



Bachelor Thesis

Is Green brand image the saviour of consumers' well-being?

An exploration on how consumers' subjective well-being can be influenced by green brand image.



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Abstract

Background: Subjective-well being is an increasingly important concept within consumer research. Previous studies have thus far shown the capability of brand image and other types of image to influence separate components of subjective well-being, mainly life satisfaction, positive and negative affect. This phenomenon is relevant not least in terms of green branding, as environmentally sustainable behaviour has been shown to also influence certain components of subjective well-being. The study focuses on resolving a theoretical gap in which subjective well-being as a phenomenon with all three of its components has not yet been studied, while recognising the importance of subjective well-being for consumers.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to explore how consumers' subjective well-being can be influenced by a green brand image

Method: In order to explore the field properly a qualitative nature was adopted. The qualitative material was thereafter gained through 16 semi structured interviews. To capture the essence of the empirical material the paper implemented a coding method inspired by grounded theory. The resulting categories and concepts were used in the analysis of the empirical material.

Findings: The main findings brought forth by this study showcase that green brand image is able to positively influence subjective well-being, through its positive impact on life satisfaction and its components, as well as through eliciting positive affect while minimising negative affect within the context of engaging with brands that present a green image. These findings have both theoretical and practical implications further discussed.

Conclusion: In concluding remarks this paper discovered that a green brand image could influence consumer Subjective well-being due to altruism and self-image.

Key words

Green brand image, Subjective well-being, Altruism, Self-image.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

During the present day, subjective well-being within consumers has increasingly become a relevant issue not least within the context of sustainable consumption (Minton et al., 2018). One form of such well-being is the subjective one (Diener, 1984). The “subjectivity” in question is reflected through the way it may heavily depend on how the consumer sees happiness, thus being subjective to them as opposed to objective in nature (Armbrrecht and Andersson, 2019). Indeed, Diener, Oishi and Tay (2018) break down the concept of subjective well-being into three main components. Such components are concerned with the way in which the individual may or may not feel content with their life state, which is popularly known as “Life Satisfaction”, several aspects compose life satisfaction, relating to the past, present, future, and urge for change (Diener, 1984). The second is concerned with whether or not the individual goes through feelings such as joy or happiness, otherwise known as positive affect (Diener, 1984). Furthermore, Diener, Oishi and Tay (2018) also mention that the absence of discomfort or otherwise “negative affect” in individuals is another facet of subjective well-being.

Though not the same as subjective well-being, rather highly related; Sirgy (2021) has emphasised through marketing, a need for the attainment of well-being for consumers. Further, the literature has also highlighted the role of branding in the attainment of different types of consumer well-being, (Mansoor and Paul, 2022; Minton et al., 2018) which is not the same as subjective well-being, rather it is closely related to it (Zhou, Wang and Zhan, 2022) not least in relation to environmental sustainability and environmentally sustainable brands. Much the same way brand image is primarily based upon concepts that consumers mentally connect to brands, environmentally-sustainable brands may possess a green brand image (Keller, 1993 and Cretu and Brodie, 1993 cited in Chen, 2010), which is defined by Chen (2010) as the consumer viewpoint associating with sustainable concepts, not least the environmental ones towards a brand in question. In short, brands who are seen to minimise their influence on the environment, due to their care towards it, or benefit it in some way (Chen, 2010). As previously mentioned, the closely related concept of well-being has been shown to be influenced by environmental sustainability within branding which may be through how trustworthy it is, or simply how aware

the consumers are (Mansoor and Paul, 2022). In fact, brand image has been shown to have an influence on certain components of subjective well-being within consumers such as joy (Cuesta-Valiño, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, Núñez-Barriopedro, 2022). It has also shown its influence on other components such as affective pleasure through satisfaction (Chen 2010; Martenson, 2007). Lastly, Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi (2017) demonstrated that mall-image, which overlaps with the concept of brand image, in the sense of an image-concept mentally existing within consumers' minds, has a positive influence on subjective well-being as a whole. It has therefore been suggested throughout marketing literature that brand image has a connection to the individual facets that create subjective well-being within consumers.

1.2 Problem Discussion

The literature has presented an evolution in terms of the connection between the facets of subjective well-being and marketing activities (Chen, 2010; Cockrill, 2012; Thürridl et al. 2020; Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi, 2017). Moreover, it has been prompted that marketers should focus more on this aspect not only due to the fact that it can enhance various activities such as brand loyalty (Attiq et al., 2022), word of mouth, inclination to pay more, maintaining a relationship with the brand, and competitive advantage (Asatryan and Oh, 2008); But it deserves focus since brands and marketers should aim to do more good for society (Sirgy, 2021), due to the consequences of over-consumption and environmentally harmful activities (Lee and Ahn, 2016; Lee, Motion and Conroy, 2009; Pereira Heath and Chatzidakis, 2012), as well as the onset of climate anxiety. They should also aim to do more good for society (Sirgy, 2021) because upcoming generations are increasingly more caring about environmental issues (Lisková et al., 2016). More good for society can be achieved by improving consumers' well-being (Sirgy, 2021). The importance of this is further demonstrated through the fact that an improvement in subjective well-being may create a slight enhancement in physical health (Cohen et al., 2003), life expectancy, and future earnings (Diener and Chan, 2011; Diener et al., 2017; De Neve et al., 2013).

In an attempt to reach the aforementioned benefits, consumers have resorted to anti-consumption as a coping mechanism in face of the reduced well-being from overconsumption and unsustainable practices (Lee and Ahn, 2016) as well as green-washing, ending with brand avoidance of the non-ethical brand in question (Lee, Motion and Conroy, 2009); Marketing has been shown to be a culprit in decreasing consumer well being through the persuasion to over-indulge, inevitably creating an unsustainable situation (Pereira Heath and Chatzidakis, 2012). Such overindulgence is problematic in light of the fact that the largest companies actively partake in practices that are highly damaging to the environment (Mansouri, 2016; Mukherjee, 2015). This makes it important to change this negative connotation and to explore how branding could improve the overall subjective well-being. Indeed, there are valid findings that certain brand consumptions can bring forth positive effects among consumers, implying that it is not necessarily harmful behaviour under the right circumstances, not least with regard to environmentally-friendly behaviour, which would ultimately stem from an

environmentally-friendly brand (Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, 2016; Ramos-Hidalgo, Diaz-Carrion, Rodriguez-Rad, 2021; Kaida and Kaida, 2016;), as well as instances within luxury brands (Nobre et al., 2022) .

Indeed, the literature has shown that brands can play crucial roles in enhancing each individual facet of subjective well-being (Chen, 2010; Cockrill, 2012; Thüridl et al. 2020). The connection may be seen through the way in which positive affect such as feelings of pleasure (Cuesta-Valino, Gutierrez-Rodriguez and Nunez-Barriopedro, 2022) and satisfaction (Chen 2010; Martenson, 2007) can be elicited through consuming brands with a specific image. Likewise, negative affect such as guilt (Haynes and Podobsky, 2016; Sharma and Paco, 2021) can be prevented through using environmental products. Moreover, scholars have also shown the influence of having certain brands on life satisfaction, another component of subjective well-being (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022; Cockrill, 2012; Xiao and Li, 2011), in which environmental consumption and brand image, though, not green brand image, enhances life satisfaction. However, the literature does not yet demonstrate a holistic picture of the way in which green brand image, let alone brand image influences all three components of subjective well-being simultaneously and is thus scattered about different contexts and different components. This means that green brand image is not understood from the standpoint of subjective well-being as a holistic phenomenon, rather, only its separate components. This separation of components implies that it is not subjective well-being that is researched within these studies. Evaluating and understanding subjective well-being through all three of its components will enable one to understand whether or not, as well as how subjective well-being is affected by green brand image (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999).

Part of the solution could lie within brand image as evidence suggests mall-image which contains similar characteristics as brand image influences shoppers' well-being (Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi, 2017). Paired with findings that showcase the ability of brand consumption to elicit individual facets of subjective well being, such as life satisfaction (Cockrill, 2012; Xiao and Li, 2011; Chen, 2010), the concept is therefore a relevant foundation to increase it. Furthermore the modern consumer, especially those belonging to the millennial and younger generations are increasingly aware and concerned over sustainability related issues (Lísková et al., 2016). In fact, all future upcoming generations are expected to be ever-more concerned over such issues

(Lísková et al., 2016). Environmentally and sustainability-wary consumers pave the way for the importance of the implementation of 'green marketing' (Lísková et al., 2016). In addition various studies highlight how environmentally sustainable behaviour has been seen to positively affect consumers' subjective well-being (Binder and Blankenberg, 2017; Kaida and Kaida, 2016), as well as how other studies have shown the relationship between brand image and components of subjective well-being such as life satisfaction (Cockrill, 2012); thus implementing the variable of sustainability could be an important component that could further close the gap between green brand image and subjective well-being.

Therefore, this provides direction that there is a need to better-understand the way in which in the creation of a green brand image influences subjective well-being among consumers, thus the paper will explore how green brand image affects consumer subjective well-being, not only resolving part of a theoretical gap, but also creating societal and managerial repercussions through it. Societal repercussions would occur as a result of increased subjective well-being. From a societal aspect, repercussions could mean a more widespread usage of brands that are green, and therefore have a green image, thus improving consumer subjective wellbeing while also minimising environmental damage. From a managerial standpoint, brand managers and marketers within green or environmentally sustainable companies would have a better understanding of how to tackle their brand image and communication, as they would have a better understanding of how it influences their consumers, and therefore gain the ability to enhance their subjective well-being.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this research is to explore how consumers' subjective well-being can be influenced by a green brand image.

1.4 Research Questions

How does a green brand image generate life satisfaction within consumers?

How does a green brand image generate positive affect within consumers?

How does a green brand image generate negative affect within consumers?

2. Theoretical framework

The following chapters provide an overview and explanation of literature within brand image, green brand image, subjective well-being and its components, as well as how the two main phenomena have been studied in relation to each other.

2.1 Brand Image

Brand image largely exists mentally within consumers (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Padgett and Allan, 1997 cited in Chen, 2010). Indeed, brand image as defined by Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) as the notion of the brand in question seen and understood through the mind of the consumer, thus the way in which such consumer perceives the brand plays a pivotal role in what brand image is. Chen (2010) conceptualised the green brand image, and much like Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), he defines it as the way in which consumers perceive and interpret a brand, in relation to environmental phenomena, “environmental commitments and environmental concerns” (Chen, 2010, p. 309). Therefore, green brand image concerns the mental perception, which would be related to the environment in a positive manner, for a brand (Chen, 2010; Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990).

Throughout the literature, brand image is seen to influence various phenomena. Instances that demonstrate this can firstly be shown by Martenson (2007), who discovered that corporate image, a concept closely related to brand image, in the sense that its existence is inside the mental space of individuals due to their interpretations (Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990), has a positive effect on the satisfaction experienced by consumers.

Indeed, another concept related to brand image, what Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi (2017) term mall image, also existing mentally within consumers as per their perceptions and interpretations, has been shown to influence the well-being of consumers, only when it comes to shopping. Indeed, Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi (2017) findings show an important link

between the concept of an image mentally existing within consumers, and shopping well-being. Though shopping and subjective well-being are not the same concept, they remain to be closely related in the way in which they showcase influences on the lives of individuals, as well as an overlap between the two concepts when it comes to “quality of life” (Diener, 1984; Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi, 2017).

2.1.2 Green brand image

Moreover, Salehzadeh et al. (2023) demonstrated that proper brand image for green brands directly effects attitude, love, and trust among consumers. The ability of green brand image to elicit emotion, love in this case (Salehzadeh et al., 2023), is on par with findings such as Martenson (2007), who demonstrated the influence of corporate image on satisfaction, which she defines as an enjoyable feeling albeit a consequence of usage, suggesting that brand image has the potential to create or influence affective response in individuals (Salehzadeh et al., 2023; Martenson, 2007). Interestingly, Chen (2010) showed the influence of such image on green satisfaction within consumers, whose definition is much like Martenson (2007), linked to the positive, enjoyable feeling from usage, however, in relation to environmental concern. This suggests that green brand image, like brand image, can elicit a positive emotion, insofar as satisfaction, and perhaps love (Salehzadeh et al., 2023; Martenson, 2007; Chen, 2010).

In addition to that, the literature shows how a green brand image has certain consequences for consumers. For instance, Fatmawati and Alikhwan (2021) showcases findings in which consumers are likely to decide to purchase a product when it has a favourable brand image, not least when it comes to environmental concern. Furthermore, Fatmawati and Alikhwan (2021) also shows that when a product is marketed to be green, or environmentally beneficial, albeit truthfully, consumers may see more value than usual in such a product. It is suggested this is the case due to consumers’ own green identities (Confete, Scarpi and Russo, 2019 cited in Fatmawati and Alikhwan, 2021). Interestingly, Lin, Lobo and Leckie (2017) suggest that the creation of a green brand image may lie in the self-expressiveness of the green product or brand. Indeed, Lin, Lobo and Leckie (2017) mention that such self-expressiveness serves the purpose of appearing a certain way to other members of society. Moreover, Lin, Lobo and Leckie (2017)

also mention that a green brand image may be built through functional appeals such as utilitarian ones, which they refer to as the functional attributes related to the environment that a brand brings forth to consumers.

Connecting Fatmawati and Alikhwan's (2021) finding regarding the increase in the perception of value, customer value was seen to be a building block of consumer happiness in a study done by Khan and Hussain (2013), suggesting a deeper connection between brand image, value, and feeling emotions such as happiness.

It was mentioned that certain consumers would avoid brands that did not fit with their moral therefore implying that consumers avoid brands who cause any form of unethical behaviour in regards to society (Lee, Motion and Conroy, 2009) Furthermore brands perceived as unethical are prone to be highly avoided by consumers who present to have positive subjective well-being (Kuanr et al., 2022). In addition it was discovered that having a positive subjective well-being is related to self control which was a significant moderator in regards to avoiding brands (Kuanr et al., 2022). This further stresses the potential relation between the way in which a brand presents itself, and is thus perceived by consumers within a certain brand image and subjective well-being among consumers. More specifically, these findings combined with Chen (2010), Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) suggest that a green brand image, being perceived as more ethical due to its environmental commitment, not only improves subjective well-being (Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi, 2017), but may also be less avoided by those who already experience positive subjective well-being.

Moreover, findings from Kaida and Kaida (2016) revealed that environmentally-sound behaviour not only leads to subjective well-being presently for consumers, but that such behaviour may be brought about from several types of motivations. Namely, altruistic and self-oriented motives were seen to cause this behaviour, though altruistic mindsets are oriented more towards caring about external phenomena, such as wanting to improve the environmental state, self-oriented motives are also aimed at the improvement of the environment, insofar as it benefits the consumer in some way (Kaida and Kaida, 2016). This finding may be connected with Kaunr et al. (2022) who showed that those with an altruistic mindset, otherwise those who believe consumption is detrimental for the environment, consumed as little as possible. This suggests a link between altruism, self-oriented motives and mindsets, with subjective well-being and

purchasing behaviour. More specifically, the engagement of individuals in environmentally-friendly behaviour through consuming due to either caring about themselves first, or the environment first, suggests that such consumption is a crucial step for subjective well-being (Kaida and Kaida, 2016; Kuanr et al., 2022). Combined with findings regarding mall image and well being (Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi, 2017) and green brand image (Chen, 2010), consumers may be prone to deciding to consume from a brand they perceive to be on par with their altruistic or self-oriented motives, in order to enhance their subjective well-being (Kaida and Kaida, 2016; Kuanr et al., 2022).

2.2 Subjective well-being

Though it may generally be referred to as happiness, subjective well-being is described by Diener (1984) as having three core components, which are positive affect, negative affect and how satisfied one is generally with their life, otherwise termed as life satisfaction in the literature (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022; Cockrill, 2012; Dhandra, 2019). Indeed, scholars have shown the interrelationship between positive and negative affect and the way in which they may influence overall subjective well being (Diener and Emmons, 1984). However, Diener (1984) stipulates that subjective well being is enhanced through a lack of negative affect.

Diener and Emmons (1984) discovered that the existence of negative affect has no influence on that of positive affect and vice versa, however, they stipulated that the non-existence of influence only occurs long-term, time-wise. Further findings from their study showed that during a short duration, more influence exists between the two, implying it is less likely that individuals can experience both simultaneously (Diener and Emmons, 1984). In addition to that, Diener and Emmons (1984) also demonstrated that both types of affect may lead to one another, albeit within the same sort of affect. More specifically, certain negative affects may create or occur at the same instances as other negative affects, much the same way certain positive affects may occur at the same instances as other positive affects (Diener and Emmons, 1984).

2.2.1 Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction can be defined as the evaluation people make in regards to how great their life may be (Diener, 1984). The greatness of life can be determined based on satisfaction in relation

to current, past and future life while also the urge for changing it. In addition the last determination is the perspective important others may hold towards one's life (Diener et al., 1999).

Diener et al. (1999) discuss the urge for change through how people may contrast how their lives or circumstances in their lives currently are, and how they would like them to be. Such contrast creates a lower level of life satisfaction when their desires surpass the greatness of their lives (Diener et al., 1999). It has also been shown that it indicates the level of life satisfaction (Luhmann and Henneck, 2017). More specifically, when an individual is greatly satisfied with their life circumstances, there is a much lower tendency to have an urge to change things as compared to when one is unsatisfied with said circumstances (Luhmann and Henneck, 2017).

To build onto this, Sirgy et al. (2006) explain that, though life satisfaction is inherently 'greatness of life' (Diener, 1984), factors such as the past can influence such greatness. They explain that this is due to the difference that exists between one's past and one's present life, in which the greatness of the past may either exceed or be inferior to the present greatness (Sirgy et al. 2006). Subsequently, the former creates inferior life satisfaction while the latter creates more life satisfaction (Sirgy et al., 2006). Building onto that, the past can also interact with current subjective well-being if one consistently reminisces on bad things that have happened in their lives (Diener et al., 1999). This demonstrates the importance of taking into account the past one has experienced when understanding life satisfaction. Furthermore, feeling content with the prospective future life allows one to enjoy more current subjective well-being, which is otherwise termed as "dispositional optimism" (Scheier and Carver, 1985 cited in Diener et al., 1999). Therefore, life satisfaction extends into being satisfied with more than just the current state of affairs that are occurring to an individual at any given moment, and rather include how satisfied they feel with how their lives used to be in the past, as well as how satisfying their lives will be in the future, all of which have an influence on subjective well being (Diener et al., 1999).

It is clear that life satisfaction has a relationship with suitable consumption since it was showcased that by consuming sustainable products would positively influence life satisfaction (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022). In accordance it was discovered that this

connection could be due to social desirability which entails that some consumers consume sustainably due to approval from others (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022). This finding is on par with Cockrill (2012), as she showcases that possessing an item of a certain brand perception may create a greater sense of life satisfaction due to being seen in a better light by others. These findings combined together imply that the way in which consumers are perceived by others, not least in relation to sustainable behaviour, may play a role in how satisfied they are with their lives (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022; Cockrill, 2012).

Authors such as Xiao and Li (2011) demonstrated that individuals feel more satisfied with their lives when wanting to, or simply engaging in environmentally-sound shopping. In addition to that, Dhandra (2019) showed that it is because consumers hold themselves in higher esteem due to the environmentally friendly shopping that life satisfaction is enhanced, allowing them to feel more capable. Combined with these findings, life satisfaction has seen to have some ties with branding since it is visible that by owning an ipod instead of a regular mp3 product it could enhance consumers life satisfaction (Cockrill, 2012). Indeed, Cockrill (2012) insinuates that such a product would not bring forth the same level of satisfaction with life had it been a brand with a weaker sense of what they term as ‘coolness’ (p. 413). This creates an opening that brands could have an impact on life satisfaction due to the image they display as a brand and on their products. Furthermore, Cuesta-Valino, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, Núñez-Barriopedro (2022) demonstrated that brand image has a positive influence on a concept closely resembling life satisfaction, which is termed as ‘pleasant life’ in their research. The overlap between the two concepts relates to the time-frame which is linked to current, past and the future (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999; Cuesta-Valino, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, Núñez-Barriopedro, 2022). Specifically, it is the way in which individuals may feel good about experiences in their lives (Cuesta-Valino, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, Núñez-Barriopedro, 2022).

2.2.2 Positive affect

Positive affect is experienced when a person gets a sense of positive emotion, this emotion is linked to pleasant feelings such as “Joy, Elation, Contentment, Pride, Affection, Happiness, Ecstasy” (Diener et al., 1999, p.277). It is visible that positive affect has both short term and long term effects, where enjoyment is an emotion who is more concerned with the short term while contentment is a mood that is more long term (Diener et al, 2017). Furthermore, Diener, Sandvik and Pavot (2009) highlight that when an individual has repeated positive affect experiences, their subjective well-being is positively impacted by such.

Positive affect has to be seen as a valuable component in regards to certain contexts within branding, for starters if a consumer get a sense of positive emotion in relation to consumption it can increase the psychological ownership of the brand which is a feeling of “owning” the brand (Thürridl et al., 2020). This emotion of ownership creates a greater bond between the consumer and is seen to significantly increase loyalty in the forms of word of mouth, willingness to pay more, relationship intention and competitive resistance (Asatryan and Oh, 2008). The connection between positive affect and loyalty was also discovered by Cuesta-Valiño, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, Núñez-Barriopedro (2022) which uncovered that consumers happiness has a direct effect on loyalty. Furthermore it was found that happiness additionally acted as a mediator for brand image in creating loyalty, this connection is achieved if a brand image provides the consumer with a more “pleasant life”(Cuesta-Valiño, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, Núñez-Barriopedro, 2022), which is both short and long term positive emotions (Filep and Deery, 2010). This showcases that there is an existing relationship between positive emotions and brand image. In addition, a positive affect was discovered to be present in relation to environmental friendly behaviour, the relation highlighted that consumers feel good about environmental friendly behaviour due to self-image (Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, 2016). This is due to the fact that when people view themselves in a positive light it contributes to positive emotions (Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, 2016).

2.2.3 Negative affect

An important facet of subjective well-being as described by Diener (1984) is negative affect. As the name suggests, negative affect is linked to undesirable or unpleasant sentiment felt by individuals (Diener et al., 1999; Diener, Oishi and Tay, 2018; Diener, Lucas and Biswas-Diener, 2008). Various moods and emotions that are labelled as negative affect, such as “guilt, shame, sadness, anger, anxiety, worry, stress, depression and envy” (Diener et al., 1999, p.277). Within negative affect there are both short and long term influence, emotions that are more short term are “anger, sadness, stress and worry” while depression is more of a long term mood (Diener et al, 2017, p.134).

Negative affect, not least feelings of guilt, have been studied in relation to consumption (Haynes and Podobsky, 2016; Sharma and Paço, 2021). Guilt was discovered in relation to green buying behaviour as well, since consumers who did not participate in green consumption had an increased chance in feeling guilty (Sharma and Paço, 2021). Haynes and Podobsky (2016) present further findings related to guilt, showcasing the consumer tendency to spend a higher amount of money for such a product, indicating that individuals prefer to pay for the ‘removal’ of guilt-related feelings. In addition to wanting to pay away the negative affect, guilt, Haynes and Podobsky (2016) also demonstrate that consumers place a higher value or worth onto the brand able to do so. Combining Sharma and Paço (2021) with the findings of Haynes and Podobsky (2015) indicates that consumers not only can feel negative affect from non-environmentally sustainable products, but also put a conscious effort into avoiding this negative affect through steering towards brands that they may see as green, otherwise being able to offset the negative affect. Furthermore, Barbarossa and De Pelsmacker (2016) presented findings that consumers may engage in environmentally sustainable consumption due to avoiding feelings of guilt, otherwise known as negative affect (Diener et al., 1999) due to what they term as ethical obligations.

Moreover, Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl (2012) demonstrated that consumer perception of a company has important repercussions on negative affect. When consumers perceive a company in a negative light due to unethical practices, negative affect (Diener, 1984; Diener et al. 1999), most prominently anger, may erupt as a result of a moral-disconnect (Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl, 2012). The moral-disconnect is due to the large differences in the way an organisation is behaving and the way in which the consumer believes is the moral way to behave (Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl, 2012). Important to note is that the authors distinguish between consumer anger towards such behaviour and normal affect. Specifically, the type of anger experienced is more tied to moral-contextuality, tying the feeling of rage closely to a specific context (Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl, 2012). Nevertheless, the emphasis of perception on the behalf of consumers of such organisations implies the existence of an image for said company as per the definition of brand image (Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990; Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl, 2012). This finding shows the fact that a company's image can evoke negative affect, in this case rage (Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl, 2012; Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999). Combined with other findings about green consumption (Haynes and Podobsky, 2016; Sharma and Paço, 2021; Lindmeier et al., 2012), it appears that consumer perception of the company or brand not only evokes negative affect, but consumption of green products prevents the onset of such affect. This indicates that green brand image (Lindmeier et al., 2012; Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990; Chen, 2010) can play a role in the prevention of the onset of negative affect (Haynes and Podobsky, 2016; Sharma and Paço, 2021) through consumption.

2.3 Conceptual model

The model below represents the main concepts emerging from the literature review regarding green brand image and subjective well-being. Originating from study findings, it is so far inferred that green brand image has an influence on subjective well-being, which is due to the fact that several studies have demonstrated the influence of green behaviour, or brand image on the three components of subjective well being. Thus, due to the findings linking these phenomena to that of subjective well being's components, this model aims to represent the link between green brand image and subjective well being as a whole, as a sum of its demonstrated

parts. The green brand image component is based on several literature sources, namely Chen (2010) who demonstrated the way in which it not only exists, but also can create the feeling of satisfaction, which is an affective response. The arrow connecting green brand image (Chen, 2010) to positive affect is heavily based on Salehzadeh et al. (2023)'s findings which insinuate the ability of green brands to elicit love, trust and influences on attitude. Moreover, this arrow is also supported by findings from Martenson (2007) who show the ability of corporate image to trigger a positive affective response, satisfaction. Though Martenson (2007) is not explicitly about green brand image, it is the compilation of all authors that suggests this link between green brand image and positive affect. Because positive affect is composed of more than affective satisfaction according to Diener et al. (1999), the link is markedly important to explore, as there may be more positive emotions involved, such as that demonstrated by Khan and Hussain (2013) with respect to the triggering of consumer happiness and green brands. This arrow erupting from green brand image to positive affect has been shown to have various repercussions within consumers, such as loyalty, competitive advantage, and self-image (Asatryan and Oh, 2008; Cuesta-Valiño, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, Núñez-Barriopedro 2022, Filep and Deery, 2010, Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, 2016). The arrow connecting green brand image to negative affect is majorly based on how guilt and guilt avoidance relating to purchasing green products instead of non-green products (Haynes and Podobsky, 2016; Sharma and Paco, 2021; Barbarossa and De Pelsmacker, 2016). As well as anger or rage which can erupt within consumers from a negative company image (Lindenmeier, Schleier and Pricl, 2012). The arrow connecting green brand image to life satisfaction is based on literature that exemplifies the ability of green behaviour to enhances life satisfaction (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022; Dhandra, 2019), as well as owning a brand with a certain brand image and its positive influence on consumer life satisfaction (Cockrill, 2012) due to a variety of factors such as self-esteem and perception by others (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022; Dhandra, 2019; Cockrill, 2012; Diener et al., 1999). Combining all three components, negative and positive affect with life satisfaction thus creates subjective well-being Diener (1984), and therefore green brand image would thus be influencing just that, according to this model.

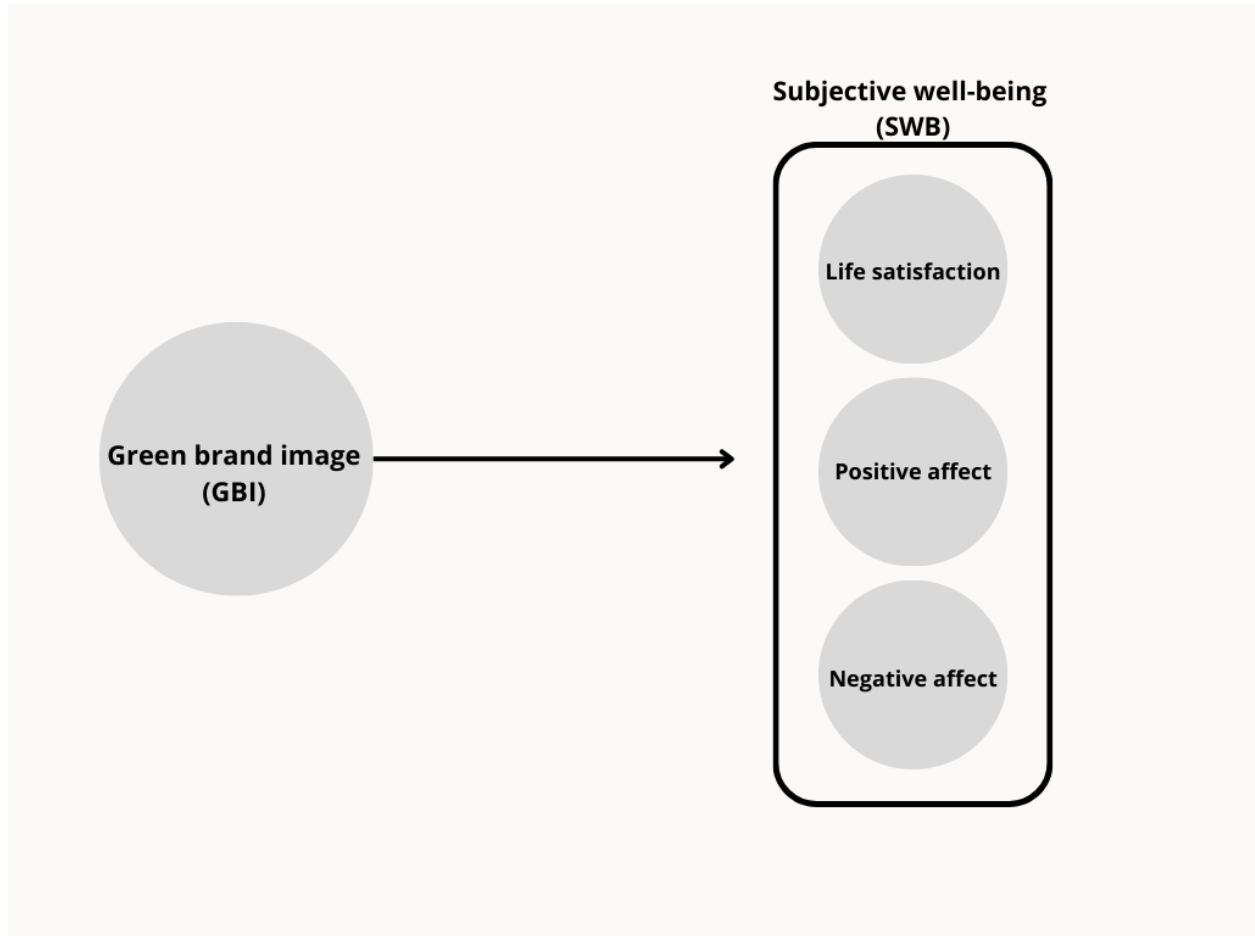


Figure 1: Conceptual framework model inspired by Diener's subjective well-being concepts (Anderzén and Ramadan, 2023).

3. Method

The following sub-chapters demonstrate the research methods and strategies undertaken in this study. In addition to that, the operationalization table, sampling techniques, analysis approach, and a summary of the interview guide are shown. Ethical and societal considerations relating to this study are also discussed.

3.1 Research strategy

The overarching research strategy utilised in this study is qualitative research (Bell, Bryman and Harley 2019; Draper, 2004). The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between two phenomena that has not yet been thoroughly studied as per the existing literature, thus the authors resorted to an inductive strategy in which the generation of new knowledge is the main goal (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Draper, 2004). The inductive approach is characterised by an ontological position stating that reality exists as a result of interactions and behaviour between people, otherwise known as constructionism (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019).

Due to the authors' constructionist ontological stance, the epistemological repercussions imply that interpretivism may be best suited for this research, as it helps the researchers fulfil their purpose of wanting to provide depth about why green brand image may affect subjective well being (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Interpretivism is described as being heavily fixated on rich, contextual information, (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020) which is suitable as the aim of the study is to understand how green brand image can influence subjective well-being, which is not well-researched, thus contextual and rich information is necessary from interviews. Moreover, interpretivism emphasises the importance of understanding the phenomena at hand through said interviewees (Ryan, 2018). It also emphasises a subjective epistemological stance in which reality experienced by people is not composed of a rigid, unchanging state (Ryan, 2018; Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019).

Further, the chosen qualitative method is semi-structured interviews, a type of qualitative interviewing (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Draper, 2004). This was chosen in order to provide deep information, it was deemed fitting with regard to interpretivism, as it generates

information detailed enough to be able to understand the phenomena from the interviewees' standpoint (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020).

Therefore, due to the inductive nature of the aim, a qualitative approach, semi structured interviews were utilised. Furthermore, the focus on wording rather than numerical data in the qualitative approach further makes interviewing more suitable for the aim of this study, as the transcription of semi-structured interviews is predominantly open-ended, concerned with language, rather than statistical data (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019).

3.2 Research design

Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) have stipulated it is possible to use semi-structured interviews in a cross sectional research. Indeed, the aim of this research, along with the inductive and ontological considerations, have led the authors of this paper to resort to a cross-sectional qualitative design. This is not least due to the fact that cross-sectional designs allow researchers to understand a specific set of individuals simultaneously (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). The aim of this study is to thoroughly understand the link between green brand image and subjective well-being thus inferring the cross-sectional design, as the authors aim to develop this relationship through interviewing a sample of individuals once, during one time-frame period (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Ekanayake, Ahmad and McKenzie (2012) demonstrate the use of cross-sectional design within qualitative research, which is characterised by the fact that interviewing took place within one time frame, rather across several long-lasting periods. On par with these researchers, the authors of this paper also resorted to a cross-sectional time period (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Ekanayake, Ahmad and McKenzie, 2012) style. In addition to that, the research design of this study is also characterised by the usage of semi-structured interviews, sampling individuals as per guidelines related to that type of interviewing, and following an approach inspired by the grounded theory in the handling of and analysing data through coding (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019).

3.3 Semi-structured Interviews

As mentioned earlier, the authors of this paper chose to conduct semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection, which is one form of qualitative interviews (DiCicco Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). The interviews were carried out online out of convenience for both the authors of this paper and participants who did not live in Växjö, making it possible for them to partake (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). The semi-structured interviews according to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) may include one interviewee at a time, which is better for handling sensitive topics which may not be comfortable to delve into when other participants are present (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Due to potentially sensitive questions, such as those relating to how satisfied one is with their life from the subjective well-being framework, the authors resorted to individual semi-structured interviews, so that the interviewees will feel comfortable to more openly express their opinions and feelings, for this same reason, the authors separately conducted interviews, so that it was a one-on-one process, meaning only one interviewer was present during each interview (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Furthermore, due to the cross-sectional design of this research, the authors interviewed each participant one time within the month of May in order to gather relevant data (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). In addition to that, the authors allocated half an hour up to two hours for each interview to that amount DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006), however, most interviews actually took less than half an hour to complete, ranging mostly between 10-29 minutes.

In order to ensure transparency and consent, the authors also informed the participants of the potential length of time the interviews were going to take (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Moreover, the interviews were conducted online. Adopting online interviews was due to the fact that it has been visible that it enables the respondents to be more open to state what they actually want to express, in a comfortable manner (Hanna et al., 2005). In addition to that, since the authors used Zoom, an online platform used for communicating online with one person, or a group of people with the option of using a webcam and a microphone, this was also advantageous (Zoom Support, 2022). Grey et al. (2020) mention that Zoom interviewing creates a pleasant experience for the participant, due to its features. Also, Zoom was seen to be suitable for interviewing people within delicate subjects, such as subjective well-being in the case of this research (Grey et al., 2020).

This is not without its limitations, as Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) discuss obstacles may arise in the way of interviewing due to problems with the internet connection, however, to counter this, the authors of this paper ensured having stable connection all throughout the planned interview times. They also made sure to try the Zoom link, webcam, and microphone before starting each interview, as well as tested that the recording feature was working, as it was the most crucial in the process, thus making sure everything was running as it should (Grey et al., 2020). Moreover, other obstacles relating to disturbances caused by surrounding events (Grey et al., 2020) can also occur, to which the authors of this paper requested the participants to be in a quiet room for the duration of the interview, as soon as they expressed interest in participating. In the case of this study, almost no disturbances were experienced relating to technological issues except for one interview whose audio file was not downloaded automatically after ending the interview. However, this file ended up being retrieved, and only caused a short delay in transcription.

In addition to that, the authors took precautions against individuals who may decide to not show up to the Zoom interview last minute, as it is likelier to occur in online interviews (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), so the authors reminded the participants of the scheduled interview one day beforehand, and several hours before the interview on the same day, that way they could make sure the participants are still interested, and that they do not forget about the scheduled interview.

The inductive approach of the authors was also one reason for choosing semi-structured interviewing as a means to gather data, not least because of the copious amount of detailed, deep information about brand image and the respondents' subjective well-being that comes from it (Bell Bryman and Harley, 2019). With that, interview guides are an important tool within semi-structured interviewing, as they allow the researchers to gather information that is relevant to their purpose, thus the authors of this paper constructed an interview guide based on the purpose of this study, which is primarily based on the operationalisation of the theoretical concepts in this study. (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019).

3.3 Operationalization

Concept	Component	Operational definition	Item	Reference	Questions
Brand image	Green brand image	Consumer perception that a brand is committed to the environment	Brand perception	Chen (2010) Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) Fatmawi and Alikhwan (2021) Salehzadeh et al., (2023)	How do you view green brands? Probe: Give example Probe2: Not give example
Subjective Well-being	Life satisfaction	Evaluation of the greatness of their life	Present	Diener (1984) Sirgy et al. (2006)	How does engaging with a green brand make you feel about how satisfied you are with life, if at all?
			Past	(Diener et al. (1999) Sirgy et al. (2005)	How has it been before? Why?
			Future	(Diener et al. (1999) Sirgy et al. (2006)	How do you think it will feel later in your life?

			Perception by important others	(Diener et al. (1999)	In what way do you think others see you for engaging with a green brand?
			Urge for change	(Diener et al. (1999)	Have you felt the urge to make a change in your life in relation to engaging with green brands? Why?
	Positive affect	Positive emotion, pleasant feelings	Joy, Elation, Contentment, Pride, Affection, Happiness, Ecstasy	Diener et al. (1999)	How does it feel to engage with a green brand? Probe: Which emotions occur? Probe: Is there anything that makes you feel good about it?
			Short term	Diener et al. (2017)	Probe: How long does it feel that way?
			Long term	Diener et al. (2017)	Probe: How long does it feel that way?
	Negative affect	Unpleasant feelings	Guilt, shame, sadness, anger, anxiety,	Diener et al. 1999 Diener, Oishi and Tay (2018)	How does it feel to engage with a green brand?

			worry, stress, depression, envy	Diener, Lucas and Biswas-Diener (2008) Lindenmeier, Schleer and Priel, 2012	Which emotions occur?Probe: Is there anything that makes you feel bad about it?
			Long term	Diener et al. (2017)	Probe: How long does it feel that way?
			Short term	Diener et al, (2017)	Probe: How long does it feel that way?

Table 1: Operationalisation table

3.3.1 Interview guide

Indeed, Baumbusch (2010) mentions that an interview guide is a necessary component of a semi-structured interview. This was utilised by the authors in order to be able to gather more information regarding relevant phenomena from the interviewees, as well as scrutinise or ask for further detail (Baumbusch, 2010). Due to the inductivist approach of the researchers, the questions utilised in the interview guide as well as the research question are not meant to stray or imply any given answers (Baumbusch, 2010). In accordance with this, creating the interview guide is thus dependent on the reviewed literature presented in the earlier chapters of this paper (Broom, 2005). Upon operationalizing the most central concepts in the literature review, the authors of this paper created questions relating to the sub-concepts of each concept, and made sure they were open-ended (Broom, 2005). This was through starting questions by “*what, how, who, when, where*” (Chenail, 2011 p. 256). These open-ended questions were utilised not least in relation to the authors’ use of a method inspired by grounded theory to code and analyse the data (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). More specifically, What, How, When, Where, all provide deeper context, with some being setting-related context, which may be useful for the future coding process (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007).

To ensure that the interview guide contains the appropriate questions for the aim of the study, they conducted ‘mock’ interviews, or a ‘pre-test’ of the interview guide with close peers (Broom, 2005). In total, the authors commenced such ‘mock’ interviews with two individuals, who suggested clarifying certain questions, such as the general life satisfaction question (Broom, 2005). The authors then adjusted the interview guide accordingly, while still fitting with the operationalised items, before commencing data collection through the rest of the scheduled interviews.

The figure below is a simplistic view of the interview guide composed by the authors of this study. Because of the qualitative nature of the interviews, this guide was meant to ‘lead’ the conversation, however in some instances the respondents would answer questions for probes without the authors needing to resort to using said probes, and other times the participant may discuss something that was not specifically or explicitly belonging to the interview guide (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Moreover, the authors resorted to using the word ‘engagement’ in the interview guide because different participants engage differently with green brands, as some

expressed following their communication, while others expressed consumption, and others expressed ownership. This not only adds context, which is important for the research strategy implemented (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), but also allows the authors to fully understand the answers given in said context. In addition to that, though not present in the interview guide nor in the visual representation, the authors resorted to asking the participants about their frequency of engaging with green brands in order to trace any major differences in answers. It was also to ensure that all participants actually engaged with green brands, which is one of the attempts of homogenising the sample (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Further, the authors also believed such a question would create additional context, which is valuable for the research strategy adopted by the authors, in which rich and contextual information is of importance (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019).

	Core questions	Probes	Probes for probes
Life satisfaction	How does engaging with a green brand make you feel about how satisfied you are with life, if at all?	(general): Why?	
		(past): Has it always felt this way for you?	Why?
		(future): Do you think it will feel that way later in your life? How do you think it will feel later in your life?	Why?
		Have you felt the urge to make a change in your life in relation to consuming green brands?	What things?
			Why? How?
		In what way do you think others see you for engaging with a green brand?	Why?
Positive OR negative affect	How does it feel to engage with a green brand?	Which emotions occur?	Why?
			How long does it feel that way?
		If X mentions only positive probe: Is there anything that makes you feel bad about it?	Why?
		If X mentions only negative probe: Is there anything that makes you feel good about it?	Why?

Table 2: Holistic structure of the interview guide (Anderzén and Ramadan, 2023).

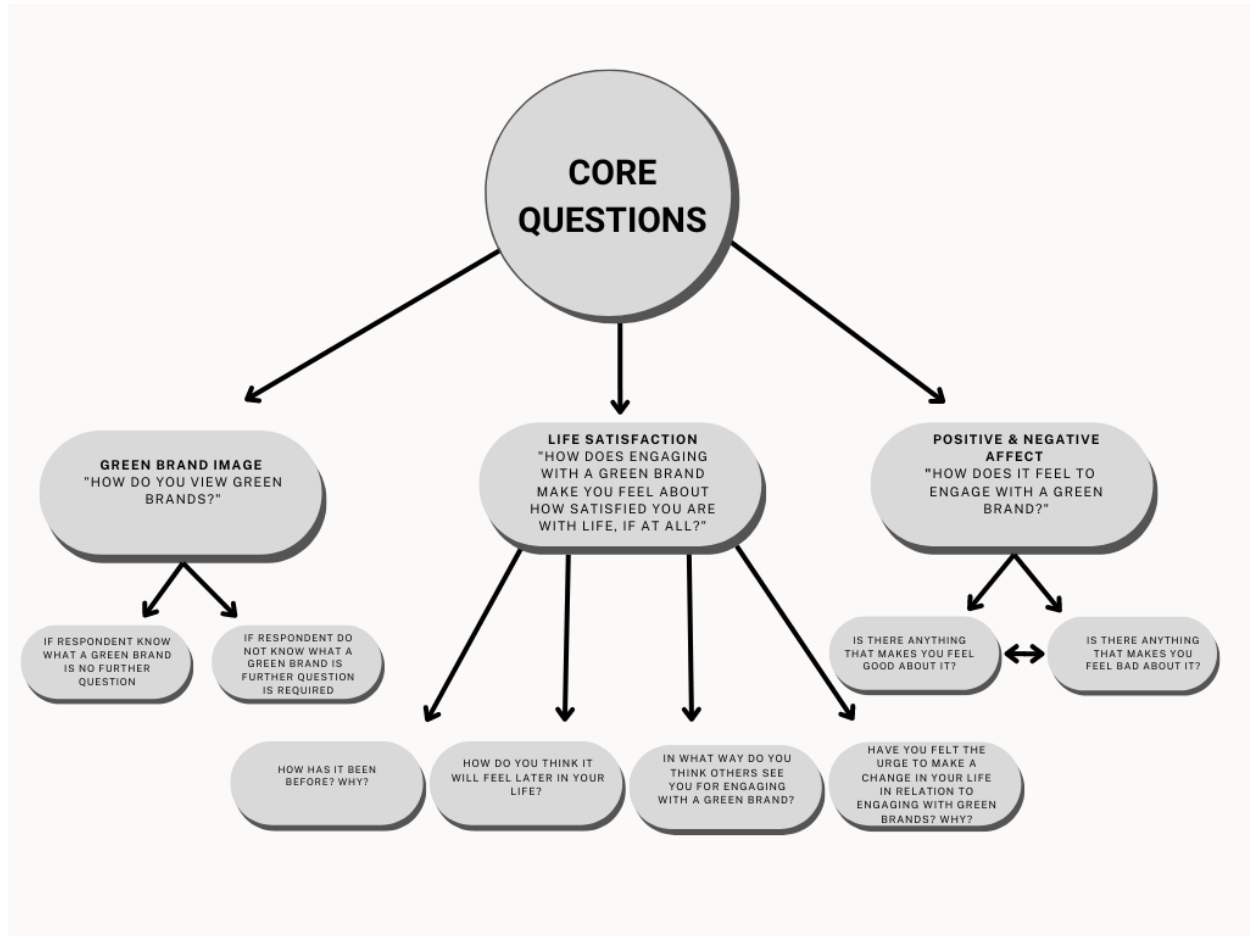


Figure 2: Visual representation of interview guide questions (Anderzén and Ramadan, 2023)

3.3.2 Conducting interviews

Furthermore, Baumbusch (2010) classifies the semi-structured interview into five main stages, which the authors of this paper followed. To create a sense of comfort and put participants at ease, the authors of this paper began the interviews by introducing themselves through revealing general information about themselves, such as that they are students of the marketing programme at Linnæus University conducting their bachelor thesis (Baumbusch, 2010). Since it was shown that the current climate can affect how people respond to subjective well-being questions, the authors made sure to briefly mention it before commencing with the interview in order to reduce its effects, as part of the general introductory stage (Kahneman and Kruger, 2006).

The introductory step is important, and the authors sent a digital consent form with information detailing the aims, purposes, and risks associated with this study, the authors utilised a consent

form template from Linnaeus University's website in order to assist them in the creation of a professional and legally accurate form (Broom, 2005; Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Linnaeus University, n.d.); the authors asked them to go through it during the start of the interview. After that, the authors asked them to electronically sign the document to obtain consent hence avoiding potentially unethical consequences, such as deception, and ensuring informed consent (Broom, 2005; Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), if that was not possible, the authors allowed them to submit the signed form after the interview instead. In order to further build comfort and trust, the authors continued through asking the participants general, simple questions about themselves, and were not too direct in gathering information about their environmental stance or how satisfied they are with their lives for instance (Broom, 2005). Instead, they led it in a casual manner, making it more similar to an organic, natural dialogue rather than interrogational (Broom, 2005).

After that, the authors began asking deeper questions, such as those relating to affect, and satisfaction with their lives (Baumbusch, 2010; Diener et al., 1999). The authors resorted to waiting before asking the same question differently (Broom, 2005), this occurred with some participants when it came to the question relating to life satisfaction, as some had interpreted it differently, thus the authors repeated the question with different words to clarify it. This is done because an avoidance of interview questions does not necessarily mean harm is being inflicted on the interviewees, rather, it may have simply been worded in an unclear manner, such that they could not find an appropriate way to answer it (Broom, 2005). The authors allowed the interviewees to have the space to openly discuss how they felt about green brands and their subjective well being, without unnecessarily forcing them to answer the questions in the interview guide, as the guide is not meant to be a strict way to control an interview (Broom, 2005). They also resorted to probing so that potential leads to new concepts, as per the inductive logic, could be further expressed such as financial concepts, as well as concepts relating to altruistic motivations (Broom, 2005). However, when resorting to probing questions, the authors of this paper avoided probes that contained overly specific information, as well as avoiding any implications, so that the participants' responses would not be biased to fit in with said information (Goodell et al., 2016). Thus, probes such as 'can you tell me more about that?', 'why?', and 'how?' were utilised.

Also, to minimise the social desirability bias (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019) the authors refrained from providing any additional information about the environment, green behaviour, the consequences of non-green brands or actions, than what the respondents claim they knew, so as to avoid any manipulation in answers from the participants' behalf, such that emotions of shame or embarrassment may arise, and may want to sound more socially desirable (Goodell et al., 2016; Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). The only instances in which the authors felt it was necessary to intervene was to ensure that the interviewee had the right concept in mind when thinking about a green brand, as in, correcting them when they stray too far from the environmental aspect of a brand, such as for instance towards the ethical-labour side. This was only done because the purpose of this study was to focus on environmentally-friendly brands, rather than fair trade brands, for instance.

Important to note is that, during the interviews, the authors of this paper refrained entirely from expressing positive reinforcement to the answers or feelings expressed by the participants to avoid creating bias or future manipulation of answers from the respondents so that they gain further positive reinforcement (Goodell et al., 2016). This was done as an attempt to ensure that their answers were as honest as possible (Shenton, 2004). Additionally, the authors of this paper also gave the participants the choice to add any information they forgot to mention during the interview after the interviewing process was over.

When the authors ended the individual interviews, they gradually shifted the dialogue to a more lighthearted one through asking simple questions, such as occupation, age, and gender identification (Baumbusch, 2010; Broom, 2005), thereafter thanking them for their time.

3.2 Sampling

3.2.4 Sampling method

The main sampling method adapted was purposive sampling, the reasoning for this is that in order for this research to answer the aim the respondents need to consist of certain behaviour. Since this research could not uncover what relationship green brand image has on subjective well-being if not the respondents have not been supporting green brands by consumption or any

other commitments. This is why purposive sampling is most suitable, since the sampling method is based on certain criterias in order to be successful in completing the aim of the research (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Furthermore this paper developed a non sequential approach due to the fact that the criterias for the respondents will be strict and that will provide the data that is needed and no extra respondent is therefore needed. In addition to purposive sampling, the authors also utilised a convenience sampling approach combined with a snowball sampling approach (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019) in order to maximise the chances of receiving participants who they know are environmentally-conscious and therefore may engage with green brands.

Though the main sampling technique was purposive, other methods were used such as convenience and snowball sampling, albeit while fulfilling the main requirement of being purposive. Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) discuss that convenience sampling is a powerful tool when the researchers have access to individuals who may have a lot to offer for the research. The authors of this paper thus made use of their existing network of individuals whom they knew to be environmentally-aware or engage with green brands, thus also fulfilling the purposive sampling technique. Furthermore, that the researchers themselves are in their 20's also made convenience sampling a more viable approach, as the chosen sample age range was 20-29, which would assist in the homogenising the sample (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006) which not only assisted with the purposive sampling approach as they were suitable matches (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), but also in the later process of theoretical saturation (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006; DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

A form of snowball sampling occurred through certain participants of the study, who had expressed that there are some people in their own network who would be interested in participating, which the authors accepted, so long as the prospective participants belonged to the set-criteria of age, country of residence, and engagement with green brands (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), though this was not the traditional way in which snowball sampling occurs, the authors expressed a reciprocated interest in those who belonged to such networks, and asked the original interviewee if they knew more individuals like that.

3.2.1 Sample size

In order to get the most reliable result it is important to discuss the sample size since it has a lot of effect on the results of the research. In regards to interviews it is argued that the sample size should consist of between 20-30 people (Marshall et al., 2013). However it has been shown that saturation can be achieved at 12 interviews (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006), as well code saturation was seen to occur around the interview 9 and at 16-24 interview meaning saturation was uncovered (Hennink, Kaiser and Marconi, 2017). This provides the paper with evidence that a smaller sample size still could be sufficient in achieving saturation. Furthermore it is argued that smaller sample sizes can be more adequate in relation to validity (Crouch and McKenzie, 2006), due to the fact that it becomes easier to assess the data better and in a more specific manner (Indrayan and Mishra, 2021). Thus a smaller sample size of between 12-16 could be fitting for this research, where 16 is within the aim. The researchers therefore conducted semi-structured interviews with 16 individuals. The reasoning for this is that it is beneficial to reach meaning saturation since it enables a more accurate understanding of the research (Hennink, Kaiser and Marconi, 2017). Moreover, findings from Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) suggest that reaching saturation in terms of theory or meaning may be achieved at somewhere between six and twelve participants, albeit that they must be similar to each other (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). To achieve this, the authors first made sure that every interview participant engages with green or environmentally-friendly brands, be it through consumption or other means they describe. Furthermore, the authors of this paper also decided to limit the sample to a certain age group, 20 to 29 year olds, in an attempt to homogenise the sample as DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) suggested.

In order for the sample to be purposive, the authors sought to find young adults belonging to the aforementioned age cohort who use or engage with green brands, as well as reside in Sweden. was to find a similar amount of males and females, the age characteristics are relevant in terms of those who are environmentally-conscious (Liskóva et al., 2016) combined with the country of residence being Sweden is also relevant in order to homogenise the sample (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). However, as per the purposive approach (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), the authors noticed there were a lack of men that contained the required engagement to green brands

in order to fit with the purpose of this study, which skewed the research to implement more females and non binary people in order for the study to reach saturation. Thus the completed sample ended up containing 5 males, 9 females and 2 non binary people.

3.2.3 Sampling selection

Due to the fact that semi-structured interviewing is best suited to involve a sample of individuals who are similar to each other (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006), the sample will be based on the 5 males, 9 females and 2 non binary within the age group 20-29, the reasoning for this is also due to the fact that they are prone to be more concerned with sustainability issues (Lísková et al., 2016), which is fitting since the paper needs respondents that have commitment to certain sustainability behaviours. DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) mention that samples for interviews must be chosen according to the aim of the research, thus people who engage with green products were seen to best fit the aim, which is understanding how green brand image affects subjective well-being. Additionally only one age group was implemented in order to homogenise the sample (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

The table below showcases the selected sample, with a short description of each individual, along with the time consumed to conduct each of their interviews. The table is meant to assist the reader in understanding the empirical material better, as well as demonstrate a general picture of who was chosen.

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Frequency of engagement with green brands	Interview duration
John	23	Male	Not that often	12 min 46 seconds
Linus	23	Male	Quite often	14 min 22 seconds
Paula	25	Female	Once a month	21 min 57 seconds
Linn	23	Female	Not that often	15 min 43 seconds
Fredrik	23	Male	Not that often	9 min 52 seconds
Casper	23	Male	Not that often	9 min 27 seconds
Christina	23	Female	Often	22 min 41 seconds
Christoffer	22	Male	Often	27 min 42 seconds
Nora	27	Female	Often	21 min 2 seconds
Kajsa	21	Female	Quite often	20 min 45 seconds
Alva	23	Female	Quite often	16 min 16 seconds
Kate	21	Female	Not that often	20 min 20 seconds
Sara	26	Female	Very often	20 min 45 seconds
Alex	21	Non-binary	Quite often	20 min 21 seconds
Rob	25	Non-binary	Quite often	16 min 13 seconds
Natasha	25	Female	Quite often	17 min 58 seconds

Table 3: Interview participants with general information containing age, gender, and frequency of engagement with green brands.

3.3 Analysis approach

Due to the qualitative, inductive, constructionist approach of this research, the authors used an analytical method inspired by grounded theory to analyse the qualitative data extracted from the semi-structured interviews (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Indeed, grounded theory gives the possibility for the researchers to generate theory out of the semi-structured interviews, which is on par with their inductive approach (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019).

Before introducing the way in which coding was conducted, it is important to note that the authors followed the guidelines by Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) regarding the entire process. This means that, after obtaining the recorded interviews, the authors began transcribing as soon as every interview was over, this was done in order to start coding without needing to transcribe several or all interviews in one day (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Furthermore, upon writing the interviews in text form, the authors went through each separate interview several times before starting to code, this was done in order for both authors to get a full understanding of each interview transcription (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019) along with this process, the authors also summarised the compilation of all interviewees' answers to each question .

The authors of this paper thus resorted to the coding process after reading the semi-structured interviews until gaining such understanding (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). In the process of coding, the authors of this paper characterised the transcribed dialogue into specific labels (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). The transcribed data is coded in order to make more sense out of everything said during the interviews, thereafter seeing it in relation to the knowledge gained by the authors through the literature review (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996 cited in Lofland et al., 2006).

The authors conducted focused and initial coding simultaneously when going through the interview transcriptions, adding a code after each sentence and when the sentences were too long, the authors added a code so to split it up into manageable pieces (Lofland et al., 2006; Charmaz 2000; 2003: 2006 cited in Holton 2007). Memos were used in this process (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Initial or open coding occurred whenever the authors dissected the dialogue transcript into sentences, sometimes words, which was not a time-consuming process (Holton, 2007). Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) stipulate that this type of coding creates

‘concepts’. Thus, upon conducting open-coding, the authors were faced with several potential concepts, of which they sought after the most commonly-occurring ones, which relate to positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Examples of the concepts that emerged as a result of coding were “Repeated use or interactions with green brands creates long-lasting good feelings”, “Lack of knowledge in the past” which emerged from the interview question related to life satisfaction, and “Negative view of those who do not use green brands”, emerging from the interview question related to how others view one. The authors gave more focus to these concepts (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Furthermore, categories also came up as a result of focused coding (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Holton, 2007). From the concepts that came as a result of coding, the authors created categories (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). This entailed combining several codes or concepts that are similar in nature, such as “Social influence from friend circle” and “social pressure”, as an example (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). However, when doing this, the authors of this paper extensively had to compare concepts or codes, and the original piece of the transcript relating to them in order to determine which category they are best fitted in (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Holton, 2007; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The researchers did this in order to aid themselves in the process of building theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

After this, the authors conducted axial coding on the categories created (Strauss and Corbin, 1990 cited in Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). This helped the authors identify potential associations between them (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019) along with potential associations between lower level categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Lastly, the authors conducted selective coding, in which the aggregation of categories created in the previous phases were analysed by the authors in order to discover what Corbin and Strauss (1990) call ‘core’ categories, allowing the researchers to begin fulfilling the inductive approach (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019) through discovering what influences the interviewees most when it comes to green brand image. The core categories were referred to as ‘categories’ in the coding schedule tables, which can be found in Appendix 2 part 2.1. Further demonstration of how categories were seen in relation to concepts can be found in Appendix 2, part 2.2.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The authors took several precautions and decisions in order to ensure this research was conducted ethically. As previously discussed, the authors supplied each participant with digital letters informing them of the purpose, risk, and general information about the study, which had to be signed to obtain consent in order to prevent any deception from occurring (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Moreover, the authors took the necessary measures in order to maintain the anonymity of those who were interviewed (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019) as well as prevent damage from being done (Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden, 2001). This was done through not using the real names of participants (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019), as well as avoiding the usage of the exact wording said by the interviewees in presenting the empirical material of this research, as it makes them easier to identify (Allmark, et al., 2009).

The authors further avoided inflicting any harm on the interviewees, seeing as subjective well-being strongly revolves around arguably sensitive topics such as expressing that one may not be satisfied with how their life is, or emotions relating to guilt and anxiety, the authors were attentive to the reactions and moods of the interviewees throughout the interview to detect discomfort. If it was, the authors of this paper shifted the conversation, as well asked the interviewees if they would like to stop or have a short pause (Allmark et al., 2009). Furthermore, as a result of respondent validation, if certain interviewees request many of the information they provided to be erased from this research, the authors complied as it poses a privacy concern for them (Sabar and Sabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2017).

3.5 Societal considerations

When creating research it is always of interest to assess the possible impact it can have on the society, in this research it is clear that if a relationship is established between green brand image and subjective well-being it could be beneficial not only to practitioners but also for the society and consumers. Starting from the practical perspective it could be beneficial to acknowledge that adopting a green brand image would enhance the overall subjective well-being of the consumers which would increase commitment from the consumers (Asatryan and Oh, 2008; Attiq et al., 2022). If more companies adopt this image while also delivering a more sustainable practice it would enhance the environment due to environmental friendly products while also enhancing the

overall consumers life. However it is worth noting that this finding could be utilised by companies that only adopt it due to the positive effects rather than actually following through which creates ethical issues in regards to greenwashing.

In addition it is important to highlight how this research could affect the consumption. If consumers would buy more products from a green image it would not only enhance their well being it would also enhance the society due to the more suitable consumption patterns that arise. However it is important to note that anti-consumption has been linked to subjective well-being (Lee and Ahn, 2016), so an increased consumption could be more damaging than positive. This is why it is of importance that this research states that switching from regular brands to green brands could be beneficial rather than empathising that consumers should increase their consumption of green brands while the other consumption is constant.

Additionally, the authors are aware that the findings of this study may be misused by companies in an attempt to greenwash, as this study focuses mainly on brand image, however, the findings are not intended to be used for companies who do not commit to environmental concern and are not environmentally sustainable. In this scenario, it is likely that greenwashing brands, or brands who are not honest about their environmental claims, may use the findings of this study in order to improve their own brand image in an attempt to falsely create subjective-well being or elements thereof, which is problematic, as it would give consumers false senses of positive affect, or life satisfaction, or a false sense of an avoidance of negative affect. Based on the findings, and the feelings emitted from using brands that are green and have a green image, these companies can emulate a false sense of such feelings. The authors are aware of how problematic and unethical this is, and do not condone such actions.

3.6 Research Quality

3.6.1 Trustworthiness

Even though validity is a common factor in quantitative research, it tends to be viewed differently in the nature of qualitative research. It is argued that trustworthiness could be a better fit in assessing quality of the research, trustworthiness is based upon the four factors “credibility, transferability, dependability, comfortability” which either contributes to a sense of reliability or validity (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019, p.363).

Where credibility is to think about the process of the data collected and ensuring that it provides a credible picture of the society, this can be achieved with the help of respondent validation which ensures that the data collected is conveying what the respondent sought to present (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Anderson (2010) discusses that respondent validity allows the researchers to make sure that the data that has been collected is accurate. Thus with this in mind the research developed this criteria and sent out all the collected data, which was the empirical chapter as a digital document, from the interviews to the respondents to ensure that the data fits what they tried to convey (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019; Anderson, 2010). Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) inferred this is internal validity, which the authors of this paper attempted to achieve through aforementioned respondent validation. The authors changed the data according to the opinions of the participants after they reviewed their own parts of it (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Though internal validity is inherently quantitative, the authors of this paper are also transparent in the way they describe their procedure in order to showcase accuracy (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Moreover, a further measure taken by the authors to ensure credibility is creating interview questions that are similar and based upon the way other researchers have opted to measure subjective well-being, not least in terms of questioning them about life satisfaction (Shenton, 2004; Kahneman and Krueger, 2006).

Secondly, transferability is about providing a robust and in-depth description of the study, this will thereafter enhance the chances for the study to be applied in other environments and therefore checking the generalizability (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Thus it was of importance to provide as much context as possible in regards to this study in order to increase its

adaptability, which could further reveal the strength and weakness of the study depending on the research result in other and applicability in other contexts (Stahl and King, 2020).

Thirdly dependability is a crucial component in order to strengthen the research, since it is mostly concerned with the reliability and this can be achieved through transparency and displaying the entire research process (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). That is why the research has showcased all different phases in order to highlight the process of the study, which will disregard the doubt in relation to its reliable nature. Furthermore, providing an in-depth process of the research would indeed help other researchers to replicate the study as closely as possible (Shenton, 2004).

Lastly confirmability, this is explained as trying to stay as objective as possible throughout the process and not your personal bias affecting the research too much (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). This is of course a key element that the researchers tried to eliminate, however qualitative is known for contributing to less objectivity compared to quantitative (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). Although some degree of objectivity can still be applied, which is why the question is founded more in theory rather than the assumptions while the researcher strictly follows the script in order to not push the respondents into a certain mindset or path.

4.0 Empirical investigation

The following sub-chapters are summaries of the coded empirical material gathered from the interviews conducted by the researchers.

4.1 Life satisfaction

When inquired about their life satisfaction when it comes to their engagement with green brands, most people felt it provided no life satisfaction or a small amount of it. However, few people mentioned that it still provides them with good feelings due to the fact that they are contributing to humanity and the world. Christoffer states *“It feels like you contribute to society doing more environmentally friendly things”*. Interestingly, for one participant, this engagement had repercussions on her self esteem, as Nora states *“more related about how I feel about myself doing something good which can be connected to how you're feeling in life”*.

A recurring theme within life satisfaction was habitualization, or a more frequent usage of green brands. Kate, who expressed no effect on life satisfaction explained that it is because of the lack of feeling of being able to contribute to factors such as *“preventing doomsday”*. Some participants expressed that they feel little life satisfaction in regards to green brands because they feel as though it is of little significance in comparison to what they believe should be done or *“in the bigger picture”*. This manifested further through Paula as she said *“Maybe if I was doing it on a larger scheme of things then it would but it doesn't have an affect on me.”*, similar to Alex who said *“With how society is progressing now so it feels good to consume a product that is a bit better but in the bigger picture it's like a water drop in a pond.”*, and Kate mentioned that *“(the) economy collapsed from flooding and for me this is the effect of climate change so for me it's like one person buying oat milk could not have prevented that”*, encapsulating Alex's euphemism of a water drop in a pond with a real life example. Furthermore, another theme that emerged was how respondents feel less satisfied and worse when they do not have access to green brands. It was mentioned by some respondents that choosing a green brand contributes to a good feeling while it would cause bad feelings if you would support a non green brand that contributes negatively to the world. Kate mentioned that she feels *“unsatisfied or not angry but a*

bit disappointed with myself when I don't buy something sustainable", which is on par with what Nora said "it makes me very unsatisfied when I don't have access to green brands" and Alex who further mentioned that "it feels worse to choose a brand that I know is really bad for the planet so when I instead try to use buy an environmentally friendly brand it feels better".

Interestingly, the aforementioned feelings of powerlessness experienced by some participants are tied to one participant being unable to experience guilt upon engaging with a non-green brand, which is the same participant who was more affected by the severe floods in a global south country. In addition to that, Natasha that the reason she feels more satisfied with her life when she uses green brands because she gains the ability to "align her thoughts with her acts".

4.1.1 The past

In addition to that, the respondents also expressed how it was for them in the past. A commonly recurring theme was knowledge, and more specifically, the participants' knowledge of environmental sustainability and green brands in the past. The majority of participants expressed that in the past, green brands were not as usual as they currently are, as well as lacked the awareness of these issues in order to think in an environmental way or care. Christoffer mentioned that it "probably started in teenage years or something when I first was bombarded with communication" about green branding and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, other participants such as Christina who mentioned *"but now if you compare it when it's more like a trend it comes from the social groups and stuff and it's more in front of a base and it affects the self esteem and it affects the life"*. Similarly, Christoffer mentioned how he informed his Shein-buying peer about the company's environmentally and sustainably unethical behaviour. Also, one participant stated that green brands do not affect her life satisfaction because they are only 'one part of her', and believed that more could be done which was reflected by other participants in different ways as the previous text shows.

Similarly, Fredrik mentioned that "I think its been a bit more lately if youre talking about 5 years ago when you're in school you might view it another way but the older you get the more you care about this kind of stuff". A recurring theme for the past was how participants were more financially restricted before. Sara, for example mentioned *"as I grew up I learned more and*

more especially since I went shopping myself and use my own salary for things I thought was important”, and Rob mentioned “ I've not always been able to afford climate friendly brands”

Some participants began caring during their adolescent years, such as Kate who mentions that “ *I went through an activist phase as a teenager i think i would have cared then*” Natasha, who also mentioned it has not always been this way during her adolescence, mentions a tipping point in which she became more aware of the impact of her consumption and turned vegetarian, laughter was present.

Another prevalent notion was being more optimistic in the past. This notion was further exemplified by Alex who said “*I think I was a bit more optimistic when I was younger and didn't know as much about environmental parties. It was like oh now I'm using a green product so it's gonna be fine in the future everything's fine.*” Alongside Rob who mentioned that “ *my view on the world has worsened... because the climate emergency seems more immediate now that it was five years ago*”. This is further exemplified by Nora who mentioned “*before I got so radical left and very critical to the system of capitalism I maybe believed more that I could make an impact on buying certain things*”.

Financial restrictions and the opportunity to engage with green brands was another notion shown. It was mentioned that money was one of the reasons that they could not engage with it too much as Rob mentioned “*i've not always been able to afford climate friendly brands, only what's available so I think my perception on those brands changed a lot*” . Much like Sara who said she began purchasing what she believed is important after having her own salary.

4.1.2 The future

A commonly recurring theme found when asked about the future was that of financial freedom. Participants expressed that in the future, things will change and they will engage more with green brands due to financial independence, such as John mentioning “*I think it will change with more income*”. As well as Sara who mentioned “*as long as I have the money and a way to get them without taking a big toll on the financial situation*”.

In addition to that, Altruism was a recurring theme within the future outlook. Reasons for this were exhibited, such as wanting to improve the planet, having children, and wanting to give them a better future, as Fredrik, mentioned “*I mean it is a great chance it will feel even better because you may have kids and family and such that you'd care for in the long run*”, which is similar to what Christoffer mentioned “*more important like when you grow up over the years and maybe in 10 years you might have kids and you feel a responsibility for making the world a better place*”

Another theme observed regarding the future, was the growth of green brands in the future, and growing accessibility to them. This was explained by Christina “*the more the market grows with the green stuff it will affect somehow*” as well as Kate, who explained that the reason why she believes she will engage more with green brands because “*I think it'll be more available and more prevalent I think there might be things that are grand like cinnabon*”, which, like Christina, believes that the growing trend of green brands and their prevalence on the market in the future will create more engagement. Furthermore, Nora mentioned the existence of a paradox in which the climate crisis will worsen in the future, and does not believe that green brands will solve the issue, however, she mentions that the inevitability of modern day consumption practices would lead her to engage more with green brands “*I still need to buy stuff and I will still try to buy green and sustainable stuff as possible knowing that it is not really possible (to stop the climate crisis from worsening)*”.

A recurring theme that was discovered was that of social influence within participants, when they discussed their future in the context of using green brands. Participants mentioned that those around them should also engage with green brands in the future, as Christina mentioned “*I can*

do more eco friendly and choose something more sustainable and I think it will grow but it really needs my social network to do the same and like people around me". Rob and Alex mention that they will keep on participating since it makes them feel good but also due to the fact that they would feel bad if engaging with non green brands. Natasha's background as an environmental engineer, she explained, was a strong reason that she believed she will continue using green brands in the future.

4.1.3 Urge for change

When inquired about the urge for change, several participants did not express an urge for change due to a variety of reasons. One of the recurring themes was that of financial freedom, even within participants who do experience an urge for change relating to aiming to diminish their environmental impact, these restraints were also an issue as Alex explained "*sometimes I look at my budget and i'm like oh okay it's gonna be a lot more expensive to buy this.*" and Nora, mentioned "*it's also very like middle class and very expensive too*". The lack of these restraints manifested in more engagement with green brands in a different participant, as John expressed such an urge "*comes with age and extra money*"; similarly, "*price equalisation*" was considered a hypothetical reason to which another participant would gain an urge for change.

The lack of pressure from one's surroundings and social circle was also mentioned as a reason for the absence of an urge for change, emerging the theme of social influence. Some participants mentioning that having it be 'mandatory' and given no other choice would cause them to only engage with green brands, or change their lifestyle, as Kate expressed "it would be in a case where it became like kind of mandatory or like you had no other choice.", on par with Christina who said "*so it would need other people and surroundings to do the same and urge me to do something more eco friendly like if there were a government saying no you can't do that i'd be, like, okay*" interestingly, the need to be forced to do this was tied to Christina's self esteem, as it is more of a 'topic' to buy green brands today. Furthermore, the passion of those behind green brands was mentioned by Kate to be a catalyst for creating an urge for change, which may be somewhat similar to needing the whole social circle to act the same way.

Others have mentioned that they consider their engagement and consumption of green brands too minute to be counted as a real urge for change, and therefore counted it as no urge for change, as Linn, for example mentioned “I have a good balance I think so its good, good amount of both things”. Lastly, other reasons for having no urge for change was that they have always engaged with green brands, they feel uninvolved, as well as seeing weak links between the green brand and environmental safety, as Kate mentions she’d prefer to see a really direct link between her purchase and environmental sustainability.” Other respondents mentioned that they do experience an urge for change when it comes to engaging with green brands, Indeed, two of the individuals who expressed an urge for change mentioned that they do not particularly care about the brand in relation to this, rather, focus mainly on the product itself, which was worded by Sara as “ if I really want the name brand I can always look for second hand but usually I don’t really care for the name of stuff like in brand way I just the product itself and try to basically pick the best one but that have the least impact.” and Rob who said “ *I wouldn't necessarily say that I am focused on getting these products from only green brands as long as the products themselves... (are green)*”. Nora expressed disdain for consumerism in general with regards to an urge for change, stating “ *I don't think that we will.. yeah come to the changes we need through green consumerism*”.

Wanting to prevent climate change was another theme that emerged out of the participants’ answers. Natasha mentioned that the reason she experiences an urge for change is because of the mixed feelings she gets from not knowing whether a brand really is green or not, stating “I start to question everything I do on my own or manually so I guess that’s the change”. Natasha exemplifies this through laughter mentioning that “doubt” behind the real source of products is a big reason behind that. Furthermore, Alex mentioned that the reason they want to buy as many green brands as possible is because “*I want to have as little of an environmental impact as possible*”. Similarly, Sara also said she “*try to basically pick the best one but that have the least impact.*”, and “*if I had to pick a brand that aren't as invested or anything about recycling I would kind of stay away from them*”. This notion was also exhibited by Rob, who said the reason they buy green is because “*stopping climate change is I think the biggest change that I want to achieve*”.

4.1.4 Perception by important others

Some expressed that their close circle of people would not look at them in any different way for engaging with green brands. However, a commonly seen theme was that interviewees believed they would be seen positively in an altruistic way for their engagement with green brands.

Participants described that they can be seen as clever, altruistic and a good person by those they know. Others mentioned that the reaction would be distinct depending on how much the other persons engaged with green brands themselves, believing it was of lesser importance for those who don't and vice versa. Alongside being seen in a positive light, some participants also expressed that they can influence their social circle to do the same or to bring awareness to certain brands that others may begin engaging with.

Similar to this notion was a commonly recurring theme of viewing those who do not engage with green brands in a negative light. Christoffer mentioned an example in which he had informed his peer about Shein's flaws upon knowing she engages with that brand. Moreover, another theme that emerged was that participants can be seen in a negative light if they behave in a 'fanatic' way. This can be through interfering with other people's consumption habits and pointing out that they are wrong for them. Which was further mentioned by Nora, where being too green could be viewed negatively however the respondent mentioned that this would not arise from their engagement with brands and that it rather emphasises if they are environmentalists.

Building on that Sara mentioned that the positive view of you would depend on the person since some people would see it as positive to engage with green brands while others would see it as a negative trait due to their relation to the environment and their belief. Sara further mentioned this point exemplifying that people who are sceptical to the nature of climate change would probably not view your engagement as something positive but rather negative. Additionally, another theme shown was being viewed as someone who spends an unnecessarily high amount of money. Sara and Natasha mentioned that they felt like they could be viewed negatively since they would spend more money on a brand or a product that they could have got for cheaper. While laughing, Natasha also expressed that some people might see her engagement with green brands are "stupid" because so many of the brands are a "lie", but that those who understand and agree with her may open up interesting discussions regarding her usage.

4.2 Positive effect

A common theme observed when asked about their feelings is feeling good due to altruism. Respondents mentioned that this feeling was brought upon that they felt good since they helped the environment to get better. As Linus explained *“I get a good feeling since I’m contributing, it can be a small thing of buying a green brand.”*, and Linn mentioned *“I would say it feels good. If I can help one bit then its good”* Furthermore this feeling contributed to some respondents feeling better about themselves and positively affecting their self-esteem, since they were doing something good and feeling like a good person. This good feeling was caused by different emotions between the participants.

Indeed, Feeling happy from using green brands due to met needs was another theme. They mentioned that the emotions evoked were happiness, satisfaction, self-content and content, and feeling healthy. For example, Christoffer mentioned, with some hesitation, *“my guess is it has a lot to do with like uh if I for example trust the company before making the purchase and then there is also the point when you receive the product and if I’m still satisfied with the product I get a good feeling of like happiness...”* as he guesses that his trust for the company allows him to feel happiness.

Another theme seen was that of feeling non-anxious when engaging with a green brand. This was described by Natasha as she hesitated and mentioned *“would say that its like um... a kind of a peace... you get peace in your mind so you um... yeah you can feel like relaxed somehow”*. She also mentioned that she feels these emotions for a long time due to her repeated ‘habit’. Other respondents, such as Relief and security were present since two respondents emphasised that by knowingly engaging with a green brand they can feel secure that they have not caused any harmfulness to either the environment, people or animals.

Pride was also a present theme and common emotion by some respondents, Christina, for example, pondered a bit until she answered with *“also like proud of myself that I did something good... yeah maybe those two”* however other respondents mentioned that this engagement with

green brands did not cause pride. John, who mentioned not feeling pride, explained that “that’s the way It should be, you can’t be too proud just because you buy green products”. Furthermore, the duration of these positive feelings have mostly been expressed to be short-term, varying in length depending on how large the engagement with the brand is, how much they like the brand, and how often they interact with or are reminded by the green brand. The more these occur, the longer the feelings will last, otherwise they are short-term, varying from some minutes, up to a week.

The long term feeling was seen to be different depending on the category of the brand, since high involvement products with a green brand image was mentioned by Sara, Linus and Linn to provide a quite long term feeling. They mentioned this in relation to clothing where all of them felt a positive emotion most of the time when they would interact with the product past the purchase since they know that they had bought it from a green brand. This was mentioned further by Sara which said that *“When you have the item at hand you are constantly reminded of the item, that I bought this item and made a great decision”*. In addition to that Linus further mentioned that if he had engaged with a green brand and saw that brand or another green brand in the city he would get a good feeling since he knows that he has been doing a good deed. Natasha mentioned she feels at ‘peace’ or having ‘peace in her mind’ as well as relaxation when she uses green brands because she did the right thing. She also mentioned that she feels these emotions for a long time due to her repeated ‘habit’.

4.3 Negative affect

Respondents commonly mentioned that engaging with a green brand contributed to no negative feelings or emotion, however some of the respondents mentioned that there are certain negative feelings that arise. One of the themes observed in negative feelings was connected with the financial spectrum, where they emphasise that the higher price of the green brands caused negative feelings, Kate mentioned *“if I had to pay a lot of money like I have to pay more to get oat milk versus regular milk and every time I buy oat milk I’m like damn why that extra 5 kr? I could’ve avoided that”* in which case such thoughts and feelings linger longer than the good feelings, she explained. Meanwhile, Alex also mentioned that the higher price is a bother to them

“it's like a lot more expensive to choose the green product. Yeah it hurts in that way, but it still feels good”, but despite this, they also mentioned that they are quick to forget about the high price, in contrast to Kate, with which the reasoning is *“I really care about the environment eager for how the future is gonna look and how the world is going right now in terms of environmental politics and stuff so it feels really bad to choose an option that is worse”*. Casper mentioned that the *“cost aspect is a bit sad for eco friendly (brands)”*.

One participant tied this effect with a feeling of ‘guilt’ or guilty pleasures, as it feels uneconomical to spend extra on the same product. Nora also mentioned that *“when it's very expensive it just reminds me how privileged I am, which is nice to me but also yeah reminds me of the inequalities”*, which is on par with the feeling of guilty pleasures mentioned by Sara, who expressed *“it could be more unreachable or lets say its more of guilty pleasure.. like you're paying a lot more than you have to technically to eat or clothe yourself”*. Similarly, Kajsa discussed how *“the money issue, like, I could be spending my money on this but I don't really need it and then I feel guilty not for long”*.

Additionally, another theme was seen with being responsible to look into how green the brand is which creates anxiety and deception or checking that the brand is actually green. According to the interviewees, this leads to feelings of shame when it ends up not being as green as they had anticipated, or greenwashed. Christina explains that *“I would feel bad for longer and I would maybe try to avoid even talking about the product like if I would need to tell someone like mmm I bought this I'd feel ashamed...”*. Christina then expressed that this would make her feel worse for a longer time period. In addition to that, Natasha stated that she feels anxious due to the overthinking that she experiences when she wants to have a green brand due to not knowing if it will really end up green. These feelings do not last long, as she believes that she cannot punish herself eternally for a mistake, and instead learns from it.

5. Analysis

The following sub-chapters demonstrate the analytical interpretation of the empirical material with the help of the theoretical framework.

5.1 Life satisfaction

The empirical material brought forth from the conducted interviews presents a wealth of concepts and categories erupting from life satisfaction and its sub-components (Diener, 1984). To start with, Diener et al. (1999) stipulate the importance of the present life-satisfaction on the overall life satisfaction component of subjective well-being. The empirical data has shown several concepts relating to this, however, respondents did not believe that green brands had an influence on how satisfied they felt with their lives in general (Diener, 1984). Despite this, a main category that emerged from the data was altruism's influence on life satisfaction. Indeed, Fatmawati and Alikhwan (2021) showcases findings that were seen through the concepts emerging from the interviews. The concept of having a positive feeling from contributing to society is interrelated with the way in which consumers are likely to buy products with a green brand image because of seeing more value in it (Fatmawati and Alikhwan, 2021).

One concept from altruism's effect on life satisfaction category is that of already being satisfied with current efforts of engaging with green brands. Indeed, combined with other concepts in the same category such as feeling altruistic upon using green brands this suggests that the altruistic feeling brought forth from said engagement is one way of creating subjective well-being from environmentally sustainable behaviour (Kaida and Kaida, 2016), solidifying the importance of altruism (Kuanr et al., 2016). This satisfaction also suggests that these participants experience no urge for change within the context of brands that have a green image, not least because said satisfaction indicates no difference between how they would ideally want their lives, or this aspect of their lives to be, and how it currently is within this context (Diener et al., 1999; Luhmann and Henneck, 2017).

Indeed, it appears that such an increased perception of value was not only demonstrated in the interviews through responses, but also through the concept of dissatisfaction resulting from a lack of access to green brands, showing a counter-effect of the perceived value of green brands (Fatmawati and Alikhwan, 2021), as well as counter-reflects Xiao and Li's (2011) finding of more life satisfaction upon engaging in environmentally-sustainable shopping. This dissatisfaction also shows the way in which brands with a green image can improve subjective well-being (Chen, 2010; Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990; Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi, 2017) through avoidance of brands perceived as non-green, as respondents mentioned they are better alternatives to them. This was also on par with Lee, Motion and Conroy (2009), in which respondents, such as Sara for instance, expressed that she avoids non-green brands as much as possible. Though this concept emerged out of an understanding of the urge for change in relation to life satisfaction, it remains to be in line with Lee, Motion and Conrot (2009), implying that respondents experience a moral-disconnect from non-green brands, thus avoiding them.

Such dissatisfaction may erupt as a result of the respondents' own identities or self-image in which they see themselves as being green (Fatmawati and Alikhwan, 2021; Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, 2016); this was also emphasised through the findings relating to positive affect and the way in which respondents expressed feeling proud of themselves for doing the right thing, indicating that they feel a high sense of self-control from engaging with a brand that has a green image (Kuanr et al., 2022); this is also further reflected through the emerging concept of being viewed altruistically by others for engaging with green brands positively, ultimately showcasing the intricacy of how self-expressiveness from using green brands allowing the respondents to appear altruistically to their social circles (Lin, Lobo and Leckie, 2017), demonstrating how using green brands, through self-expression creates life satisfaction (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022). Indeed, as Christina mentioned “ it comes from the social groups and stuff and it's more in front of a base and it affects the self esteem and it affects the life”, an example showcasing the concept of the altruistic view others have of yourself, which is on par with Dhandra (2019), showing that consumers may hold themselves in higher esteem albeit when their social circle approves of them. It is also on par with Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher (2022) finding relating to social desirability, in which case Christina, as an example, experiences the need for approval and social desirability from those around her through using

green brands, especially in light of their recent popularity in the present, as compared to the past. Interestingly, another emerging concept within the category of altruism's effect on life satisfaction, was being viewed positively by others who are environmentally-sustainable. This finding is an additional level of detail showing how consumers' own green identities or self-image may not only influence the value they see in a green brand, but also affects the way in which they see others who engage or do not engage with green brands (Confete, Scarpi and Russo, 2019 cited in Fatmawati and Alikhwan, 2021; Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, 2016). This showcases that an element of congruency may play a role in the way green brands create life satisfaction through being accepted or viewed positively by others, not only in the sense of a green brand reflecting one's own image of themselves (Fatmawati and Alikhwan, 2021; Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, 2016), but also in the sense of it reflecting one's congruence with those who already do (Confete, Scarpi and Russo, 2019).

Indeed, this is counter-reflected in another concept, having a negative view of those who do not use green brands, exemplified by Christoffer and the way in which he responded to his Shein-buying peer, a brand known for its environmentally harmful practices (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022). This further exemplifies the interrelationship between engaging with green brands and the way in which one wants to be perceived as socially desirable, altruistic, as well as the counter-effect of viewing those who do not negatively. As being socially desirable and altruistic are positive ways of being viewed, thus demonstrating how this creates life satisfaction (Cockrill, 2012; Chéron, Sudburt-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022) through expressing oneself as such (Lin, Lobo and Leckie, 2017). Important to note is the utilitarianism mentioned by the respondents, who associated green brands with better quality or long-lasting products, which is on par with Lin, Lobo and Leckie's (2017) finding of green brand image and utilitarian appeal, which may further add an element of satisfaction, as respondents mentioned they enjoyed said quality. This suggests that, through social desirability, being seen as altruistic contribute to life satisfaction, the utilitarian associations with the brand are not to be ignored.

Moreover, in relation to being viewed by others, another concept emerged was being viewed as someone who spends an unnecessary high amount of money for their usage of brands with a green image. Interestingly, as Christina mentioned it would be seen as great to use "Maybe

because they think so that it's a really good thing and that it's something they're really opinionated", this notion counter-reflects those who mentioned they would be viewed as uneconomical, as it suggests such individuals do not carry values related to environmental sustainability, thus failing to achieve social desirability or approval from them (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022). Within the scope of this study, the empirical material also shows a negative view given by others (Diener et al., 1999), when their values on the environment differ in a sense of disbelief of climate change and other environmental problems. This creates an implication in which brands with a green image and their usage may reflect an image of oneself that differs depending on the values held by the significant others (Diener et al., 1999), which means that life satisfaction therefore is affected by this too, as it may be enhanced or reduced depending on such, thereafter either positively or negatively affecting one's subjective well being (Diener, 1984).

Furthermore, the extent to which social desirability (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022) manifests within life satisfaction for brands with a green image is exhibited through another concept, "social pressure", in which participants expressed they believe they would have a greater urge for change if those around them forced them to exclusively use brands with a green image. This further suggests the importance of congruency between oneself, one's social circle, as well as the images that the brands emit. In this case, it is the needed congruence between the green image of the brand, oneself, and one's green-brand-using social circle, in which social desirability plays a crucial role, that it acts as a catalyst for the creation of an urge for change (Diener et al., 1999; Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022; Cockrill, 2012). This implies that owning a brand with a green image in such a case would allow one to achieve social desirability, ultimately contributing to enhanced life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999; Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022; Cockrill, 2012).

Indeed, the existing gap between present and past life satisfaction is another contributing factor on current life satisfaction (Sirgy et al., 2006). Based on this, an emerging category, knowledge, would carry several implications for current life satisfaction when it comes to green brands. This notion is captured by several interviewees, such as when Christoffer mentioned him caring about green brands "probably started in teenage years or something when I first was bombarded with communication", as well as when Nora stated that "I was not so critical then". Interestingly, the

lack of awareness, be it due to the respondents stating it was not as trendy in the past, or as Christoffer mentioning there was little communication from these brands, coincides with past optimism (Sirgy et al., 2006), which is another concept comprising the category of knowledge within life satisfaction and the past. In other words, brands with a green image were not relevant to these individuals' past life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999; Diener, 1984) which implies that the past has no influence on current life satisfaction, as there is no gap within this context.

Moreover, another emerging concept under the category of altruism's effect on life satisfaction, was how respondents believed that they will be engaging more with green brands in their future because of altruistic motives, such as creating a better future for their children or wanting to have as little of an environmental impact as possible. This is on par with Kaida and Kaida (2016) who showcase how people who engage in environmentally sustainable actions due to altruistic motives. Though respondents did not explicitly mention they are optimistic for the future, their belief that they expect to be more financially capable to engage with green brands paired with their altruistic motives to do so in the future implies a level of "dispositional" optimism (Scheier and Carver, 1985 cited in Diener et al., 1999). This is in the sense that their desire to engage more with green brands will be fulfilled in the future, which therefore implies an elevated level of current life satisfaction, because of the aforementioned dispositional optimism within the context of expected future financial freedom (Scheier and Carver, 1985 cited in Diener et al., 1999). In other words, expecting such freedom would allow them to pursue their desire of engaging more frequently with brands that have a green image, thus implying dispositional optimism, therefore leading to higher levels of life satisfaction (Scheier and Carver, 1985 cited in Diener et al., 1999).

Indeed, altruism as well as dispositional optimism are interlinked with the fundamental fact that the green brands discussed by the interviewees possess a green image (Chen, 2010), acting as a catalyst for the forthbringing of these concepts. It is the fact that they perceive green brands to be helpful for the environment, that allows said brands to be on par with their self-image (Fatmawati and Alikhwan, 2021) as well as present a particular image for others (Lin, Lobo and Leckie, 2017), and allowing them to express their altruistic motives (Kaida and Kaida, 2016) ultimately contributing to an enhancement of their life satisfaction (Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022).

In addition to that, another category observed within the past-aspect was a financial one, in which interviewees expressed their inability to engage with green brands in the past due to low income. This concept actually overlaps with a category for the future-aspect of life satisfaction (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999) in which participants believe they will use more green brands in the future due to predicted financial freedom. Indeed, both of these notions were exhibited in the current lives of the respondents, of which many stated that the higher prices of green brands created negative feelings (Diener, 1984) for them, as well as hindered them from being able to engage more, showcasing that the ability of green brand image to elicit facets of life satisfaction as has been thus far discussed is hindered by higher prices.

Interestingly, this same financial aspect was also a category within the urge for change within life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999). Indeed, combined with concepts such as ‘prevention of climate change’ as well as the aforementioned predicted financial freedom and engagement with green brands, suggests that those who feel an urge for change do so altruistically (Kaida and Kaida, 2016; Kuanr et al., 2022). However, the financial obstacles may prevent this sort of urge of being fulfilled, ultimately leading to less life satisfaction, for those who feel an urge for change in terms of using brands that have a green image (Diener et al., 1999). This implies that higher prices act as an obstacle in how brands with a green image can create life satisfaction and thereafter subjective well-being (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999).

At the same time, another emerging concept was already feeling satisfied with current efforts of engaging with green brands, which some respondents may experience due to holding themselves in higher esteem upon engaging with green brands (Dhandra, 2019), whose image is reflectant upon themselves (Lin, Lobo and Leckie, 2017), and allows them to present a positive image of themselves to their peers (Cockrill, 2012). This is exemplified through other concepts such as social influence as well as being viewed positively from using green brands. This showcases the intricate connection between brand image (Chen, 2010) on the one hand, self-image on the other, and even the image presented to one’s social circle, in which a green image would allow one to express their own green image, as well as project it onto their social circle, ultimately granting them social approval, and increasing their life satisfaction (Cockrill, 2012; Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher, 2022).

5.2 Positive affect

Through the empirical material it was visible that one affect was more emphasised in relation to green brands and that was a positive affect (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999). This was highlighted due to the fact that people got the feeling that they did something good and were being a good person, which is on par with Kaida and Kaida (2016) who presented that subjective well being is caused by both altruistic motives and self-oriented motives, in this case, environmentally-sustainable behaviour from using brands with a green image leads to subjective well-being (Kaida and Kaida, 2016) through the elicitation of positive affect (Diener, 1984).

When it comes to the overall category of altruism and positive affect, the respondents emphasised that they felt like a good person since they helped the environment and were participating in order to improve society, which is the indication of altruistic motives (Kaida and Kaida, 2016). This is also on par with Martenson (2007) in the sense that brands with a green image were shown to elicit positive feelings, such as pride, or ‘feeling like a good person’ upon using or purchasing them. Furthermore, some respondents also mentioned feeling satisfied from using brands that have a green image, such as Nora, Kajsa and Christoffer, which, combined with how ‘dissatisfied’ people expressed they feel, as discussed in the previous section, further goes in line with Martenson (2007) in the sense that brands with a green image also elicit more satisfaction, a positive affective response. This showcases the way in which green brand image can contribute to the enhancement of subjective well-being (Mohammad Shafiee and Es-Haghi, 2017) due to altruism (Kaida and Kaida, 2016), generating positive affect in the process (Martenson, 2007).

The feeling as a good person goes on pair with Venhoeven, Bolderdijk and Steg, (2016) which highlighted that participating in environmental friendly behaviour provides positive emotions due to the fact that people see themselves in a more positive way, which indicates that the green brand influences people's self-image positively which then generate a sense of positive affect. However respondents did not only feel good due to hedonic reasons but also in relation to the utilitarian aspect, since it was emphasised that happiness was present since green brands met the overall need for what they were looking for in the market, with Christina for example stating that

she would buy the brand first because she thinks of what she wants, and then because of the environment. Similarly, Kate mentioned her engagement with brands that present a green image is due to feeling healthier. This is also on par with Kaida and Kaida (2016) who show that self-oriented reasons can bring forth subjective well-being when using a brand with a green image. Which is in accordance with Lin, Lobo and Leckie (2017) since a green brand can significantly provide the consumer with a more functional satisfaction. However it was further visible that respondents also felt good upon engaging with a green brand due to the fact that they feel like a better person, which showcases that the feeling good is caused since they know that they are doing something good which highlights self-oriented reasoning (Kaida and Kaida, 2016). The findings thus far show that both self-motivated reasons as well as altruistic ones can trigger positive affect and therefore contribute to the enhancement of subjective well-being.

Within the empirical it was found that certain positive emotions were present, as some concepts emerged such as feeling prideful and feeling relaxed or non-anxious when engaging with green brands. Thus it highlights that green brand image causes a great amount of positive emotion which is in line with findings by Salehzadeh et al., (2023); Martensson, (2007); Chen, (2010). Indeed, the way in which participants describe some of the feelings elicited by using brands with a green image, such as ‘security’, ‘relaxed’, ‘feels safe’, and ‘relieving’ implies the existence of counter-emotions such as worry or anxiety over using non-green brands, as Natasha exemplified how she ‘overthinks’ whether or not she made the right purchase decision of green brands. This therefore implies that using a brand with a green image allows the consumer to avoid feelings that are not associated with relief, safety, or security, which is on par with Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl (2012).

As per Lindenmeier, Schleer and Pricl (2012), and the way in which some respondents, such as Natasha, stated that “*you align your thoughts and your acts*” when she purchases brands with a green image; It implies that the moral-disconnect experienced between the individual’s values and the brand’s values exists, and is avoidable through using brands that present a green image, henceforth lessening the negative affects felt, as described by the interviewees (Diener, 1984), which ultimately contributes to the enhancement of subjective well being.

5.3 Negative Affect

This is supported by Diener et al., (1999) as well, which mentioned that several of these emotions are present in relation to positive affect, further it showcases that the emotions are both momentary due to happiness and also long term since when contentment is felt a long term mood is established (Diener et al., 2017). Interestingly the positive emotions were seen to be both short term and long term depending on various reasons, most commonly respondents mentioned that they would feel this emotion at the moment they engage with the green brand and short period (Diener et al., 1999) after the engagement. Although in relation to the category of clothing a few respondents emphasise that they could get a positive emotion most of the time when engaging with the green brand even after their consumption, since they would get recalled of the good deed that had been made. In relation to that it was gained that engaging with one green brand could provide a good emotion when even surpassing another green brand since they get reminded again of their good deed. Which highlights that green brands' image influences positive affect with the help of memory of altruistic nature. Along with that it implies that a green brand image influence on positive affect is quite robust since it contributes to not only momentary emotion but also long term (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999). Moreover, such 'memory' and more frequent engagement as described by the interviews, from which the category 'frequency' was formed showcases the intricacy between feeling repeated positive affect (Diener, Sandvik and Pavot, 2009) and brands that present a green image. The interviewees, as shown, recall the good deed which re-triggers the positive affect, thus the frequency implies they experience higher levels of subjective well-being (Diener, Sandvik and Pavot, 2009).

The emotion of relief is heavily related to that by engaging with a green brand they can feel security that they do not cause any harm to the environment, where some even engaged with green brands in order to avoid non green brands that could cause negative feelings. This emphasises that the respondents' moral is more fitting in regards to green brands due to avoiding non green brands (Lee, Motion and Conroy, 2009), in relation to that it emphasises that if consumers avoid unethical brands it is visible that their overall subjective well-being is positive (Kuanr et al., 2022).

In relation to negative affect it was almost non existing since most agreed that there is necessarily anything bad with engaging with a green brand, since it is viewed as a good thing to do. Moreover it could also be due to the fact that it is not likely that a person feels both positively and negatively at the same time (Diener and Emmons, 1984), therefore negative was not present due to the high level of positive affect. Although some negative emotions were introduced such as guilt, anxiety and worry. Guilt appeared due to the fact that the respondents felt privileged to spend that kind of money when they do not necessarily need to, which contextually, in terms of price, contradicts Haynes and Podobsky (2016) in which brands with a green image were found to offset such feelings. In other words, though the green image of the brand may offset feelings of guilt, unrelated elements such as price may forebring said guilt. This finding may extend that of Haynes and Podobsky (2016) in the sense that, though the empirical material shows that interviewees expressed relief, relaxation, and anxiety-prevention from brands with a green image, which is on par with their findings, the higher price points of green brands may create feelings of guilt. Thus it implies that consumers still emphasise pricing and it enhances the perspective on how price is an important factor for this research and sample. However it also highlights that a big part of the negative affect (Diener, 1984) between green brand image could be eliminated by lower prices.

Anxiety and worrying was uncovered since a few respondents mentioned that they would overthink if the brand actually is as green as it is and therefore feeling worried and anxious if they have made the right decision or not. This shows that when consumers have a great awareness and knowledge of environmental friendliness it can at some point cause unpleasant emotion by engaging with a green brand. This finding implies that knowledge plays a central theme in the generation of negative affects such as anxiety (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999) with regard to brands that present a green image to consumers. It further expands onto Lindenmeier, Schleier and Priel (2012), in the sense that it is not only moral anger that consumers may feel upon purchasing a brand they are unsure is green, but other negative affect as well, such as anxiety and worry. The category of knowledge was seen to overlap between life satisfaction and affect (Diener, 1984).

5.4 New conceptual model

The new conceptual model, being a redone version of that which came as a result of the literature review, showcases two main new facets that appear to interact with ‘Green brand image’. Indeed, the majority of the renewed model is the same as the previous one due to the fact that green brand image was shown, as per the analysis, to influence subjective well-being through the conventional three components as conceptualised by Diener (1984). The analysis has added context as to how this occurs, nevertheless, the three components remain to be the same. The two new components were found to be overlapping categories, which as the analysis shows, have influenced several components of subjective well-being. Altruism has been a highly recurring category within Life satisfaction and Positive Affect. The arrow goes in both directions from altruism to green brand image to showcase the way in which it is consumers who are altruistic, that gain positive influence from green brand image onto their subjective well-being, not least through life satisfaction and positive affect. It has been extensively discussed how altruism plays a role in the way others view one, as well as the way one expresses themselves, and their urge for change. This is paralleled with its role in eliciting positive affect, as it has been extensively discussed how altruism allows them to feel good about themselves when using brands with a green image. Similarly, self-image also plays a role in the way in which green brand image influences subjective well-being, in its interplay with Life satisfaction, not least how others view one, and positive affect, within the context of seeing oneself as a good person and feeling good about it. The remainder of this model is meant to visually demonstrate that green brand image has been shown to influence all three components of subjective well-being, life satisfaction by enhancing its components, therefore enhancing subjective well-being, positive affect by increasing it, and negative affect through decreasing it, which is why it remains to be similar to the previous model shown in this paper.

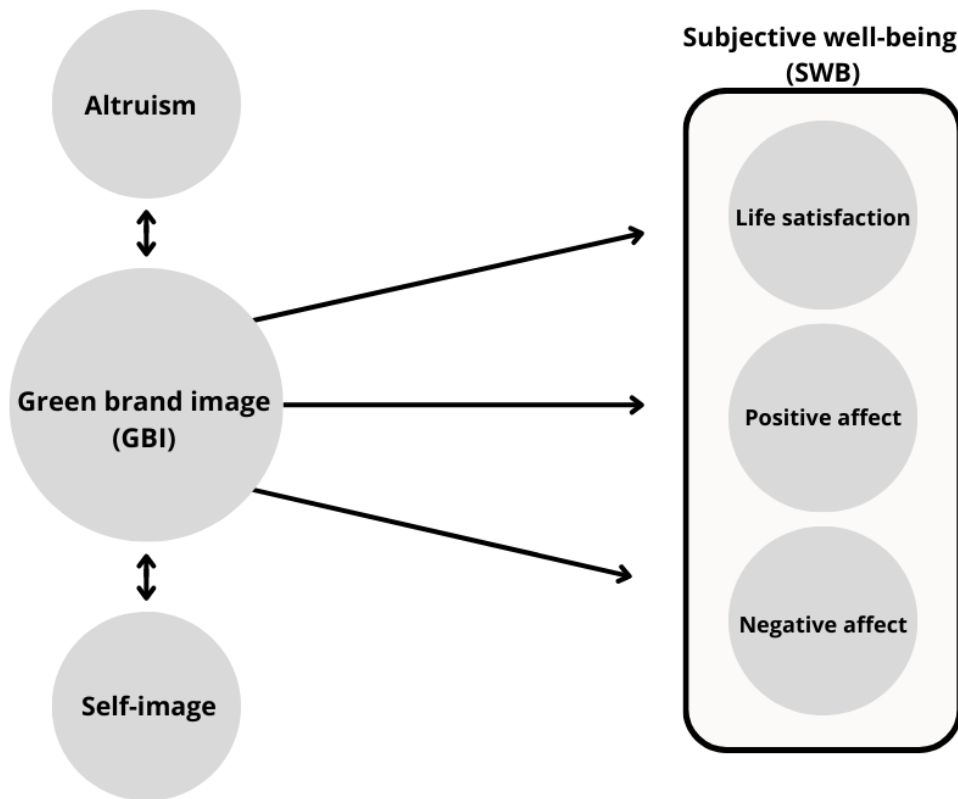


Figure 3: The influence of green brand image on subjective well-being conceptual model (Anderzén and Ramadan, 2023).

6. Conclusion

Below are the concluding remarks of this study, relating to its purpose of understanding the influence of green brand image on subjective well-being. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

In conclusion it has been discovered that a green brand image has a certain influence on subjective well-being but more importantly it has shed light on why. Even though the general life satisfaction was negative or non existing in relation to green brands, the paper uncovered that certain parts of life satisfaction is significantly positive. Which is mainly due to altruism and that green brands help consumers in order to be part and doing good for the society. In addition altruism helps consumers be viewed in a better light by its peers which emphasises one positive part of life satisfaction, leading to enhanced subjective well-being. The altruism further provides the consumer to feel more positive about themselves and therefore enhancing their self-image. Life satisfaction was also received since people felt that green brands helped to express themselves as altruistic people, while also being satisfied by utilitarian aspects that green brands brought. This highlights the existence of a congruence between the self-expression, self-image that is altruistic, being viewed by others as altruistic, and the image of a brand being green. This congruence creates positive consequences for life satisfaction, ultimately enhancing subjective well-being. This finding is further countered by the dissatisfaction and negative views of non-green brands, and individuals who engaged with them, as well as being viewed negatively for spending too much money on these brands. This illustrates the importance of congruence stemming from the green image of a brand within the context of altruism on life satisfaction therefore subjective well-being. Furthermore, brands with a green image demonstrated no influence on past life satisfaction, implying no major change with current life satisfaction compared to the past, meaning subjective well-being is unaffected by this aspect. Concerning future life satisfaction, the dispositional optimism with regards to finances shows an increase in current life satisfaction and therefore an enhancement of subjective well being because brands with a green image allows them to fulfil their desire of being more environmentally friendly in the future.

While life satisfaction had a lot of positive and negative factors, affect did not have as much since there were a lot of positive feelings discovered while also absence of negative feelings. When engaging with brands that have a green image consumers got emotions of happiness, relief and pride and it helped them in order to feel as a better person while also feeling at ease that they would not harm the environment in any way, which is altruistic in nature. This was because the green image of a brand enhanced the self-image of the participants, thus eliciting a positive affect. These feelings being positive, as well as the absence of negative affect shows the centrality of altruism within the context of using brands with a green image in enhancing subjective well-being. Additionally, brands with a green image also enabled positive affect through self-oriented motives and not just altruistic ones. These positive emotions were also discovered to be both monetary and long term due to frequency, memory and product category, which emphasise that green brands contribute to a great sense of positive affect, demonstrating that brands with a green image enhance subjective well-being through their ability to elicit positive affect. However even if the negative sides of green brands were minimal it is worth mentioning, since guilt and anxiety was present due to the fact of paying a higher price then needed while also being anxious if the green brand really is as environmentally friendly as it is proposed, which are elements that are external to green brand image itself, yet influence the way that it can enhance subjective well-being.

As a final concluding remark, the purpose of this paper has been fulfilled as brands with a green image are shown to enhance subjective well-being through the way they make people feel in regards to aspects of life satisfaction, as well as positive and prevention of negative affect. In certain cases, negative affect can come up, however, it is due to external factors to the green brand image, such as price.

6.1 Theoretical implications

The main theoretical contributions that this study has brought forth are meant to fill a theoretical gap within the literature of subjective well-being and green brand image, since these two fields have not yet been combined in this way before, including all three components of subjective well-being. This study has contributed to the understanding of how green brand image influences subjective well-being, which extends knowledge both in branding and subjective well being literature. Altruism has been seen to be a central theme for life satisfaction within the context of green brand image and its ability to enhance subjective well-being. Green brand image has been shown to influence life satisfaction, with the main finding being that of how others view one for engaging with a green brand, as well as self-image and identity-expression all being related to altruism. The findings also show that, since past life satisfaction with regard to using brands with a green image is non-existent, that knowledge of environmentalism and related themes plays a central role as well. The findings demonstrate that people feel dispositional optimism towards green brands, which thus enhances life satisfaction and therefore subjective well-being. That dispositional optimism enhances subjective well being is not a new finding, rather, it is the fact that people experience it in relation to green brands. Additionally, findings show that the financial state plays a role in the ability of green brands to enhance subjective well being, in which case it hinders the ability for people to satisfy their urge for change, as well as elicits negative affect in relation to paying higher prices. The theoretical contribution is therefore that factors external to the green image of brands may aid or hinder its ability in enhancing subjective well-being when it comes to two components, life satisfaction and negative affect.

Further contributions were shown for affect. Brands with a green image were shown to induce positive affect, thereby enhancing subjective well being. The theoretical contribution is that this positive affect from green brand image comes forth from several factors, such as congruence between thoughts and actions, self-oriented motives, and altruism or feeling like a morally good person, which thereafter enhances subjective well-being. Moreover, memory has been shown to re-trigger positive affect, which is external to green brand image, but still aids it in the enhancement of subjective well being through positive affect.

Additionally, this study shows that green brand image elicits positive affect such as relaxation, to offset negative affect such as anxiety, meaning it has been shown that green brand image enhances subjective well-being through lessening negative affect.

6.2 Practical Implications

The practical implications that is brought forward through this study is that brands can positively influence consumers' subjective well-being by adapting a green brand image. Which provides a sense that brands can enhance certain parts of their overall life. By adapting this green brand image companies are also able to minimise the risk of contributing to negative feelings since this was visible in relation to non green brands. This is why it is important for marketing practitioners to honestly communicate about the organisation's green practices, and to what extent they truly are green, as the consequences of dishonesty and uncertainty have been shown to produce anxiety and worry among consumers, which is equally damaging to the brand image.

In addition to that, the presence of knowledge in the findings suggests that marketers should aim to generate awareness regarding the environment in relation to the green brand, so as to create an opening for it to be able to positively affect their subjective well-being through brand image.

There are also other positive sides to adapting this branding strategy, albeit with honesty, since when this positive emotion appear the ownership of the brand will increase (Thürridl et al., 2020), which will strengthen the relationship that the brand has with the consumer in the form of word of mouth, willingness to pay and competitive resistance (Asatryan and Oh, 2008). Thus adopting a green brand image could indicate an increase in loyalty, which could be beneficial for both marketers and companies.

7. Limitations and future research

The following sub-chapters highlight the limitation of the research while also emphasising new direction and suggestions for future research.

7.1 Limitations

This study took place after inflation began in Sweden, affecting the prices of products and not least green brands, which may have influenced the way in which interviewees responded, thus affecting the findings. The researchers recommend that such study be repeated during a time period in which current inflated prices have become more normalised.

Furthermore, to homogenise the sample, this study took place within one age range only. This means the findings cannot be generalised to other age groups that may experience this differently. Because of the age sample being 20-29, many of the participants did not have a lot of economic freedom as they are students, or newly having full-time jobs, which could have led to different experiences and priorities regarding green brands, thus a study that utilises an older more economically independent sample can allow one to gain more insight into the interplay of subjective well being and green brand image.

The study took place in Sweden, and all participants have lived in Sweden which is a country known for its environmentally sustainable practices (Swedish Institute, 2021) and is not as affected by climate change and disasters as other countries in the global south are.

7.2 Future research

For future research this paper emphasises that it could be of great value to further explore the relationship between green brand image and subjective well-being in order to reach more conclusions within different contexts. Hence it could also indicate that subjective well-being could be applicable in other brand image and branding contexts. Moreover it is suggested to further investigate the relationship between self-image and altruism in relation to green brand image and subjective well-being in order to grasp a more broadened and depth understanding of

the interrelationship. As mentioned before, the study took place in Sweden, and therefore the authors recommend that this study be replicated in countries who experience more environmental issues related to pollution, as well as those that experience more direct effects of climate change, such as natural disasters.

Furthermore, the same study can also be replicated for an older age group that may have more financial freedom, seeing as it was a recurring theme and has affected the findings.

The study can be replicated through different research strategies and methods so as to be able to quantitatively test some of the relationships shown in the findings of this study.

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Appendix 1

Source Criticism

The scientific articles used in this study were evaluated as per the recommended guidelines by Linnaeus University's library centre (Linnaeus University, n.d.). This entails five main criteria, first that the authors are affiliated with and work in academia, which the authors interpret as universities. The second is that the article is not outdated, which the authors interpreted as using articles published between 2015-2023. The third criterion is that the articles contain a rich reference list, which entails that it does not utilise very few sources, instead, utilises many. The fourth criterion is that the article follows a scientific structure, which entails a scientific method, data collection, analysis and conclusions. Lastly, the article must be relevant to the purpose of this study, which is green brand image and subjective well-being.

Observe that the authors also utilised articles that were reviews, or do not fulfil the criteria of having a scientific structure, however those articles, such as Diener (1984), Diener and Emmons (1984), Diener, Suh and Lucas (1999), were used due to their importance and prominence in the field of subjective well-being. Diener (1984) may be outdated as per the criteria set by the authors, however, he is a known pioneer in this field, and thus the authors believed it was important to define and build onto the original definition of said pioneer. Other outdated articles containing Diener such as the latter articles were also seen to be ground-breaking within the field of subjective well-being, showcasing crucial progression and evolution of the field, which the authors believed was important to include in this study.

Cockrill's study was seen to fulfil most criteria. As the author, Antje Cockrill works in Swansea University within the Business and Economics department. The article also contains over 40 references which fulfils the criteria of a rich reference list. The article also follows a scientific structure, meaning that it follows a method, has data, and data analysis, as well as findings and conclusions. Though the article was published in 2012, its findings were still relevant to the authors of this paper, as it was seen to be connected with similar articles that are more recent, which also utilise concepts of life satisfaction. Though the context of this article is within a technical, outdated product, the iPod, it was not utilised in isolation of other recent more relevant

articles that are about green consumption. In other words, it was found relevant due to the added-context it brings forth to the interplay between consumption and life satisfaction, adding the element of ‘coolness’ as an image. This was extended into the green brand context in combination with Chéron, Sudbury-Riley and Kohlbacher (2022), a more recent article that discusses green consumption and life satisfaction. Therefore, the authors interpreted Cockrill’s (2012) findings in connection with it, showcasing the logic behind its extension into the green brand context. The authors are also aware that the specificity of the coolness of an iPod likely no longer applies today, in 2023, however, the authors interpreted ‘coolness’ as an element of brand image, and not the specific one tied to having an iPod. In short, the interpretation was more generalised to the ‘image’ of that product, and how it was able to affect people’s life satisfaction. The main reason the authors brought mention of specifically the iPod was to demonstrate for the readers the logic through which its context was extended.

Appendix 2

2.1 Open coding example

Theoretical concept	Open codes	Concept	Category
Life satisfaction	Code: Contributing to society Code: Provides boost due to doing something good Code: Doing something good for the humanity	Positive feeling from contributing to society	Altruism on Life Satisfaction

Table 4: Example of open code, category and concept

Below is an example of an excerpt from a transcript through which the open codes were derived:

*“I would not say that it naturally gives me satisfaction, it gives more of a boost because to think that I'm doing something good **Code: Provides boost due to doing something good** . For the same way that I'm providing something for the world or like humanity **Code: Doing something good for the humanity**. Because there is a lot of things when it is not green based that's behind the scenes that we don't know about”*

2.2 Concepts and categories

Concepts	Category
Altruism will be more prominent in the future (future)	Altruism effect on LS
Already satisfied with current efforts (LS)	
Prevention of climate change (urge for change)	
Viewed positively in an altruistic way (view)	
Positive feeling from contributing to society (LS)	
Viewed positively when other person is also sustainable (view)	
Feeling good due to altruism	Altruism effect on PA
Feeling prideful over using green brands due to morality	
Feeling relaxed or non-anxious when engaging with green brands	
Financial incentives affecting the opportunity for engaging with green brands in past	Financial on LS
Future financial freedom	
High prices and urge for change	
Green brands having a higher price creates negative feelings	Financial on NA
Feeling privileged to be able to buy green brands	
Size of impact by using green brands does not feel big enough	Frequency on LS
Repeated use or interactions with green	Frequency on PA

brands creates long-lasting good feelings	
Feeling good for a short time directly after or during purchase	
Lack of knowledge in the past	Knowledge on past LS
More optimism in the past as compared to the present	
Environment not important in the past	
The feeling of being responsible to look into how green the brand is creates anxiety and deception	Knowledge on NA
Negative view of those who do not use green brands	Negative view (LS)
Viewed as someone who spends an unnecessarily high amount of money	
Viewed as annoying if they are excessively green	
Feeling good due to self-oriented reasons	Self oriented effect of GB on PA
Feeling happy from using green brands due to met needs	
Social influence from friend circle	Social influence
Social pressure	

Table 5: Demonstration of categories and concepts.