designing multifunctional and unisex clothes enabling multiple usage of a garment (Case F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Tailored unique pieces, thus producing less quantities (Case C,E,F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Fast fashion model | |
|--------------------| |
| - Causes overconsumption and high amounts of waste | |
| - Enhances the social and environmental impacts of fashion | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of responsibility</th>
<th>CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Companies develop new business models decoupled from environmental degradation, social inequalities and poverty. The new business models integrate all three aspects of sustainability. Besides guaranteeing economic sustainability by improving corporate profitability, they also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Contribute to social sustainability by improving well-being, human fulfilment and reducing poverty and inequalities (Benn, Dunphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Wilson, 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Contribute to environmental sustainability by through business models that replace linear production processes with circular ones, and support the dematerialization of production. (Benn, Dunphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Doppelt, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Promote sustainability within industry and society at large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop products and services aimed at improving the sustainable behaviour of consumer,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transform the industry through the sharing and promotion of sustainability values and practices (Benn, Dunphy, &amp; Griffiths, 2014; Zadek, 2007)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Issues facing the fashion industry

#### Negative social impacts

- Poor working conditions:
  - No employee rights
  - Long working hours and low wages
  - Poor health and safety standards
  - Child labour

- Complex supply chain characterized by lack of transparency and control

#### Material phase

- Exploitation of natural resources (petrol for production of polyester and water for growing cotton)
- Emissions of GHG and waste water
- Use of dangerous chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers for growing cotton)
- Animal torture

#### Production phase

- Emissions of GHG and waste water
- Production waste
- Use of dangerous chemicals (dye; softener)

#### Transport

- Emissions of GHG

#### Usage Phase

- Issues related to unsustainable fashion model based on large quantities, low prices, poor quality and fast changing trends
- Fast fashion model:
  - Causes overconsumption and high amounts of waste
  - Enhances the social and environmental impacts of fashion

#### Practices contributing to social sustainability (C)

- Enhance quality of life, well-being and reduce poverty by building capacities through skill formation, and providing equal opportunities both within the organization and the broader society
- Women empowerment project in Jordan and employment of Syrian refugees (Case C)

#### Practices contributing to environmental sustainability (B,C,E,G,I)

- Replacing linear production processes with circular processes (B,E,I)
- Develop clothes that can be recycled, by using recycled materials and ensuring that at the end of its life-cycle the garment is recycled or returns to nature in a form that is not harmful
- Use recycled materials (Cases E,I)
- Giving production waste, left-over clothes to recycling firms (Case B)

- Contributing to the dematerialization of fashion (C,G,I)
- Services based on remanufacturing and repairing of old clothes thereby using consumer waste for new business activities (Cases C,G,I)
- Business models around the renting and sharing of clothes ➔ Renting of kids clothes (Case H)

#### Practices to improve sustainable behaviour of consumers (C,D,G)

- Training and awareness raising initiatives towards "buying less, but better clothes" (Cases D,G)
- Developing services which improve the sustainable behaviour of consumers
  - Encourage consumers to wear their clothes longer, by offering reparation services and remanufacturing services of their old clothes (Cases C,G,I)
  - Changing consumer behavior towards renting out clothes instead of buying them (Case I)

#### Practices contributing to a more sustainable industry (D,G)

- Sharing and promotion of sustainability values and practices with other companies to actively create the change towards a more sustainable clothing industry:
  - Increase awareness about importance of sustainability within the fashion industry (Case G)
  - Sharing of best practices with other designers (Cases D, I)
  - Research project with scientists (Case D)
Appendix F - Coding of sense making – 10 interview transcripts

Case A

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?
“IT means a lot for us to know who produces our clothes – it gives us security and a clear conscience. We want to be able to look at ourselves in the mirror”
“The bigger you get the more complicated your supply chain and the more countries and people are involved it gets more difficult to produce in a responsible way…” “That’s why we started the company, we wanted to produce clothes that we feel good about. Because before we had another brand which was much more complicated with for example jeans with zippers and buttons and it was difficult to keep it all organic. We had the feeling we were not doing enough… so we decided to start with the new brand and make it more simple by reducing the amount of materials and have only a few production sites which is the same or close by where the material is collected”

MK: When you started the new brand, did you think there might be a demand from responsible consumers?
“We were not thinking that much about the consumer. We were thinking more about the people that produces the clothes and the environment and our own feeling of doing something that is a good product because the industry is so messy”
“We don’t know if our consumers buy the products because there are responsible, maybe its 50-50 conscious and not conscious consumers”
“We thought that the consumer might not care but at least they get a better product. Actually we don’t think our products look organic”
“The product has the look good, feel good, make you look good when you wear it.. all these things come first, before the sustainable factor “
“if we would look at the profit first we wouldn’t be producing in Peru and we wouldn’t be using organic pima cotton from Peru but import it from America because it’s cheaper to import it from there. We could also just produce everything in China..”
“It gives peace of mind, and in our view it is also an added value to our product.”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
“When you choose to create your clothes in a sustainable way, you attract a certain kind of customers. You have to really consider the environmental and social aspect in everything you do otherwise you will lose credit towards your consumers. They will be sceptical if you are not perfect, if all of your products are not 100% organic”
“We would like to certify our production sites with the GOTS certificate but we cannot because it would be too much effort to get certification for our small producers in Peru. We would have to produce in Portugal but then quality is less good”
“The transport is not particularity eco friendly. But everything is sourced and produced at one place so we don’t have to import for example from china to Peru. So in that sense we are reducing the transport. It would be possible to get cotton, alpaca and cashmere from closer locations.. but then the quality is not as good. And for us the quality is more important because the better the quality the longer you use the product”
“We are doing everything our own, also the website. We are just two people so a lot of things cannot get done very quickly”
“and in order to compete with “normal” fashion brands there are some things that need to come first such as branding, trying to get the products into the shops are more important than for example recommending low temperature washing and all of this… you need to pick your battles, there is always a compromise to make if you want to survive as a responsible designer” “We need to make profit because otherwise we die”
“We need to make profit because otherwise we die”
MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays?
"Clothes are so cheap that people have so many clothes they never wear or throw away after two times"
"The unsustainability of clothing comes from the consumer"
"Nobody thinks about the consequences, the background behind cheap products the same is happening with food.. but there are too few people who decide consciously because it's more expensive even though we have money in Denmark"

MK: What do you do to change it?
"We think that ensuring high quality is a big step towards more sustainable consumer behavior because once a consumer has experienced how long lasting our products are they don’t have to buy new ones every season”. “The designs need to be timeless in order for consumer to want to wear for long time"

MK: What more could you do?
“there are so many possibilities... - I know for instance that designer X is taking old Filippa K clothes back and do something new with it. That’s a dream.” -“designer Y is also doing something like that.. instead of buying clothes you rent it out” “it really inspiring, but with adult clothes it’s a bit more difficult”

MK: Would you for instance consider offering reparation services?
“it depends if we have the resources.. because it’s only the two of us.. then we would need a collaboration with other companies or so..”

MK: What are your plans for the future?
“We are always working on the little things like last year we changed the name tag to use certified paper .. now we are trying to get some recycled plastic bags”
“We are trying to get the GOTS certificate for the place where the cotton is produced. But we work with so many small workshops in Peru that at the moment it is not possible to certify the entire product
“We have been thinking about writing something on our webpage to promote washing at low temperatures but we haven’t done that yet “

Case B

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?
“That was from the very beginning. We started out with a small collection of GOTS certified clothes. Because we wanted to create beautiful and simple everyday clothes in sustainable materials”
“It has been in me since I was a teenager, reading about Greenpeace campaigns, getting aware of the issues linked to global warming you know things like that have always been in me. ““During the design school I would always work with this aspect with this idea in my mind – I want to do things better “

MK: Do you think there is a demand for responsible clothes in Denmark?
“I think in kids wear there is a greater demand, but in adults cloths I don’t think there is a particular demand for organic clothes. People buy clothes first because of the look”
You cannot tell from our clothes that they are organic … it is just a bonus thing you only realize it after that it is actually organic”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
“Higher prices and availability of organic fabrics because they are not as much as conventional out there”
“the producer only produces with higher amounts of fabrics…” the producer tells me I have to take 1000m instead of 500m “so I have too much material compared to what I want to produce”
“So at the beginning we were ordering 500 pieces of each and that was a lot for a small company its hard to sell 500 t shirts. But now we are working with lower minimums and higher prices “
“You have to pick your battles, cannot do everything, change everything”
“You have to see what you can do, where do you want to do something”
“We work with these certifications and that’s already a lot and having higher prices for us is already enough of a battle so if we have to also take it back and use the time and administration on that you know it would kill us”

MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays?
“It’s the fast fashion.. the low prices mean that you’ll just buy it and then use it for a very short time and then throw it away instead of investing in quality.

MK: What do you do to change it?
“we try to use materials that last longer”
“how can you do that, it is difficult? I think the only way you can ensure this as a designer is by producing something that is really of value so they want to keep it…making clothes that people really want to wear now and really try hard to make it good”

MK: What more could you do? Did you ever consider taking back your old clothes in case consumers do not want to wear them anymore?
“I don’t think if I take back the few clothes people do not want to wear any more from my brand, it wouldn’t make that big of a difference. In order to make a difference you have to think big I wouldn’t really know what to do with the clothes that come back, except from doing patchwork out of it”
“actually when we have too much clothes we deliver them to H&M so it gets recycled.” “apparently, Danish fashion institute is investing in a factory that would take back textiles it should start this summer”
“it is the customer’s responsibility.”

Case C

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?
“it was just very natural for us” “It’s really with our heart we do it”
“we have been doing this from the beginning, that’s how the company started
“This company started in the late 90s when we noticed that everything started to go very fast and people were buying a lot of things not really considering natural materials and just buying buying buying and nobody cared anymore about the wool on the faroe islands anymore… and then some time we saw a big bone fire of wool.. people were just burning it because there was no use for it… Consumers wanted fleece and artificial materials…. and it really broke our heart to see that and we thought we have to do something about it and that’s actually how the company started”
“we needed someone to produce knitwear besides our production in faroe islands… we even had some Chinese suppliers who offered us beautiful samples for a very reasonable price. But then when we asked them ‘how do you ensure the working conditions of the people who produce these pieces’ they could not answer. So we decided to create the project in Jordan and pay more for the production, but be sure that the conditions are good”

MK: Do you think there is a demand for responsible clothes?
"Consumers are not stupid. more and more consumers are interested in natural and environmental and socially friendly products. but we started not because there was a consumer demand… “At the beginning there was no consumer demand for wool of Faroe islands”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
“our vision is to try to make the best we can in all kinds of processes, it is never going to be perfect but we try to do as much as possible”
“we are a fashion company, we don’t only focus on environmental things… we are not excluding some materials because they are not environmentally friendly”
“sometimes you need to accept that for example the polyester.. we have to use polyester when we use materials such as mohair” using other materials as well or flying clothes via plane”
MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays? What do you do to change it?
“Designers are too focused on profit.. I think we should talk less and do more” “not talk about how sustainable the product is.. but talk about the design.. I want people to buy the product because they are beautiful.. and then when consumer sees what is inside, how it is produced.. they think it’s good”
“look at H&M for example.. they do maybe 1% of their production in a responsible way and everyone talks about it... but what about the 99%?”
“I think it also depends on the consumers, we can get them on board with information… they have to know how things are done. If they don’t know how their clothes are made there is no way for them to make a conscious decision”
“we were part of the designers who started the trend” “we were doing it long before people started to put the label of “sustainability” on us”
“our company is different from those who try to change their ways of doing things. It can be very difficult if you have a certain way of doing things or a specific culture… to change the way you do things ”

MK: What are your plans for the future?
“ the social aspect… if you look at our jordanien project a lot of Syrian refugees are being employed now”
“if you take the project in peru the women have old ways of knitting that are almost dying out and we are interested to keep these traditions a life and encourage this old handcraft and if it would be possible for us to allow them to make a business out of it, it would be beautiful”

Case D

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?
“I have been interested in sustainability even before I started my brand. I have worked with environmental issues for 10-15 years” “when I pass by a fast fashion shop and buy some clothes for my kids. Sometimes it is good quality and has the potential to have a long durability. But it still breaks my heart when I think about how it has been produced” “so I think it is really a personal matter for me to try to change something about it”
“when I started my brand the purpose was to produce with considering env and social issues at every step” “I wanted to be able to make people change their mind about consuming with my brand”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
“I use a lot of time for these research projects and it is very hard to earn money from doing it so I think it is a challenge.. because in the end I have to pay my bills”
“I have this very small company and I think especially after the financial crisis it is very hard to generate enough money for a living from responsible products “
“But yeah sometimes it’s a challenge, but its okay.. I wouldn’t want to do it any other way”

MK: What could you do more to make the fashion industry more sustainable?
“I have thought about renting out my clothes but I think that the best thing for me is to sell the pieces because I don’t have enough quantities in order to rent out. My company is too small, I don’t think it would be the right business model for me”

MK: What are your plans for the future?
Make collections with hemp, if research project comes out to be successful
Go to Roskilde festival to promote the projects
Exhibition at Design museum Denmark – to show some of our results about hemp and linen compared to more conventional fabrics like cotton/polyester to inform people about possible alternatives
Case E

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?
“The sustainability aspect was inside our designs from the beginning on. At the beginning we were experimenting, and we were looking for good and high quality fabrics”
From the beginning we had in her mind that the clothes should be as clean as possible
And we do it because it is part of our DNA

MK: What about the initiative with the Danish government – did it change the reasons why you act responsibly?
No not at all.. it is more costly to produce this way but we still do it

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
“I don’t think there is any, it is easy.. it’s more a choice to do it one way or the other. your mindset needs to be focused on these things.. so you see the opportunities to reduce you impact at every step. it’s about asking your suppliers what is possible”
“Today it is quite easy to choose materials with least impact, you go out to the fairs or you have the suppliers coming here and normally they have two lines – they have the normal line and the organic line. So you can choose very easily which fabric you want”
And it’s about being willing to pay the price. Of course we need to make some money but most of the people who are working for us also have the same idea and the same mindset that not only decides based on the price….
“Sometimes need to compromise and choose less responsible which require lower minimum quantities in order to have less production waste”
“We don’t have power or the money to control or ask our producers to do things another way. We have to be happy with what the factory is offering you, when they agree on producing fewer quantities. You’re always put behind because you are less important, bring less money than”
“we are starting to give the leftovers that we cannot use anymore to recycling companies that recycle them to make recycled fabrics. But the problem is that there only some fabrics that can be recycled and reused. For example, cotton you cannot recycle it in a way that you can reuse it for new products. But yes I think in the future we will use more recycled fabrics. It depends on the industry, if there is companies in the future that make it possible. but there is always going to be waste it depends how good designer is in collecting and giving pieces to recycling.. but it is better that doing nothing and throwing these leftovers away”

MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays?
“Larger companies have the power, possibility to change how things are done.. but they don’t because of the profit. They don’t have the right mindset and its is all anonymous. The board takes the decision and all they care about is how much they earn – nothing else and that is what is going on in huge fast growing and fast fashion companies – profit, profit and profit”
“The biggest challenge is to make the consumer buy it. because of course it is more expensive, because we pay more for producing it.. “ And it hard to change their behavior because we don’t have the money to make a lot of marketing and get more people buy our products instead of buying fast fashion”

MK: What do you do to change it?
“We promote a longer usage phase and we show consumers that they can wear them in multiple ways”..

MK: What more could you do? Did you ever consider taking back old clothes?
“Yes, we have been working on the idea. But when you have a company you have to focus on the things you are doing right now and improve this and start to make some money and as soon as you have some money you have to make a stronger ground for your brand. this means moving from wholesale to retail (we are wholesale but have retail in our webshop). that’s where we are now. But of course once we have
a retail we could consider implementing this idea to either just to repair it and re-sell it or redesign it and sell a new piece.”
“but to start that it would need to employ more people that can do that and also the money to have that business running so you need to take it step by step, but we’ll do it once we have the money to go into the next step.”

Case F

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?

The philosophy of the brand is to create beautiful and responsible clothes made of quality materials that can last a lifetime with minimal care.
“I think it was mainly a coincidence, he [the designer] talked with some people from the furniture store and then he saw these materials and really liked them. We buy it from them and its good for us because we are a small company, sometimes its difficult to get small amounts of fabric. that way we don’t have to buy more as what we need and create waste” “So it’s almost sustainable”
“It kind of became our trademark. We are producing that every season“
“Also the seal it was pretty much a coincidence, he [the designer] went to a store were they had one seal skin and he thought this is nice and then he got in touch with cph fur and started. And we brand it as responsible and tell the story of the inuits”
“We take materials we like and if we can tell a story around sustainability then we brand it like that”
“It’s almost sustainable, but our focus is on the quality, the durability”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?

“We have to keep the margin very low… we are not making much money because the production is so expensive to pay the employees, materials… And right now, because we don’t sell that much we need to think this way… we want to sell“

MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays?

“I really don’t believe in making a sustainable product – I don’t think it can sell“
“And companies cannot get 100% sustainable, there will always be a flaw somewhere, when you have different materials, it’s hard to control the production and trace it back.”

MK: What do you do to change it?

“If we can tell a story around sustainability, its good, but our focus is really on the quality so that it is long lasting”

MK: What more could you do? Did you ever consider taking back old clothes?

“No, I don’t think we would”

MK: What are your plans for the future?

“Grow bigger, making bigger collections. Maybe going into accessories…”

Case G

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?

“I started to play, try things out from what was left from my own production (put on chains, laces)”
I created unique pieces. Then I ended up doing more and more of that.. I moved to Paris, more people came by to my place from all over the place taking orders. They liked the style, the story, it was more personal. They were ready to pay a lot for these dresses, we were producing a lot.
“At the same time I didn’t make much money out of it because I had to pay the workers, PR etc..I realized this is going the wrong direction”
“At that time everyone was going to China. .. I could have done way more money if I would have gone to China but I didn’t want to go to some ugly manufacture in China or even in Poland. I thought I am not going to disabuse my life and do something that is against my will just to make 50 kr more.”
“I didn’t want to be one of them – so I decided to stay in France, I moved to the south and produced less.. and I was ready to risk to increase prices. I kept the 10 best people and we produced less. Now it’s better, more fun.. it’s not all about being big”

MK: Do you think there is a demand for responsible clothes in Denmark?
“My clients don’t buy these pieces because they want sustainable clothes, they buy it because they like the look – people don’t care about sustainable clothes”

MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays?
“What is really sustainable is a piece that is not fashion that is timeless, you can wear it today you can wear it in 10 years.. you give it to your daughter. It doesn’t really matter what it is made off, but about how you use it “it is even better not to buy anything than to buy responsible because even a responsible piece will have an impact on transport and production.”
“People have low self-esteem they don’t know what makes them happy. instead of working on themselves and try to see what would make them happy.. “”They think that consuming more will make them happy, they get high on it but its only for a short time, then they have to buy a new piece.” Instead of being happy with less” “it needs a change in mindset. People should start buying less and use longer, buy because they really like it, not because it’s a trend”
That’s where it all comes from, consumers want fast fashion always more and cheap clothes, because most designers are producing what the consumer wants they keep on doing fast fashion

MK: What do you do to change it?
“I opened the berlin fashion week and people were asking me, what would you recommend to people to be sustainable .. and I said: buy less”
“I moved to the south and produced less. I kept the 10 best people and we produced less. Now it’s better, more fun.. it’s not all about being big”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
“I have a friend she told me ‘ I’m sustainable because I am cutting my patterns…’ so every designer is inventing their own rules or definitions of sustainability ““But is it really sustainable? the rules need to be defined, so we know when you can call yourself sustainable”
“Fashion is completely finished. What is fashion, fashion is cheap, it’s a trend and everybody wears it” – “so why call it sustainable fashion?” that’s not appropriate because sustainability is a beautiful word by itself but when you relate to the fashion it put a negative angle to it, you don’t trust it “ “we need a new message for fashion- and the new message should be sustainability: this whole mentality that we have to slow down create better products that we use for a long time, that are unique but to find this message for oneself as designer is so hard”

MK: What needs to change to move industry towards sustainability?
“Because fast fashion is all about selling more, all designer do the same – go to china .. to produce more and make more money” “Then because H&M collections were probably produced at the same place as DKNY or Valentino, suddenly everything looked the same- clothes lost their energy, their uniqueness, all had followed the same trend”
“We need to move away from following the fast fashion model, away from producing many quantities of usual, common styles and copy each other, designer should try more uniqueness…not choosing easy way out, but make things differently” “they should create something new, become more of a specialist, do what they are good at”
“For me it takes a lot of courage to continue that direction, not choosing the easy way of producing things that I know will sell well, many people will buy”
We need to support young designers, we need to support sustainability – those designers that want to be different.

“We need to collaborate and work more together. For instance we could create a group to help each other out and explore possibilities, to become more sustainable.. and also include young designers who want to be different. “for example we could sit down with 20 designers and produce all together “ I could make clothes for a colleague – wouldn’t cost him anything but I would promote his brand.”

“But we need an org to hold all that together to market us, to give us the knowledge and the rules of what sustainability is. There would be a budget for it, Danish fashion is the third biggest export in Denmark. But the problem is that the Danish fashion institute don’t do anything like that, nothing is happening to promote sustainability, encourage young designers to take this way. And, other fashion institutes such as the Danish textile union don’t want to work with Danish fashion institute, they don’t collaborate. it is done in a very old fashion, individualistic way”

Then a whole lot more designers would be sustainable if they would know the rules and receive some help. But today . “it is done in a very old fashion, individualistic way”

Case H

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?

“it was important that the products won’t do any harm to the children because of the chemicals“

“we want to have a supply chain we are not ashamed of – where no one is threatened or abused”

“And they knew that when they were going to open their own brand it should not only be nice to look at it should also give you a good conscious”

MK: Do you think there is a demand for responsible clothes in Denmark?

“we haven’t yet experienced the demand from the customer, so this was actually something we did because we wanted to, because we thought it was important, not because there was a lot of demand”

MK: What motivated you to participate in that initiative with the Danish government?

“to improve and get better in our CSR effort” - “we’ll never be finished with improving in CSR”

“also the fact that we participated in that initiative, didn’t bring us more value, we cannot see that it gave us more value yet” “but this is not our intention when doing csr”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?

“We do everything possible to act responsible”“You can only do it step by step.. if you would try to do everything from day one you would kill yourself. You need to identify small goals and once you have achieved them you can move on”

“I think the biggest challenge is yourself because sometimes you always look for other ways to improve, you’re never satisfied because you look at what you can do more... Sometimes you also have to stop and look at what you have achieved, realize that we’re actually doing a lot more than many other companies.” “and we realized that during the deloitte project, other companies told us we were doing a lot “

“Because we’re not so close to our suppliers, so it is hard to see if they are actually telling you the truth.. especially at the beginning it was very difficult to keep track, because it is such a large area to work with”

“So we needed to hire professionals (lawyers) specialized in CSR to help us get the certificates, make chemical tests.. you cannot make it yourself”

MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays?

“Money.. because you want to make profit and most of the producers are not ready to pay a higher price for the workers, for organic materials.. they want to make always more money “ - “If everyone would be willing to pay more, the industry wouldn’t be that unsustainable.. but that is my own personal opinion”

Focus on profit (designers not ready to ay higher price- want to make more profit)
“and we are always seeking for new.. we have more pieces than we need and we throw away things that are not worn out. That is how the industry is working, that is how we earn our money”
“ if the consumer would use their clothes longer, buy less… I mean I don’t want to kill the industry but for instance if we would recycle more old garments, use them to make some changes that would be a start “

MK: What do you do to change it? Could you imagine taking back old clothes and reuse them or resell them?
“I know more and more companies start doing it, but that’s not part of our strategy at the moment. We have discussed it but right now it is not something we seek to do” “We don’t have the resources, the correct set of for doing it” “We think that the quality of our products is very good. That’s also an important issue when we test the clothes that the product has a long durability, doesn’t lose its color, changes its shape”
“we see that the clothes are still living like five years old clothes of our brand we still see them on the internet (for instance trendsell.dk) .. we see how people recycle them but we are just not a part of it. So we don’t see a need to go into that business, because it is already happening.“

MK: What are your plans for the future?
“We have no real plans for the future. We just hired a new sales and marketing manager. And he should also be a part of our csr team and then we can discuss new ideas what do we want to do do…”

Case I

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?
“It has always been very important for us from the beginning on when we started the company 50 years ago that the employees have good conditions to work and that environment is respected”

MK: Do you think there is a demand for responsible clothes in Denmark? When you started the new brand, did you think there might be a demand from responsible consumers?
“For me I don’t think so much about it (what the consumer wants), I think more about that I can look at myself in the mirror” “That’s also the reason why we don’t talk so much about it or promote how sustainable we are in the newspaper or in advertisement.. we do it for us.. “
“I think people already pay more and more attention to how it is produced, what is inside the clothes, the chemicals that are used that could be bad for the child”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
“because the fibers of the cotton are too short once they have been recycled“

MK: Why do you think is the fashion industry so unsustainable nowadays?
“I think it is that the industry is based on large quantities and low prices. Clothes are produced in a way that doesn’t take into account the conditions under which employees are working and the consequences on the environment” “the problem is in the textile industry” “we can only make a solution for our own company but we cannot change the industry- I think it is the biggest problem”
“We always try to improve wherever we can - if we can do something good for the employees in our fabric we will ”
”the customers do not make enough use of the clothes but throw them away to quickly” “I think the biggest problem is that people don’t want to pay too much for the clothes and that’s the reason why the textile industry is so bad … I think it is up to the customers to pay a higher price for better products”
As opposed to founder of the brand (before it got sold) used to teach sustainability to customers and organizes “swap parties”, where parents could swap their children’s used clothes in order to ensure longer life. But “that was before.. we’re not doing it anymore…”

MK: What do you do to change it? What more could you do?
“I can see from our customers that they are sharing and giving their clothes to their neighbors…. I think they are already doing it”
For me it is more important to ensure good quality of the products I produce and thereby I ensure that customers can exchange them or give them away to friends or family members”

Case J

MK: What motivates you to be a responsible brand?
“one of the industry’s major problem is that clothes do not get enough use and are either put away in cupboards or thrown out” “when I started my brand I wanted to make sure that we make the most out of a piece – not just wearing it for one season”
“When you think of little baby pants, if it is only used seven times it almost doesn’t matter how sustainable it has been produced … because it still has an impact”
I think that the only way to make the industry more sustainable is by enabling that one piece is used several times ( thus, enabling multiple usage phases) - For me it was clear that the only way to ensure that is through “sharing, so that it is used by many people. “
“The brand is founded in the belief that we can take better care of our blue planet, if we share with each other and recycle everything we can.” “we need to get the customers on board so that they become “activists” ”and I wanted to get the customer on board, to change his way of consuming..”
“with my previous brand, even though we tried as much as we could to produce in a sustainable way.. I thought we were not solving the industry’s major problem, “I tried concept based on leasing clothes in my previous brand” “after several quality tests I noticed that the quality was still not good enough to survive several usage phase as it is necessary in the concept of leasing”

MK: Do you think there is a demand for responsible clothes in Denmark? When you started the new brand, did you do it because you thought there might be a demand from responsible consumers?
“High quality, organic baby clothes are often very expensive. Parents are not ready to pay such a high price for kids clothes that will only serve a few months. ““Customers/ parents would like, but too expensive: “Even though parents would like to buy the highest quality for their kids, with no harmful chemicals or materials.. they often cannot afford to buy an entire wardrobe full of sustainable and chemical free clothes..” “This concept enables parents to not having to decide between quality or price, they can have high quality for a low price. Denmark, there is already a trend towards sharing and exchanging kids clothes and toys.. but there was no real system to support and promote this kind of sharing economy” “We estimate that our revenues can be 50 percent higher than normal, if we would just sell the clothes”

MK: What challenges did you encounter since you created your responsible brand?
I think we are the only clothing brand with this kind of model.. lego does it.. People are not familiar with this concept.. and even if they already share and exchange their clothes .. we need to make more people aware of the concept.. that’s what I am trying by organizing the events and inviting customers.. but still it only happens on a very small scale..
It requires a very good logistic systems to track where the clothes are, how much we have left to rent out, when will we receive packages back. when we receive packages back we have to check if all clothes are there and the quality
We cannot change customers behavior, force them to not buy clothes in a shop.. we can just offer them our service and hope they continue renting our clothes.. it would take more to change the industry and make it more sustainable.. it would take action from politics and regulations

MK: What are your plans for the future?
We need to grow first, get the business running before we can expand to other countries like Germany. We could offer our leasing service to other kids brands so that they can start sharing their own clothes via our homepage/ platform.. however, this is risky because most of the kids brands do not have such a high quality that enables multiple usage phases.. the clothes would break after a few usage phases..”
## Appendix G – Coding Manual – Coding of Sense Making Cues

In-vivo codes: sense making cues, namely words, expressions and simple phrases mentioned by designers when talking about their motivation to adopt responsible practices. And, the cues related to the challenges they face when doing so and that prevent them from doing more.

| Case A | Cues mentioned when talking about motivations | “It gives us peace of mind” “we want to be able to look at ourselves in the mirror” **Personal values, emotions**  
“We wanted to produce clothes that we feel good about. We decided to start with the new brand to make it more simple, because before we had another brand and it was difficult to keep all materials organic.” **Responsibility from the start** + start of new brand in order to be more responsible  
“We were not thinking about the consumer. More about our own feeling of doing something that is a good product” “The consumers might not care but at least they get a better product.” **Consumer not the first driver**  
“Actually we don’t think our products look organic” “The product has the look good, feel good (...)all these things come first, before the sustainable factor” **Promote quality, design, comfort first** (value of humility)  
“It is also an added value to our product to use high quality materials” **Added value (business context)**  
“If we would look at the profit first we wouldn’t be producing in Peru and using organic pima cotton from Peru but import it from America because it’s cheaper. We could also just produce everything in China.” **Willingness to pay higher price for responsible production** |
|---|---|---|
| Cues related to challenges today | “The transport is not particularly eco-friendly” “It would be possible to get responsible materials from closer locations but then the quality is not as good. And for us the quality is more important because the better the quality the longer you use the product” **Compromise among responsible practices** (accept greater transport to enable greater quality)  
“In order to compete with normal fashion brands there are some things that need to come first” ”There is always a compromise to make if you want to survive as a responsible designer” ”We need to make profit because otherwise we die” **Compromise between profit and being responsible** |
| Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices | The unsustainability of clothing comes from the consumer””don’t think of the consequences behind cheap products” ”people have so many clothes they throw away after two times” **Aware of broader issues**  
“there are so many possibility, taking clothes back and do something new with it” ”rent out clothes” **Aware of sustainable practices**  
**But not doing more because**  
> ”it’s only the two of us.. then we would need a collaboration with other companies or so.” **Lack of human resources**  
> ”ensuring high quality and timeless designs is a big step towards more sustainable consumer behavior because then they don’t have to buy new things every season” **Think they do enough (no need to change)**  
**Future practices (not making things differently):** “We are always working on the little things like.. we are trying to get some recycled plastic bags, promote washing at low temperatures” |
| Case B | Cues mentioned when talking about motivations | “It has been in me since I was a teenager, reading about Greenpeace campaigns, getting aware of the issues linked to global warming” ”During the design school I would always work with this idea in my mind – ‘I want to do things better’” **Personal experience and values**  
“from the very beginning. Because we wanted to create clothes in sustainable materials” **Responsibility from the start** |
"I don’t think there is a particular demand for organic clothes. People buy clothes first because of the look" **Consumer not the main driver**
"You cannot tell from our clothes that they are organic … it is just a bonus thing you only realize it after that it is actually organic" **Promote quality, design, comfort first (value of humility)**

| Cues related to challenges today | "availability of organic fabrics" **Less choice of materials**
"we are working with lower minimums and higher prices" **Had to produce less, and increase the prices (Personal value)**
"You have to pick your battles, cannot do everything" "We work with these certifications and that’s already a lot and having higher prices for us is already enough of a battle. If we have to also take it back and use the time and administration on that it would kill us" **Compromise between profit and being responsible** |
| Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices | ".,It’s the fast fashion… the low prices mean that you’ll just buy it and then use it for a very short time and then throw it away instead of investing in quality”
**Aware of broader issues**
*But not doing more: because*
*Not big enough to make a difference* “it wouldn’t make that big of a difference [if I take back the few clothes people do not want to wear anymore]. In order to make a difference you have to think big”
*Waiting for others to become more sustainable* “apparently, Danish fashion institute is investing in a factory that would take back textiles it should start this summer” “it is the customer’s responsibility..”
*Think they do enough (no need to change)* "We work with these certifications and that’s already a lot “we use materials that last longer” "producing clothes that people really want to wear and want to keep for long” "we deliver left over clothes to H&M so it gets recycled” |

| Case C Cues mentioned when talking about motivations | "it was just very natural for us” “It’s really with our heart we do it”
**Personal beliefs + values**
"we have been doing this from the beginning, that’s how the company started.we noticed that people were buying a lot of things not really considering natural materials. Nobody cared anymore about the wool on the faroe islands anymore… we saw a big bone fire of wool.. people were just burning it because there was no use for it... and it really broke our heart to see that and we thought we have to do something about it and that’s actually how the company started” personal **Personal experience + responsibility from the start**
"we started not because there was a consumer demand...At the beginning there was no consumer demand for wool of Faroe islands “ **Consumer not the main driver**
""I think designers should talk less and do more.look at H&M for example.. they do maybe 1% of their production in a responsible way and everyone talks about it… but what about the 99%?” “I want people to buy the product because they are beautiful.. and then when consumer sees what is inside, how it is produced.. they think it’s good” **Promote quality, design, comfort first (value of humility)**
"Consumers are not stupid.. more and more consumers are interested in natural and environmental and socially friendly products” **Consumer demand (business context)** |
| Cues related to challenges today | "we try to do as much as possible, but it is never going to be perfect” “we are a fashion company, we cannot only focus on environmental things... we are
| Case D | Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices | "Designers are too focused on profit. I think we should talk less and do more" “I think it also depends on the consumers, we can get them on board with information about for them to make a conscious decision” **Aware of broader issues**  
**But not doing more: because**  
>"Think they do enough (see themselves as frontrunners)" we were part of the designers who started the trend” “we were doing it long before people started to put the label of ‘sustainability’ on us” “our company is different from those who try to change their ways of doing things”  
**Future practices (not making things differently):** "for the project in Peru, we are interested to keep old ways of knitting alive and allow the women to make a business out of it, it would be beautiful” |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Case D | Cues mentioned when talking about motivations | “I have been interested in sustainability even before I started my brand. I have worked with environmental issues for 10-15 years” “when I pass by a fast fashion shop it breaks my heart when I think about how it has been produced” “it is really a personal matter for me to try to change something about it” **Personal background & experience -> emotions values**  
"when I started my brand the purpose was to produce with consideration of the environment and society” “I wanted to be able to make people change their mind about consuming with my brand” **Responsibility from the start** |
| Case D | Cues related to challenges today | “it is very hard to earn money from doing it” “in the end I have to pay my bills” “I think especially after the financial crisis it is very hard to generate enough money for a living from responsible products” **Compromise between profit and being responsible** |
| Case E | Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices | Aware of the issues, but not doing more: because  
>"too small to change business model, to rent out" “I have thought about renting out my clothes but I think that the best thing for me is to sell the pieces because I don’t have enough quantities in order to rent out. My company is too small, I don’t think it would be the right business model for me”  
**Future practices:** "Make collections with hemp, go to Roskilde festival and have an exhibition at Design museum Denmark to inform people about possible alternatives" |
| Case E | Cues mentioned when talking about motivations | “From the beginning we had in her mind that the clothes should be as clean as possible.” **Responsibility from the start**  
"we were looking for good and high quality fabrics” “we do it because it is part of our DNA” **Business context**  
"it is more costly to produce this way but we still do it” **Willingness to pay higher price for responsible production (Personal value)** |
| Case E | Cues related to challenges today | "I don’t think there is any challenges, it is easy.. to choose materials with least impact” **don’t think there are challenges**  
“Sometimes need to compromise and choose less responsible which require lower minimum quantities in order to have less production waste”  
**Compromise among responsible practices (choosing less responsible materials over responsible ones because they have lower minimum quantities, thereby reducing amount of production waste)** |
"We don’t have power or the money to ask our producers to do things another way. We’re always put behind because are less important and bring less money" too small, not enough power in supply chain there are only some fabrics that can be recycled and reused Limits of recycled materials

Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices

"Larger companies have the power to change how things are done. But they don’t because of the profit" “The biggest challenge is to make the consumer buy it, because of course it is more expensive. And it hard to change their behavior” aware of broader issues we have thought of taking back old clothes, sell them second hand or redesign them” aware of sustainable practices

But not doing more: because

> "would need to employ more people that can do that and also the money to have that business running so you need to take it step by step" Compromise between money and responsibility + not enough human resources yet

> "It depends on the industry, if there is companies in the future that make it possible" Waiting for others to become more sustainable

> think they do enough : “we show consumers that they can wear them in multiple ways”

Case F

Cues mentioned when talking about motivations

“I think it was mainly a coincidence. he [the designer] talked with some people from the furniture store and then he saw these materials and really liked them"
"Also the seal it was pretty much a coincidence. The main reason we use it is because it is a beautiful material”. “We take materials we like and if we can tell a story around sustainability then we brand it like that” Responsibility of the brand was a coincidence, use it tell a story around sustainability to better sell their clothes

“It’s good for us because we are a small company. Sometimes its difficult to get small amounts of fabric” that way we don’t have to buy more as what we need and create waste, so it’s almost sustainable” Choosing fabric from furniture store to reduce costs

Cues related to challenges today and which prevent them from doing more

“I really don’t believe in making a sustainable product – I don’t think it can sell” no willingness to be responsible only if they can tell a story “If we can tell a story around sustainability, its good, but our focus is really on the quality so that it is long lasting”
“We have to keep the prices very low and right now, because we don’t sell that much, we need to think this way, we want to sell” focus on profit

Future practices (not making things differently) “Grow bigger, making bigger collections. Maybe going into accessories...”

Case G

Cues mentioned when talking about motivations

“I started to play, try things out from what was left from my own production. I created unique pieces. Then I ended up doing more and more of that. People came from all over the place to take orders. But I didn’t make much money out of it because I had to pay the employees in France” “I could have done way more money if I would have gone to china but I didn’t want to go and disabuse my life, do something that is against my will just to make 50 DKK more... So I decided to stay in France and was ready to risk to increase prices. I kept the 10 best people and we produced less. Now it’s better, more fun... it’s not all about being big” Willingness to pay higher price (personal values) + personal experience + responsibility from the start people don’t care about sustainable clothes” No consumer demand
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cues related to challenges today and that prevent them from doing more</th>
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| “People should start buying less and use longer, buy because they really like it, not because it’s a trend” “What is really sustainable is a piece that is not fashion, you can wear it today you can wear it in 10 years.. you give it to your daughter. It doesn’t really matter what it is made off, but about how you use it” “consumers want fast fashion always more and cheap clothes, and because most designers are producing what the consumer wants they keep on doing fast fashion and all designer do the same ” **aware of broader issues and what needs to change in the behavior of designers** “away from producing many quantities of usual, common styles and copy each other, designer should try more uniqueness... They should create something new and unique, become more of a specialist, do what they are good at” “We need to collaborate and work more together among designers. For instance we could create a group to help each other out and explore possibilities, to become more sustainable.. and also include young designers who want to be different. But we need an organization to hold all that together to market us, to give us the knowledge and the rules of what sustainability is. There would be a budget for it, Danish fashion is the third biggest export in Denmark. But the problem is that the Danish fashion institute don’t do anything like that, nothing is happening to support designers to take the “right way” of sustainability. And, other fashion institutes such as the Danish textile union don’t want to work with Danish fashion institute, they don’t collaborate. it is done in a very old fashion, individualistic way” “Then a whole lot more designers would be sustainable if they would know the rules and receive some help” “For me it takes a lot of courage to continue that direction, not choosing the easy way of producing things that I know will sell well” **Had to produce less, and increase the prices** (Challenging for designers to dare making things differently, unique and increase prices) “at the same time this is my life, I need to make money somehow” **Compromise between profit and being responsible** “I have a friend she told me ‘I’m sustainable because I am cutting my patterns...’ so every designer is inventing their own rules or definitions of sustainability “ “But is it really sustainable? the rules need to be defined, so we know when can you call yourself sustainable” **misunderstanding of what sustainability means**

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<tr>
<th>Case H</th>
<th>Cues mentioned when talking about motivations</th>
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| “For us it was important that the products won’t do any harm to the children because of the chemicals” “we want to have a supply chain we are not ashamed of – where no one is threatened or abused” “And they knew that when they were going to open their own brand it should not only be nice to look at it should also give you a good conscious” **personal values, emotions + responsibility from the start** “we haven’t yet experienced the demand from the customer, so this was actually something we did because we wanted to, because we thought it was important, not because there was a lot of demand” this is not our intention when doing csr” **No consumer demand**

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<td>“we do everything possible to act in a responsible way. You can only do it step by step.. if you would try to do everything from day one you would kill yourself. You need to identify small goals and once you have achieved them you can move on” <strong>Compromise between profit and responsibility</strong> “we ll never be finished with improving in CSR” Difficulty to be a 100% good</td>
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<td>Case I</td>
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| Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices |
| “Clothes are produced in a way that doesn’t take into account the conditions under which employees are working and the consequences on the environment” “customers do not make enough use of the clothes but throw them away to quickly” “people don’t want to pay too much for the clothes and that’s the reason why the textile industry is so bad” aware of broader issues But not doing more because >think they cannot do more than what they are doing (bigger change) “we can only make a solution for our own company but we cannot change the industry- I think it is the biggest problem” “We always try to improve wherever we can if we can do something good for the employees in our fabric |

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| Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices |
| “producers want to make always more money.. If everyone would be willing to pay more, the industry wouldn’t be that unsustainable.” Focus on profit “we have more pieces than we need and we throw away things that are not worn out. That is how the industry is working, that is how we earn our money” ”I mean I don’t want to kill the industry but for instance if we would recycle more old garments, use them to make some changes that would be a start” aware of broader issues But not doing more because >“we don’t see a need to go into that business, because it is already happening. We see five years old clothes of our brand on second hand sites, so people recycle them. we are just not a part of it” no need to do things differently (take back old clothes) consumers already doing it >”I know more and more companies start doing it, but that’s not part of our strategy at the moment. We have discussed it but right now it is not something we seek to do” ”We don’t have the resources, the correct set up for doing it” lack of resources, not right business model >think they do enough (not making things differently) “think the biggest challenge is yourself because sometimes you always look for other ways to improve, you’re never satisfied because you look at what you can do more... Sometimes you also have to stop and look at what you have achieved, realize that we’re actually doing a lot more than many other companies.” + “We think that the quality of our products is very good.” |

| Cues about what prevents them from adopting sustainable practices |
| “we needed to hire professionals (lawyers) specialized in CSR to help us get the certificates, make chemical tests.. you cannot make it yourself” Requires time, money, human resources |

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<td>“It has always been very important for us from the beginning on that the employees have good conditions to work and that environment is respected” Personal values, emotions + responsibility from the start “I think people already pay more and more attention to how it is produced, what is inside the clothes, the chemicals that are used that could be bad for the child” Thinks there is a consumer demand, but not the main driver “For me I don’t think so much about it [what the consumer wants], I think its about being able to look at myself in the mirror” “That’s also the reason why we don’t talk so much about it or promote how sustainable we are in the newspaper or in advertisement.. we do it for us. “Not talking too much about what they do to be responsible. on their homepage, mention that the clothes are responsible, good quality... but not so much about what they do to be responsible...” Promote quality, design, comfort first (value of humility)</td>
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**Case J**

Cues mentioned when talking about motivations

- "one of the industry’s major problem is that clothes do not get enough use and are either put away in cupboards or thrown out"  
  "When you think of little baby pants, if it is only used seven times it almost doesn’t matter how sustainable it has been produced ... because it still has an impact”
- Producing in a high quality and organic materials in a socially responsible way is not enough “we need to get the customers on board so that they become “activists” aware of broader issues
- “With my previous brand I realized that even though our clothes were sustainable, the way consumers were using them wasn’t. For me it was clear that the only way to ensure that clothes get enough use is through sharing. I tried the concept in my previous brand but I noticed that the quality was still good enough to survive several usage phases as it is necessary in the concept of leasing,”’ personal experience, values + responsibility from the start (started of a new brand)
- "‘when I started my new brand I wanted to make sure that we make the most out of a piece – so that clothes are not just worn for one season’ ’and I wanted to get the customer on board, to change the way people consume clothes” also driven by desire to create a greater change in the behaviour of consumers
- “Parents would like to buy the highest quality for their kids, with no harmful chemicals. However, they often cannot afford it because organic baby clothes are too expensive” "This concept enables parents to have high quality for a low price" "We estimate that our revenues can be 50 percent higher than normal, if we would just sell the clothes" + “With the subscription model we have a more stable cash flow than within a normal fashion brand which is subject to the seasonal trends” Consumer demand (business context)
- “there is already a trend towards sharing and exchanging kids clothes and toys.. but there was no real system to support and promote this kind of sharing economy” Danish consumers already doing it (she sees a business opportunity)

Cues related to challenges today

- "People are not familiar with this concept... We need to make more people aware of the concept.. it only happens on a very small scale.." Not much awareness "It requires a very good logistic systems”
- “We cannot change customers behaviour, force them to not buy clothes in a shop.. we can just offer them our service and hope they continue renting our clothes... it would take more to change the industry and make it more sustainable... it would take action from politics and regulations” Change fast fashion depends on government
### Appendix H – Grouping codes into categories

Deriving categories from data by means of constant comparison involves comparing the codes for similarities and differences and grouping those codes which have a similar meaning under one category (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Glaser & Strauss, as cited in Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Main categories</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>In-vivo codes – sense making cues mentioned by designers when talking about</th>
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<tr>
<td>Because sense making influences action, (Pfeffer, 2005; Weick in Linnenluecke &amp; Griffiths, 2015) I have grouped the categories into three main categories, depending if they positively or negatively influence designer’s action towards responsibility</td>
<td>Through constant comparison of the codes, 9 sense making categories emerged which best describe - the motivations, - the challenges - the barriers for more advanced practices</td>
<td>their motivation to adopt responsible practices the challenges they are facing today when doing so the cues that prevent them from adopting more sustainable practices</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| “Driving categories” Consists of three sense making categories - which describe designers’ motivations - which positively influence designers’ commitment and choice of responsible practices. | **“Identity factors”** including personal values, beliefs and experiences | Personal beliefs (cases A, C)  
Case A: “it gives us peace of mind” “we want to be able to look at ourselves in the mirror”  
Case C: “it was just very natural for us” “It’s really with our heart we do it”  
**Personal experiences (cases B, C, D)**  
Case B: “It has been in me since I was a teenager, reading about Greenpeace campaigns, getting aware of the issues linked to global warming” “During the design school I would always work with this idea in my mind – ‘I want to do things better’”  
Case C: “We noticed that people were buying a lot of things not really considering natural materials and nobody cared anymore about the wool on the Faroe islands anymore… we saw a big bone fire of wool, people were just burning it because there was no use for it… and it really broke our heart to see that and we thought we have to do something about it and that’s actually how the company started”  
Case D “I have been interested in sustainability even before I started my brand. I have worked with environmental issues for 10-15 years” “when I pass by a fast fashion shop it breaks my heart when I think about how it has been produced. It is really a personal matter for me to try to change something about it”  
**Value responsibility over profit (cases A, B, E, G, H)**  
Case A, “we do it for our own feeling of doing something that is a good product” “If we would look at the profit
first we wouldn’t be producing in Peru and using organic pima cotton from Peru but import it from America because it’s cheaper. We could also just produce everything in China.”

Case B: “we are working with lower minimums and higher prices” “I don’t think there is a particular demand for organic clothes. People buy clothes first because of the look”

Case E: “it is more costly to produce this way but we still do it”

Case G: “I could have done way more money if I would have gone to china but I did not want to do something that is against my will just to make 50 DKK more” “people don’t care about sustainable clothes”

Case H: “we needed to hire professionals (lawyers) specialized in CSR to help us get the certificates, make chemical tests.” “we haven’t yet experienced the demand from the customer, so this was actually something we did because we wanted to, because we thought it was important, not because there was a lot of demand, this is not our intention when doing CSR”

Identity factors as important drivers for development of a responsible brand

- Opened responsible brand with the desire to produce in a responsible way (cases A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J)

Case H: “We wanted to have a supply chain we are not ashamed of – where no one is threatened or abused”

Case I: “It has always been very important for us from the beginning on that the employees have good conditions to work and that environment is respected”

Case E: “From the beginning we had in her mind that the clothes should be as clean as possible.”

Cases A, G, J previously had another brand, created a new, more responsible brand.

Case A: “We wanted to produce clothes that we feel good about. We decided to start with the new brand to make it simpler, because before we had another brand and it was difficult to keep all materials organic.”

Case J: “with my previous brand I realized that even though our clothes were sustainable, but the way consumers were using them wasn’t. I thought we were not solving the industry’s major factors of unsustainability “For me it was clear that the only way to ensure that clothes get enough use, is through sharing”

- Case D and J created a responsible brand with desire to create a greater change in the behaviour of consumers.

Case D: “I wanted to be able to make people change their mind about consuming with my brand” Case J: “
when I started my new brand I wanted to make sure that we make the most out of a piece – so that clothes are not just worn for one season and I wanted to get the customer on board, to change the way people consume clothes”

| “Cultural context” including the value of humility “talk less, do more” Cases A,B,C,I | Case A: "Actually we don’t think our products look organic” “The product has the look good, feel good (...)all these things come first, before the sustainable factor ” Case B: "You cannot tell from our clothes that they are organic ... it is just a bonus thing you only realize it after that it is actually organic” Case C “I think designers should talk less and do more. “look at H&M for example.. they do maybe 1% of their production in a responsible way and everyone talks about it... but what about the 99%?” “I want people to buy the product because they are beautiful.. and then when consumer sees what is inside, how it is produced.. they think it’s good” Case I: “‘we do it for us. That’s also the reason why we don’t talk so much about it or promote how sustainable we are in the newspaper or in advertisement “.

| “Business context” including consumer demand, added value, communication Cases A, C, E, F, H, I, J | Identity factors first before business context (cases A, C, E, H, I) Consumer demand not the main driver for responsibility Case C: “At the beginning there was no consumer demand for wool of Faroe islands” But “More and more consumers are interested in natural and environmental and socially friendly products” Case I: “I think people already pay more and more attention to how it is produced, what is inside the clothes, the chemicals that are used that could be bad for the child”. But " I don’t think so much about it [what the consumer wants], I think it’s about being able to look at myself in the mirror” Consumer demand not the main driver for responsibility, but communicate about their responsibility Case H: “this was actually something we did because we wanted to, because we thought it was important, not because there was a lot of demand” But, CSR report aimed at “spreading the word that the firm is a responsible brand of kid’s clothing” Consumer demand not the main driver for responsibility, but still perceive it as an added value for their clothes Case A: “We were not thinking about the consumer. More about our own feeling of doing something that is a good product” but ”It is also an added value to our product to use high quality materials” case E “From the beginning we had in mind that the clothes should be as clean as possible”, but on the other hand also mentioned cues related added value through quality products, and branding “we were looking for
Combination of identity factors and business factors
Case J: “Parents would like to buy the highest quality for their kids, with no harmful chemicals. However, they often cannot afford it because organic baby clothes are too expensive. This concept enables parents to have high quality for a low price” “We estimate that our revenues can be 50 percent higher than normal, if we would just sell the clothes” “With the subscription model we have a more stable cash flow than within a normal fashion brand which is subject to the seasonal trends”

Only business factors
Case F: “I really don’t believe in making a sustainable product, I don’t believe it can sell” “I think it was mainly a coincidence” “We take materials we like and if we can tell a story around sustainability then we brand it like that” “It is good for us because we are a small company sometimes it’s difficult to get small amounts of fabric. That way we don’t have to buy more than what we need”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restraining categories – present</th>
<th>Challenges linked to the responsible practices themselves</th>
<th>Compromise between responsible practices and less responsible practices (cases A, C, E, J)</th>
<th>Limited choice of organic and recycled materials (cases B, E, I)</th>
<th>Lack of power in the supply chain</th>
<th>Lack of awareness of subscription concept</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consists of two sense making categories - which describe the challenges faced by designers today and - which negatively influence their responsible practices.</td>
<td>“The transport is not particularly eco-friendly. It would be possible to get responsible materials from closer locations but then the quality is not as good”</td>
<td>Case A: “The transport is not particularly eco-friendly. It would be possible to get responsible materials from closer locations but then the quality is not as good”</td>
<td>Case B: &quot;availability of organic fabrics&quot;</td>
<td>Case E: “We don’t have power or the money to ask our producers to do things another way” We’re always put behind because are less important and bring less money”</td>
<td>Case F: “People are not familiar with this concept… We need to make more people aware of the concept…”</td>
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</table>
| **“Compromise between responsibility and profit”** | **Case A:** “There is always a compromise to make if you want to survive as a responsible designer” “We need to make profit because otherwise we die”  
**Case B:** “You have to pick your battles, cannot do everything”  
**Case C:** "we try to do as much as possible, but it is never going to be perfect” “we are a fashion company, we cannot only focus on environmental things”  
**Case D:** “it is very hard to generate enough money for a living from responsible products. In the end I have to pay my bills”  
**Case G:** "I kept the 10 best people and we produce less now. It’s better, more fun.. it’s not all about being big” “at the same time this is my life, I need to make money somehow” “For me it takes a lot of courage to continue that direction, not choosing the easy way of producing things that I know will sell well”  
**Case H:** “we do everything possible to act in a responsible way. You can only do it step by step. If you would try to do everything from day one you would kill yourself” |
| **“Awareness of sustainability issues of fast fashion”** | **Designers too focused on profit and consumers who do not want to pay higher price (Cases A, B, C, E, G, H, I)**.  
**Case A:** “The unsustainability of clothing comes from the consumer, they don’t think of the consequences behind cheap products. They buy so many clothes which they throw away after two times”  
**Case B:** „It’s the fast fashion, the low prices mean that you’ll just buy it and then use it for a very short time and then throw it away instead of investing in quality”  
**Case C:** “Designers are too focused on profit..”  
**Case E:** “The biggest challenge is to make the consumer buy it, because of course it is more expensive. And it hard to change their behaviour”.  
**Case G:** "consumers want fast fashion always more and cheap clothes, and because most designers are producing what the consumer wants they keep on doing fast fashion and all designer do the same"  
**Case H:** “Producers want to make always more money.. If everyone would be willing to pay more, the industry wouldn’t be that unsustainable.”  
**Case I:** "Clothes are produced in a way that doesn’t take into account the conditions under which employees are working and the consequences on the environment” “people don’t want to pay too much for the clothes and that’s the reason why the textile industry is so bad” **Responsible production is not enough, what matters is how many clothes people have and how long they wear them (cases G and J)** |

| **“Restraining categories – future”** Consists of four sense making categories which describe the barriers that prevent designers from adopting sustainable practices in the future. | **“Awareness of sustainability issues of fast fashion”** A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J | **Designers too focused on profit and consumers who do not want to pay higher price (Cases A, B, C, E, G, H, I)**.  
**Case A:** “The unsustainability of clothing comes from the consumer, they don’t think of the consequences behind cheap products. They buy so many clothes which they throw away after two times”  
**Case B:** „It’s the fast fashion, the low prices mean that you’ll just buy it and then use it for a very short time and then throw it away instead of investing in quality”  
**Case C:** “Designers are too focused on profit..”  
**Case E:** “The biggest challenge is to make the consumer buy it, because of course it is more expensive. And it hard to change their behaviour”.  
**Case G:** "consumers want fast fashion always more and cheap clothes, and because most designers are producing what the consumer wants they keep on doing fast fashion and all designer do the same"  
**Case H:** “Producers want to make always more money.. If everyone would be willing to pay more, the industry wouldn’t be that unsustainable.”  
**Case I:** "Clothes are produced in a way that doesn’t take into account the conditions under which employees are working and the consequences on the environment” “people don’t want to pay too much for the clothes and that’s the reason why the textile industry is so bad” **Responsible production is not enough, what matters is how many clothes people have and how long they wear them (cases G and J)** |
**Case G:** “What is really sustainable is a piece that is not fashion, you can wear it today you can wear it in 10 years. It doesn’t really matter what it is made off, but about how you use it. People should start buying less and use longer”.

**Case J** “Clothes do not get enough use and are either put away in cupboards or thrown out” “When you think of little baby pants, if it is only used seven times it almost doesn’t matter how sustainable it has been produced ... because it still has an impact”

| “Awareness of sustainable practices to address them” | Case A: "there are so many possibilities, taking clothes back and do something new with it.. rent out clothes”  
Case D: “I have thought about renting out my clothes”  
Case E: "we have thought of taking back old clothes, sell them second hand or redesign them”  
Case H: we would recycle more old garments, use them to make some changes.. I know more and more companies start doing it. We have discussed it” |
| --- | --- |
| “Barriers for sustainable practices” | Lack of resources (cases A, B, E, H)  
Case A “It’s only the two of us, then we would need a collaboration with other companies or so”.  
Case B “if we have to also take it back and use the time and administration on that it would kill us”  
Case E “we would need to employ more people that can do that and also the money to have that business running so you need to take it step by step”.  
Case H: “We don’t have the resources, the correct set up for doing it”  
The size of their company is too small (cases B, D I)  
Case B “if I take back the few clothes people do not want to wear anymore, it wouldn’t make that big of a difference. In order to make a difference you have to think big.”  
Case D “My company is too small, I don’t have enough quantities to rent out. I don’t think it would be the right business model for me.”  
Case I “We can only make a solution for our own company but we cannot change the industry”. As opposed to founder of the brand (before it got sold) used to teach sustainability to customers and organize “swap parties”, where parents could swap their children’s used clothes in order to ensure longer life. But “that was before.. we’re not doing it anymore…”  
Waiting for other actors to find innovative solutions (cases E, B)  
Case E "it depends on the industry, if there are companies in the future that make it possible”  
Case B “apparently, Danish fashion institute is investing in a factory that would take back textiles.” | Cases A,D,E,H | Cases A,B, D,E,H,I |
Consumers are already sharing and buying second hand clothes (cases H, I)
Case H: “we don’t see a need to go into that business, because it is already happening. We see five years old clothes of our brand on second hand sites, so people recycle them, we are just not a part of it”.
Case I: “I can see from our customers that they are sharing and giving their clothes to their neighbors…. I think they are already doing it.”

| “The role of other actors in improving sustainability in consumers’ behaviour and in the fashion industry ” (G,J) |
| Role of government to improve consumer behaviour (J) |
| Case J: “We cannot force them [consumers] to not buy clothes in a shop, we can just offer them our service and hope they continue renting our clothes. It would take more to change the industry and make it more sustainable.. it would take action from politics and regulations.” |

Actors within the fashion industry need to collaborate more and fashion institutions need to set the ‘rules of sustainability’ to designers (G)
Case G: actors within the fashion industry should collaborate more. Designers should create a group and “explore possibilities, to become more sustainable”. But she also mentioned that “we [designers] need an organization to hold all designers together, to give us the knowledge and the rules of what sustainability is.” Especially important because according to her, misunderstanding of what sustainability actually means: “I have a friend she told me ‘ I’m sustainable because I am cutting my patterns…’ so every designer is inventing their own rules or definitions of sustainability. But is it really sustainable? the rules need to be defined, so we know when can you call yourself sustainable” She further argues that even though there would be institutions such as the Danish Fashion Institute and the Danish textile union and “there would be a budget for it, as the Danish fashion is the third biggest export in Denmark”. But, “nothing is happening, to support designers to take the ‘right way’ of sustainability” and “everything is done in a very individualistic way” More designers would be sustainable if they would know the rules about how to be a sustainable brand / what sustainability means in the fashion industry.
## Appendix I - Model of categories

### Three main categories of responsible practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main categories</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Subcategories of codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-active practices&lt;br&gt;aimed at reducing social and environmental impacts of fashion&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>Practices to reduce negative social impacts (A,C,D)</td>
<td>Own production sites or collaboration with small private owned manufacturers (A,C,D). Life cycle analysis (D). Use of environmental safer materials (A,C,D) and innovative materials (D). Reducing the use of materials (A). Use of left-over fabrics from other designers (G). No use of harmful chemicals (A,C,D). Reduce consumption of electricity and water (B). Reduce production waste by re-using leftover fabrics from own production (E) and producing tailored, unique pieces, only once ordered (C,F,G). Avoid polluting transportation means (E,H). Improving product packaging (E). Promote environmentally friendly washing (C,E).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable practices&lt;br&gt;aimed at&lt;br&gt;- contributing to social and environmental sustainability&lt;br&gt;- addressing issues of fast fashion&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>Social sustainability (C)</td>
<td>Producing high quality clothes (all), timeless designs (A,F,E), multifunctional and unisex clothes (E), tailored pieces (C,F,G). Women empowerment project (C). Replacing linear production processes with circular processes, using recycled materials (E,I), giving production waste to recycling firms (B). Contributing to the dematerialization of fashion by offering services around remanufacturing, repurposing of clothes from other brands (C,G,I) and through circular business models – renting of luxe clothes (I). Awareness raising initiatives about &quot;buying less, but better clothes&quot; (D,G). Encourage longer usage through reparation and remanufacturing services (C,G,J). Changing consumer behavior towards renting out clothes (F). Increase awareness about importance of sustainability in the fashion industry (G). Sharing best practices (D,F).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social sustainability</strong>&lt;br&gt;(C)&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>Environmental sustainability (C, B, E, I, G, J)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental sustainability</strong>&lt;br&gt;(C, B, E, I, G, J)</td>
<td>Improving the sustainable behavior of consumers (C, D, G, J)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improving the sustainable behavior of consumers</strong>&lt;br&gt;(C, D, G, J)</td>
<td>Contributing to a more sustainable fashion industry (D, G, J)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Three main sense making categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main categories</th>
<th>Sense making categories</th>
<th>Subcategories of codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driving categories</strong>&lt;br&gt;Categories which describe the motivations and positively influence designers’ choice of responsible practices</td>
<td>Identity factors (A,B,C,D,E,G,H,I,J)</td>
<td><strong>Moral reasons</strong>&lt;br&gt;Personal beliefs (A,C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural context (A,B,C,I)</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Business reasons</strong>&lt;br&gt;Identity factors first before business context (A, C, E, H, I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business context (A, C, E, F, H, I, J)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Restraining categories—present</strong>&lt;br&gt;Categories which describe the challenges faced by designers today and negatively influence their responsible practices</td>
<td>Challenges linked to the responsible practices (A,B,C,E,I,J)</td>
<td>Compromise between responsible practices and less responsible practices (A, C, E, I)&lt;br&gt;Limited choice of organic and recycled materials (B, E, I)&lt;br&gt;Lack of power in the supply chain (I)&lt;br&gt;Lack of awareness of subscription concept (J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compromise between responsibility and profit (A, B, C, D, G, H)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Restraining categories—future</strong>&lt;br&gt;Categories which describe the barriers that prevent designers from adopting sustainable practices in the future</td>
<td>Awareness of sustainability issues of fast fashion (A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J)</td>
<td>Non-responsible designers and consumers who do not want to pay higher price (Cases A, B, C, E, G, H, I, J)&lt;br&gt;Responsible production is not enough, what matters is how many clothes people have and how long they wear it (G, J)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness of sustainable practices (A,D,E,H)</td>
<td>Lack of resources (A, B, E, H)&lt;br&gt;The size of their company is too small (B, D, I)&lt;br&gt;Waiting for other actors to find innovative solutions (E, I)&lt;br&gt;Consumer are already sharing and buying second hand clothes (H, I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barriers for sustainable practices (A,B, D,E,H,I)</td>
<td>The role of fashion institutions to make the fashion industry more sustainable (G)&lt;br&gt;The role of government to improve consumer behaviour (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The role of other actors in improving sustainability in consumers’ behaviour and in the fashion industry (G,J)</td>
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