



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW

# Understanding consumer emotions in practices of omnichannel slow fashion retail

*The involvement of emotions in slow fashion shopping*

Hanna Bratic  
Ellen Lindeblad

Graduate school  
Master of Science in Marketing and Consumption  
Supervisor: Ingrid Stigzelius  
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## **Abstract**

This study draws on previous research in omnichannel shopping, which is based on literature of consumer experience, customer journey and emotions in slow fashion shopping. The aim of this study is to further evaluate how emotions shape the practice of slow fashion shopping in an omnichannel environment and how the practices also evoke emotions. To do so, this study takes a practice theory perspective derived from Schatzki's (1996, 2002) teleoaffective structures, which connects the linkage between practice and emotion. Methodologically, this research takes a phenomenological research approach with ten semi-structured interviews. By taking a phenomenological approach, the inner worlds of the interviewees and their stance of emotions and doings are revealed. This study contributes to the research field of omnichannel experiences by focusing on the emotions involved within the customer journey from a practice theory perspective. The practice of shopping slow fashion is characterized by doing extensive research based on the idea of "investing" rather than doing impulsive shopping of clothes. Emotions are involved in this practice through feelings of convenience, ease and safety. These feelings stem from past routines and habits around how research is conducted prior to a purchase, which affects the choice of channels. This study identifies three typical groups of consumers in their primal choice of channels: the online consumer, the offline consumer and the indifferent consumer. Practices of shopping slow fashion however differ depending on whether the emotional involvement of the consumer had primarily hedonic or utilitarian motives. Consumers in the indifferent group were more likely to switch channels and often overlooked the hedonic motives and strived towards utilitarian outcomes such as convenience of saving time and money. The consumers who stuck to their chosen channels of either online or offline were similar in their emotions connected to slow fashion shopping, which included hedonic motives such as visual appeal and the comfort of shopping within their preferred channels. Furthermore, they gained emotional safety by choosing their preferred channel due to the high involvement of time and emotions when shopping slow fashion. The concept of omnichannels offering the ease of seamless shopping, positively enhances the experience of consumers that have tendencies to switch between channels. Although, omnichannels does not contribute to the practice of shopping slow fashion in solely physical stores.

**Keywords:** Omnichannel retail, Teleoaffective structures, Emotions in shopping, Slow fashion shopping, Practice Theory

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# 1. Introduction

In recent years there has been a shift from multichannel to omnichannel retailing, which in turn is triggering a change in shopping behaviors towards a more integrated and seamless experience in the choice between a different set of channels, including mobile, online and offline shopping (Verhoef et al., 2015; von Briel, 2018). Previous studies have primarily focused on the omnichannel experience (Verhoef et al., 2015) from either a customer journey perspective or by segmenting consumers into a set of characteristics that drive behavior within an omnichannel environment (Mosquera et al., 2019, Barwitz & Maas, 2018). Moreover, other studies have shown that there is a connection between emotions and experiences during shopping (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), where emotions for example have been identified as the main drivers of satisfaction and loyalty (Ou & Verhoef, 2017). While emotions have been stressed as an important topic in omnichannel retail in general (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), there is however a lack of studies on how emotions are involved in consumer's everyday practice of omnichannel shopping.

In addressing this gap, this study takes a practice theory perspective, since practice theory has of recent work managed to embody the aspect of emotions and how experiences create a set of emotions within a certain practice (Molander & Hartmann, 2018; Schatzki, 1996). The practice of shopping fashion has shown to be particularly rooted in motivations of emotional and psychological characters (Goldsmith et al., 1996). What still remains obscure from a practice perspective is how emotions come into play in slow fashion consumption in omnichannels, which this study therefore contributes towards. Slow fashion differentiates from fast fashion due to the quality of the clothes (Pookulangara & Schepard, 2013) and not based on seasonal trends (Cataldi et al., 2013). It is particularly interesting since slow fashion evokes more emotions compared to other types of fashion consumption (Zarley Watson & Yan, 2013; Pookulangara & Schepard, 2013). Studying consumers who shop slow fashion and how they interact with omnichannels could bring new light on omnichannel usage within slow fashion. Omnichannel shopping aims for a seamless experience which makes it easier for consumers to shop frequently, while slow fashion focuses on less frequent updates of the wardrobe and no seasonal trends. These phenomena could in that sense be seen to contradict each other. This research could therefore be of interest to retailers since understanding how emotions are involved in the practice of slow fashion shopping, could reveal underlying motives for consumers actions, which retailers can use to adapt in their omnichannels within the slow fashion industry.

Previous research has proven that emotions have an effect on purchase intentions in the customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The customer journey is conceptualized as a set of experiences during the purchase cycle and across multiple touch points in omnichannels (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The customer journey can further be described as dynamic, which flows from pre-purchase, to purchase and post-purchase. Researchers have focused on understanding customer motivation, determinants of choice and their experience within omnichannels. Consumers go through a variety of emotions within an omnichannel

experience (Lynch & Barnes, 2020) and emotions are also treated as the main drivers of satisfaction and loyalty (Ou & Verhoef, 2017). Studies within the area of customer journey also proves to possess underlying and evident reasons for customers' choice of interactions. This further denotes underlying motives that are either hedonic or utilitarian (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). Hedonic experiences refers to pleasure and excitement, and a sense of belonging, while utilitarian experiences includes effectiveness and performance content (Barwitz & Maas, 2018). The hedonic or utilitarian motives could be further linked to the fact that hedonic and utilitarian experiences are seen to be affected by the consumer's emotions during shopping (Rodríguez-Torrico et al., 2020).

By adopting a practice-centric approach to omnichannel in retail, it provides a deeper understanding of a new form of shopping (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017), encompassing a bundle of different elements and how they are kept together into a practice (Schatzki, 1996). Practice theory has of recent work managed to embody the aspect of emotions and how experiences create a set of emotions within a certain practice (Molander & Hartmann, 2018; Schatzki, 1996). Revived from Schatzki's (1996) theory of teleoaffective structures, Molander and Hartmann (2018) have captured the essence of practice and its linkages to emotions. This is done through the intersection of various performances with individuals as carriers of practices. There are three steps within the practice, which is further introduced as anticipating, actualizing, and assessing (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). These steps are described as "teleoaffective episodes" which depict routines and embodiment of emotions that are intertwined within a practice (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). These theoretical building blocks are used in this study to enable a deeper understanding of the emotions in omnichannel slow fashion practices. Therefore, it is interesting to look into the omnichannel customer journey by gaining an understanding of the emotions' involvement in the practice of shopping slow fashion. This approach emphasizes the understanding of underlying emotions within the practice of omnichannel shopping of slow fashion and is therefore also a part of creating the practice itself. The essence of this research is to look into the consumers' practices by taking on a teleoaffective approach on slow fashion shopping in omnichannels. This creates the possibility to define and theorize the practice-emotion linkages (Molander & Hartmann, 2018; Schatzki, 1996) and creates an opportunity for further analysis within omnichannel retailing.

Against this background of research about behaviors in omnichannel shopping, consumer experience within customer journey and studies on slow fashion behavior, this study aims to understand how emotions shape the practice of slow fashion shopping in omnichannel environments and how practices in turn evoke emotions. This will be achieved by answering the following research question: *How are emotions involved in the practice of omnichannel shopping in slow fashion?* The contribution of this research is to generate a deeper understanding of how consumers through their emotions differentiate their practices when it comes to omnichannel shopping of slow fashion. The underlying emotional cues could give an indication whether the channels of omnichannel are suitable for the slow fashion consumer. This study is delimited to examine Swedish consumers in the ages between 20-30 years old.

In order to answer the research question, this study dives further into previous studies which includes the notion of omnichannel experience, customer journey and emotions from a practice-centric point of view. It becomes crucial to denote how consumers adapt and create habits in accordance with their experiences and changes in the external environment. Although previous research has studied consumer's experiences within omnichannels and determinants of channel choice in the customer journey. It remains to be further analyzed how emotions are involved in the practice of slow fashion shopping within omnichannels, which is the contribution of this study. This study contains the following sections; firstly, a literature review of relevant topics is presented, which aims to lay a foundation to the understanding about emotions in shopping. Secondly, the methodology is explained, including the choice of a phenomenology stance and emotionalist semi structured interviews. This is followed by the empirical results from the interviews, and the results are analyzed and further discussed. At last, the conclusion and answer to the research question is revealed which is followed by suggestions for future research and managerial implications.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Slow Fashion

Emotions in shopping are particularly prominent in slow fashion shopping. For clothes that are mass-produced, such as fast fashion, consumers do not hold an emotional connection to the item and can easily be replaced with new trends (Gabriel & Lang, 2006). However, slow fashion consumers are seen to be more emotionally connected to their items compared to fast fashion consumers (Zarley Watson & Yan, 2013; Pookulangara & Schepard, 2013). Slow fashion shopping has proved to reduce the stress of shopping, since consumers shop less and choose items with more thought and care (Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2015). However, there is a duality in motivations to why consumers buy slow fashion which induces traditional attributes such as quality, price, style, and comfort but also ethical considerations (Jägel et al., 2012). Some researchers indicate that consuming slow fashion could go against the social norm, but if more people start consuming slow fashion, the norms might change (Pookulangara & Shepard, 2013). Slow fashion items are viewed as products that consumers buy to wear for a long period of time (Pookulangara & Schepard, 2013). Consumers will buy fewer items but clothes that are of higher value compared to fast fashion clothes (Pookulangara & Schepard, 2013). Slow fashion also aims to reduce the number of trends and seasons of the items (Cataldi et al., 2013). In addition, this type of fashion enables a richer bond between designers, producers, users, and garments (Cataldi et al., 2013; Fletcher, 2007). Moreover, consumers, designers and buyers are more aware of the impacts on workers, communities, and ecosystems (Fletcher, 2007). Slow fashion brands are often perceived to be luxury fashion brands (Zarley Watson & Yan, 2013). Taken together, these connections generate stronger emotional bonds to the consumed clothes, which makes slow fashion particularly interesting to this study. This is of interest to further dive into how slow fashion is conveyed as a practice in an omnichannel environment that offers an easy route towards an increased consumption of clothes and therefore, contradicts the idea of slow fashion consumption.

### 2.2 Emotions in omnichannel shopping

Regarding the area of fashion consumption, previous studies have presented the notion of fashion behaviors as deeply rooted in emotional and psychological motivations (Goldsmith et al., 1996). In addition, shopping has emotional benefits to many consumers (Babin et al., 1994), which is why emotions are of interest in this study when denoting how consumers adapt and create practices in fashion omnichannel in accordance with their emotions. In line with previous studies, emotions are described as a set of episodes during consumption, these episodes are associated with intense feelings which are connected to either objects, people or events that trigger certain behavior (Cohen & Areni, 1991). Focus on emotions from a stance of environmental cues, both offline and online, refers to physical stores and online shopping. Therefore, the significance of emotions still prevails as an essential perspective within this study to further investigate the aspect of shopping. Since emotions are treated as the main drivers of satisfaction and loyalty it further denotes the two categories of orientations within consumption as in: hedonic and utilitarian (Ou & Verhoef, 2017). With this in mind, the



essence of understanding the practice of an action stems from also understanding the consequences of consumers' emotional reactions to the offline and online environment (Souiden et al., 2019). An aspect worth noting is the description of both utilitarian and hedonic elements which stems from an online shopping perspective (Rodríguez- Torrico et al., 2020). Utilitarian experience had three formative dimensions in Rodríguez- Torrico et al. (2020) study which were interactivity, security, and privacy whilst hedonic had visual appeal and enjoyment. The hedonic values involve the fun and excitement people experience by trying new experiences, customized designed products and so on (Forsythe et al., 2006). Utilitarian and hedonic experiences are significantly influenced by the emotions which appear during online shopping. On the other hand, the relationship between a utilitarian experience and emotions are stronger for frequent omnichannel consumers due to their ability and experience of shopping (Rodríguez- Torrico et al., 2020).

Other studies related to hedonic and utilitarian motives in shopping found that the mood of consumers is related to the previous association to the usage of a specific product, and the consumers are reminded of the hedonic or emotional values of the product (Chaudhuri, 1997). Since consumers sometimes cannot physically access the product, they have to rely on their emotional states such as pleasure. In the same vein, positive emotional states such as pleasure, evoked from the website may bias shoppers' estimate of the amount of information that is available on the website. In that way retailers can provide a pleasurable shopping environment by using images and technologies that entertain the consumers, to increase consumers perceived amount of information (Kim & Lennon, 2008). Pleasure and arousal were also found to be positively related to purchase intention. Therefore, by creating an enjoyable environment online, retailers can encourage shoppers to purchase within the website (Kim & Lennon, 2008).

In research of online shopping, it is evident that former studies have proven to showcase emotional reactions during online shopping which are influenced by the web characteristics (Richard & Chebat, 2016). Previous research has also studied environments during shopping and found that pleasant environments have been shown to allow consumers to handle more information, foresee more positive outcomes and to engage in more exploration (Isen, 1987). Hedonic experience, which is related to consumers' degree of playfulness that shoppers experience from the website (Järvenpää & Todd, 1997), also increases customers' information search behaviors (Schmidt, 1996). Previous research suggests that consumers respond to dimensions of the physical surroundings both emotionally and cognitively, which affects their behavior (Mehrabian & Russel, 1974). Visitors' emotions in a store (online or offline) precede their cognition and site interfaces such as background music and colors which evoke consumer's emotions at the initial site exposure (Mazaheri et al., 2012). Consumers have been found to impact their perceptions of site effectiveness and informativeness as well as site entertainment (Mazaheri et al., 2012). In addition, previous research has found that the channel selection when shopping, is influenced by the social setting, such as shopping with family or friends (Nicholson et al., 2002). Emotions within shopping will be of importance to analyze in this study due to the outcome of consumer choice and behavior within an omnichannel setting of slow fashion, since emotions as earlier mentioned, proven to be

influenced by both environmental cues online (Richard & Chebat, 2016), and offline within a shopping experience (Mehrabian & Russel, 1974). Furthermore, fashion consumers are emotionally attached to items, which further denotes the fact that shopping is a form of emotional investment that gets triggered by either objects, people or events (Cohen & Areni, 1991; Goldsmith et al., 1996; Babin et al., 1994).

### 2.3 Consumers' experiences in omnichannels

To further understand consumers' emotions in slow fashion, consumer experiences are of interest since emotions could be seen to be deeply connected to the experiences of consumers. Consumer experience could contribute to the understanding of consumers' emotions in practices of omnichannel retail shopping since experience has seen to have an effect on consumers behaviors. To evaluate further, consumer experience is seen as being constituted of spatial material as in physical layouts, objects, atmospheric cues and social dynamics includes the social, emotional, historical and cognitive aspects (Andreu et al., 2006). Findings from a study by Lynch and Barnes (2020) denotes that consumers' experiences showcases an emotional rollercoaster throughout consumers' omnichannel experience. This is in line with the study by Fuentes and Svingstedt (2017), which revealed that an increased level of stress and anxiety is connected to mobile shopping. Consumers in the study by Fuentes and Svingstedt (2017) experienced information overload and the fear of "missing out" which lead to unnecessary overconsumption due to impulse purchases. Mobile shopping has instead been found to be favorable when buying habitual products that consumers have a past experience of purchasing (Wang et al., 2015). Although, what needs to be noted is that consumer experience within retail is considered to be strictly personal, involving consumers cognitive, affective, emotional, social and physical responses to the retailer (Verhoef et al., 2015). In regard to this, it has been found that consumers' experience differs, the study by Savastano et al. (2016) revealed that task-oriented customers seek time saving tools to get an efficient shopping experience. Other types of consumers look for enriched shopping experiences and highly unique customized products which is considered an emotional worth of shopping (Savastano et al., 2016).

Previous research manages to cover areas of how a shopping environment affects the experience, which have shown to prove a distinction between static and dynamic environmental cues (Schmitt, 2003). Static design elements involve features that are there prior to the arrival of the customer, and dynamic elements refer to human interactions between customers and personnel store interface (Schmitt, 2003). This is similar to the study by Alexander and Olivares Alvarado (2014), who depicts that store dynamic and atmospheric elements are important to deliver an online/offline integrated shopping experience. Store atmospherics such as layout, design, product displays etc. plays a role. Multi-sensory variables also play a role for the atmospherics, such as sight, touch, sound, smell, and taste. The study also found that consumers were motivated to visit the physical store for browsing rather than with the intention to buy and that most consumers do research online before going to the physical store (Alexander & Olivares Alvarado, 2014). Additional research also implies that the physical environment or stimulus causes a mental and emotional effect on the

organism (person) which results in a responsive behavior (Mehrabian & Russell's, 1974). In relation to the store atmospherics, store personnel have been found to influence consumer's experience (Bäckstrom & Johansson, 2006). In addition, offline store personnel showcased positive effects on the determinants of online store usefulness and online store enjoyment in a multi-channel setting (Verhagen et al., 2018).

Another concept that is researched within the area of omnichannel shopping and consumer experience is seamlessness. A challenge for retailers with omnichannels today is to deliver a seamless and holistic experience (Ping Chang & Lingwen, 2022). There is not yet a common understanding of a seamless experience. Although prior researchers have explained it as a management-oriented concept to describe the omnichannel integration capabilities that retailers should have (Accenture, 2013). Seamless could be further depicted as removing the distinctions between the various available channels, with the aim to integrate all the channels to one showroom without walls (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013). In a shopping environment, a consumer sees the channels as seamless if the consumer perceives fluidity and absence of barriers when moving between channels (Huré et al., 2017). Retailers play a big role in delivering an integral consumer experience (Pratt, 2012). Retailers can conceptualize the holistic fashion experience in terms of enabling consumers to perform relevant online activities within the store (Pantano & Naccarato, 2010). Retailers can also use technology to create more customized services, optimize logistics and better understand consumer preferences (Pantano & Naccarato, 2010). Since technology is a part of the store's environment, it must improve the in-store experience and meet the customers' expectations (Kozinets et al., 2002). The in-store experience should be relaxing and entertaining which makes shopping a pleasurable experience (Chu & Lam, 2007). Meanwhile, technology can also create an attractive and memorable experience (Kozinets et al., 2002). This is in line with Kim et al. (2016) study which showcased those consumers strive for an emotionally positive experience during their purchases. Therefore, retailers' goal is to attract the customer emotionally, so that the bonds get deeper (Mishra et al., 2016).

What has been researched is the experiences within an omnichannel environment (Lynch & Barnes, 2020, Fuentes & Svingsted, 2017), but not necessarily what effect the emotions have on the outcome of the behavior, or vice versa, how the emotion affects a certain behaviour. By this means the field of consumer experience of slow fashion shopping can further evaluate why consumers strive for a certain experience. This can be explained in the choice of channel or how they move between a set of channels in a customer journey.

## 2.4 Customer journey in omnichannel

In order to understand the practice of shopping in omnichannels and the emotions connected to it, the customer journey manages to convey all stages within purchasing which is depicted as an on-going cycle. The customer journey is described as dynamic, which flows from the pre-purchase, purchase and to post-purchase which represents the three stages of a customer journey. To specify, the term "dynamic" indicates the sense of an on-going process for the customer throughout the journey (Schmitt, 2003). In every stage of the customer journey, the

customer experiences a set of touchpoints, where some of the touchpoints are under the firm's control (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The customer journey is reflecting the cognitive as well as the emotional aspects of the purchase decision (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The research within a customer journey prevails important touch points throughout an omnichannel experience. To begin with, the authors Lemon and Verhoef (2016) conceptualizes the customer journey as a set of experiences during the purchase cycle and across multiple touch points in omnichannels. Although emotions have a central role in some aspects of the customer journey, emotions are most often not in focus when researching customer's journeys when shopping.

To further describe the customer journey in omnichannels it becomes necessary to differentiate between the set of channels as described by Verhoef et al. (2015). Mobile is the usage of mobile devices for either research or shopping whilst online is shopping or research through one's computer or tablet. Finally, offline represents brick-and-mortar store which is the physical setting of shopping (Verhoef et al., 2015). With omnichannel retailing, different channels such as mobile, online and offline becomes more indistinct and consistent when consumers shop compared to its previous detachment in multichannel retailing (Verhoef et al., 2015; Savastano et al., 2016). Channels become more intertwined, in the sense that consumers may use multiple channels, an example is when a consumer is visiting a physical store but simultaneously does research on their mobile phone in order to compare prices. Omnichannels makes it difficult for retailers to control the usage during the process of purchasing, whilst in a multi-channel environment the channels were not simultaneously used which gave the retailers more control (Verhoef et al., 2015). With omnichannels, the divisions between the different channels become blurred (Verhoef et al., 2015). The changes of the multichannel shopping environment have therefore increased the interest for creating a seamless shopping experience between mobile, online and offline channels throughout the customer journey (Yrjölä et al., 2018; Verhoef et al., 2015; von Briel, 2018).

The pre-purchase stage includes all aspects of the customer's interaction with a brand before a purchase (Lemon & Verhoef, 2015). Social media denotes an important integration to the pre-purchase stage of research, since the communication between customer-to-customer on social media can have an effect throughout the customer journey, however, this does not signify a transactional process but rather an informational one (Verhoef et al., 2015). With this in mind, the research within customer journey manages to connect the social interactions during the pre-purchase to post-purchase stage of the customer journey (Barwitz & Maas, 2018; Alexander & Kent, 2022; Lynch & Barnes, 2020). Furthermore, social media and other technologies do have an influence on the pre-purchase stage due to the inducement of hedonic and utilitarian responses which are pivotal in the research stage (Alexander & Kent, 2022). Consumers with hedonic benefits of value-in-use tend to move towards higher interactivity and social engagements for discussions (Barwitz & Maas, 2018). Social approval and other factors were significant for the pre-purchase stage as a social experience, and consumers would actively seek opinions of others before a purchase by sharing images and links of a fashion product (Lynch & Barnes, 2020).

The purchase stage covers all aspects of the customer's interaction with the brand and its environment during the purchase itself. This could be behaviors such as choice of product, ordering and payment (Kotler & Keller, 2011). Furthermore, the decision making in this stage of the customer journey could be influenced by two factors, such as the attitude of others and unanticipated situational factors. The first refers to the opinion of others and the latter refers to influences that could disrupt the purchase such as personnel or economic aspects (Kotler & Keller, 2011). This could be concluded by the notion that social norms have been found to be an important factor for channel selection when purchasing (Chandon et al., 2000). Other factors of influence during the purchase stage contribute to other perceived risks during a purchase such as the price, product quality and level of self-assurance as well (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

Finally, the post-purchase stage encompasses customers' interactions with the brand and its environment following the actual purchase. Previous studies have proven that the shopping journey would continue even after the customer visits the store (Alexander & Olivares Alvarado, 2014). This includes behaviors such as usage, consumption, post-purchase engagement, and service requests (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). This stage also includes non-purchase behaviors such as word of mouth (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Consumers tend to be influenced by their peers, which can include family and friends, but also reviews from former customers which can affect their decision making even after their purchase (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014). In connection with the customer journey and omnichannel experiences, customers tend to bring previous experiences to new ones, an overwhelming exposure of information can push the consumer towards making impulsive purchases (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014; Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017). Emotional responses can be impacted by either social pressure or a consumer can also consider themselves being more rational and spending time to evaluate a purchase (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014). This concludes to the fact that consumers tend to behave differently depending on their emotions and experiences within their omnichannel customer journey (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Nelson, 1971).

Research about consumers' choice of channels within the customer journey is further evaluated by Kang et al. (2021). The authors have studied the area of consumer behavior and the influences of psychographic characteristics in consumers during webrooming and showrooming in retail. To begin with, showrooming depicts the notion of store-to-online shopping where the consumer does research in physical stores and makes the final purchase online or on their mobile devices (Kang et al., 2021). Whilst webrooming defines the opposite of the consumer that first-hand does research online or on mobile devices in order to compare prices or reviews of brands, the purchase is thereafter made in physical stores (Kang et al., 2021). Previous studies have shown that shopping behavior and use of technologies during the customer journey are influenced by sociodemographic variables such as age, education, and gender (Venkatesh, 2012). It also becomes critical to observe consumers from a stance of their thoughts, reactions, and feelings (Nelson, 1971). Consumers who showroom do replicate with consumers who search product information, compare prices across channels and strive for social interactions. Webrooming on the other hand, are consumers that

appreciate trying on and touching the products before purchase, therefore their online function stems from checking stock availability before purchasing in store, they also avoid shipping fees (Kang et al., 2021), therefore webroomers are not interested in price comparison. Furthermore, consumers who tend to search for information were more inclined to omnichannel shopping which also depicts that consumer in multichannel environments are driven by social and economic goals as well (Kang, 2018). Consumers that neither engage in webrooming or showrooming are more motivated to gain convenience and time saving, due to the time-consuming effort being made by doing research either online or offline, their motives are in this case utilitarian (Kang, 2018).

In studies regarding customer journey various segments of consumers have been found (Konus et al., 2008; Mosquera et al., 2019). To begin with, Konuş et al. (2008) presented the segment “enthusiasts” who are depicted as the innovative consumer that explores and uses new alternatives. The enthusiasts have a positive attitude towards all channels (Konus et al., 2008). The segment of enthusiasts considers shopping a pleasurable experience compared to the other segments (Konus et al., 2008). In line with Mosquera et al. (2019) study the segment “enthusiastic shopper” was found to be consumers who was influenced by opinions of others, such as family and friends and often used more than two different channels for a purchase (Mosquera et al., 2019). They often search information online before a purchase but finally buy the product in a physical store (Mosquera et al., 2019). The other segment of the study by Konuş et al. (2008) was “uninvolved shoppers” who are characterized by not having any specific preference of channels. In connection to the study by Mosquera et al. (2019), an “indifferent group” was identified. They conduct their research either online or on mobile devices and finally make the purchase in brick-and-mortar stores solely to gain the best deal and not for any hedonic motivation. Lastly the “reluctant group” were defined as consumers who did not value the integration of different channels and did not enjoy shopping (Mosquera et al., 2019). In similarity with Konuş et al.’s. (2008) study, the group of “uninvolved shoppers” did not value the hedonic experience of shopping.

To conclude, the customer journey shows that a variety of elements are of importance to consumers' behavior and how they adapt in a set of channels. Previous research also shows that consumers can be segmented within an omnichannel setting. However, what prior research does not show is how the various segments are influenced by emotions and what impact emotions have on practices. To further understand emotions, a practice perspective by Schatzki's (1996) theory of teleoaffective episodes is adopted, which connects practice to emotions. This approach helps to understand how emotions affect practices and vice versa (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Practice and emotions related to consumer behavior has previously been studied, but not related to customer journeys, even though emotions are seen as involved in the customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014; Nelson, 1971). Therefore, this study, as aforementioned, aims to investigate practices and emotions within the customer journey and explicitly in the consumer's shopping of slow fashion through omnichannel context as a whole.

## 2.5 Practice theory and teleoaffective structures

Practice theory gives an understanding of how consumers behave, which is of interest in this study when investigating how consumers act when using retail omnichannel shopping. Practice theories emphasize routine, flow and sequence, tendencies, and practical consciousness rather than the opposites of these factors (Warde, 2014). Furthermore, practice theory takes a stance against the perspective of cognitive and decision-making models of actions, but rather focuses on bodily and physical procedures within routines which leads to habits of doings (Warde, 2014). Practice theory has previously been focused solely on practical doings and therefore, overlooked on feelings which influence the practical performance. Although emotions have traditionally been recognized as an important element in practices, it has been recently revived in the study by Molander and Hartmann (2018). By adopting a practice-centric approach to omnichannel in retail, it provides a deeper understanding of a new form of shopping and its consequences for consumers (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017). Furthermore, retailers could gain more knowledge about the motives of their customers by understanding how the shift from multi to omnichannel has influenced the practices of their customers.

Practice theory has of recent work managed to embody the aspect of emotions and how experiences create a set of emotions within a certain practice (Molander & Hartmann, 2018; Schatzki, 1996). The inclusion of emotions within practice manages to set off another stream of analysis that does not solely focus on practice theory that de-emphasizes individuals solely as “carrier” but rather as carriers of experience and emotions (Molander & Hartmann, 2018; Reckwitz, 2002). Instead of focusing on practice as bodily and physical procedures within routines that lead to habits of doings (Warde, 2014), this study understands consumptions as invested and sustained through emotions (Belk et al., 2003). These emotions are deployed of desires and imaginations (Belk et al., 2003). Shopping in slow fashion omnichannels can be seen as related to this ability to imagine desired outcomes as prescribed by the practice, since fashion behaviors are deeply rooted in emotional and psychological motivations (Goldsmith et al., 1996). This view of practice is in line with the Wittgensteinian perspective, which believes that emotions are located in practices (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). From this perspective of practices, the practice consists of four elements (Schatzki, 2002: 87): teleoaffectivity, practical and general understandings, and rules. The emphasis of this study is in line with the theory of teleoaffectivity due to its integration of emotions into practices (Schatzki, 2002). This view on emotions is similar to Scheer’s (2012) work where emotions are communicative since they engender exchange with others. Emotions are also performative and thus practices express emotions and the other way around (Scheer, 2012). Additionally, emotions can be a mood manager when being mobilized in practices (Scheer, 2012). Similar to Sahakian’s (2019) study, this study on practices and emotions can help to understand people’s priorities in terms of how things ought or should be.

In line with Molander & Hartmann’s (2018) study the researchers attempt to understand emotions as a linkage to practice which stems from Schatzki’s (2002) depiction of

teleoaffectivity as “a range of normativized and hierarchically ordered ends, projects and tasks, to varying degrees allied with normativized emotions and even moods.” (p.80). A teleoaffective structure is a set of ends, projects, and affectives, which are expressed in sayings and doings in the practice (Schatzki, 2002). The teleoaffective structures also provide emotional aspirations and goals (Schatzki, 2002). Emotions are in this sense embedded in the goal people try to reach, and the means by which they do so (Sahakian et al., 2020). Emotions are encapsulated in contexts and fundamental in relationships between people, objects, and their environment, and central to how practices play out (Sahakian et al., 2020). Emotions never come alone, instead they are always related to a practical outcome. Through teleoaffective structures, practices hold preordained sets of desired emotional outcomes and impacts. Even though emotions are linked to practices, they are experienced individually (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Revived from Schatzki’s (1996) theory of teleoaffective structures, the theory managed to captivate the essence of practice and its emotion linkages through the intersection of various performances and individuals as carriers of practices which represents the phases of anticipating, actualizing, and assessing (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). These episodes are an evolving cycle, where experiences are added in every step.

Molander and Hartmann (2018) presented the first teleoaffective episode of anticipating as a pre-stage of emotions which are not fully developed. This episode derives from how practitioners predict their desired outcomes of practices and doings (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Anticipating is socially shaped and learned from previous experiences and indicates what the practitioners could anticipate to be the emotional outcome in a situation after a specific “doing”. A result from this could be affective pleasure, which could occur when the actor is uncertain about what to expect from performances in the future. This anticipation does affect the doings as something to make sense to do (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Affective pleasure could thus be related to stress and a feeling of threats (Marx & Stapel, 2006), and this could prepare the practitioner for performances that reduce the displeasure (Molander & Hartmann, 2018).

Actualizing as stated by Molander and Hartmann (2018), is the linkage between practice and emotion as it depicts the practice, the performance of the practice leads to a set of emotions. Once practice of doing has begun, the embodiment of an emotion begins to actualize (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Emotions stem from bodily doings which are expressed and communicated, thus further leads to the depiction of either reflective or unreflective state of emotions (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Additionally, in accordance with Molander and Hartmann (2018) emotions are still practice-emotions and guided by teleoaffective structures which denote emotions of “acceptance” once the performance is done.

Finally, assessing presents the aftermath of a practice being performed, the emotions triggered afterwards can trigger the adjustment of future practices based on past experiences (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Depending on the performance of the practice and its outcome, the negative or positive emotions of assessing might depict future performances (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Molander and Hartmann (2018) explains that if a practitioner



performs a certain practice with content, the practitioner will continue to do what it does without any further control of the situation due to the former positive outcomes (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). This study encapsulates this view on teleoaffective structure and emotions to better understand the emotions in the practice of omnichannel shopping in slow fashion.

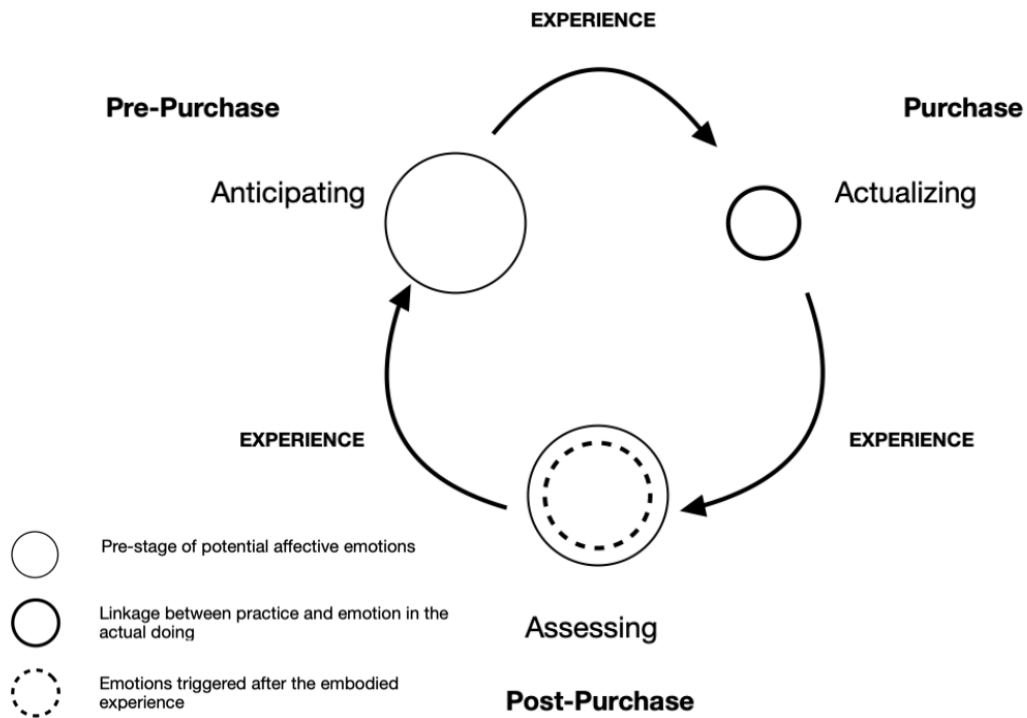
What is thus important in teleoaffective structures is the complexity of how it guides practice performances. The performances can be aligned or misaligned throughout the episodes of anticipating, actualizing, and assessing (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Teleoaffective structures might not always be straight forward, since there might be many emotions that occur at the same time (Woermann & Rokka, 2015). Although the three teleoaffective episodes operate in the intersection of practice performance, practice template and experiences of the practice carrier. Those intersections are circular which involve new and previous experiences (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). In this study the emotion is on the central stage of practices when leading practitioners along a preferred path (Molander & Hartmann, 2018).

## 2.6 Analytical framework

Figure 1 showcases the analytical framework of this study, where the practice theory and customer journey are integrated together with consumer experience. In this study, the practice theory takes a stance in analyzing shopping of slow fashion from the perspective of teleoaffective episodes which depicts the routine and embodiment of emotions and practice as intertwined (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). The teleoaffective episodes include anticipating, actualizing, and assessing of a practice and its linkage to emotions (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). This is further analyzed from a perspective of customer journey of pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase phases from a practice theory stance since both the practice of shopping and the customer journey give a wholesome presentation of dynamic shopping behaviors in omnichannels. Molander and Hartmann (2018) presented the central role of emotions within consumer culture, as emotions are intertwined into our daily lives and the social world of practitioners that surround themselves in. In the theme of emotions, the perspective of how emotions are involved in consumer choice and behavior within an omnichannel setting of slow fashion becomes of interest.

Figure 1 presents the various parts of a practice. Every step of the practice within a customer journey includes empirical research on emotions and consumer experience. This could reveal the underlying motives to why consumers experience the emotions that they do and how that could affect the practice, since earlier research on environmental cues proves that both online and offline environments may affect the consumers both from an hedonic or utilitarian standpoint (Rodríguez-Torrico et al., 2020; Schmitt, 2003). However, it remains to be further explored specifically how emotions prevail within a practice and how this can affect the practice of shopping throughout a customer journey. The analysis of this study stems from the perspectives of previous studies which include emotions in shopping, experience, and the phases of customer journey in order to understand the behavioral motives of our interviewees that form their practice. What becomes of interest is to further depict how slow fashion

consumers are either using a set of channels within an omnichannel journey or if they lack usage of multiple channels. This could provide an interesting notion towards the analysis of the practice and emotions involved in slow fashion shopping among these consumers.



**Figure 1.** The practice of emotions in the customer journey of slow fashion shopping. Adapted from Molander and Hartmann (2018).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Strategy

This study was conducted as a qualitative study since researchers have applied qualitative research in order to make sense of the understanding and viewing of the social world, from the perspective of the people whom they study (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In order to fully grasp the significance of a qualitative study, there is a need to look upon the traits and characteristics of quantitative research methods. Most importantly, this study aims to understand how emotions are involved in the practice of slow fashion shopping in omnichannel environments and how practices in turn evoke emotions, which is explained in a set of emotions. Quantitative research according to Bryman and Bell (2015) fails to distinguish people and social institutions. Quantitative measurements are said to lack in the interpretation of peoples' worlds around them. Furthermore, quantitative research and specifically in applying a set of variables to interpret, creates the risk of not fully understanding the social life of respondents. This means that the results could comprehend a more static view of social life (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The nature of this study is to evaluate the practice and how emotions are interconnected to shopping slow fashion in omnichannel, therefore the usage of qualitative research is of preference due to the possibility of analyzing the social lives of the interviewees. Whilst quantitative research creates a more “static” view of social life which is not related as much to the individual person's own perception (Bryman & Bell, 2015). An abductive approach towards the theory is used, where inductive and deductive elements combined (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). There is a theory testing element of the teleoaffective structures in emotions and practices from Molander and Hartmann, (2018), where an deductive approach is applied. This is further analyzed with empirical data that is inductively used to complement the literature review.

This study takes a phenomenological stance, by looking into subjective and shared meanings it becomes of interest to analyze how people act as a group or individually, and to further understand and interpret social events and settings (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Bryman & Bell, 2015). Furthermore, it becomes critical to understand how people engage with their surroundings, which is why a qualitative approach from a phenomenological stance is deemed suitable (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Bryman & Bell, 2015). The phenomenological stance also contributes to fully grasping the behavior of a person, and “*attempts to see things from a persons' point of view*” (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975:13-14), which is the focus in this study. Since the lived experiences are at the center of a phenomenological study (Kvale, 1996), this method is suitable in this study when looking to understand the emotions involved in omnichannel slow fashion shopping.

The phenomenological approach focuses on the lived experience of the participants, which is why interviews were conducted to gather data (Groenewald, 2004). The type of interviews conducted were semi-structured interviews, to get a deeper understanding of consumers' emotions in practices of omnichannel slow fashion retail. Since this study investigates the emotions involved in the practice of omnichannel shopping for slow fashion clothes, an emotionalist interview was conducted (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The emotionalist

interview study is of interest in this research since it applies for studies that want to know how people experience something, and not just accurate information about what happened and facts (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), which could reveal underlying motives to perform a practice. An emotionalist interview study is interested in research questions that includes how or what. The best interviews are said to combine what and how questions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), which is how the interviews were conducted in this study (see Appendix 1). The interview questions were formed to be able to indirectly answer the research question according to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008). The research was, as previously mentioned, conducted with semi-structured interviews, which is somewhat comprehensive and systematic (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The interviews were pre-designed with outlines of topics, issues, and themes, although some wordings were changed during the interviews and the order of the questions did change during the interviews, which is in line with a semi-structured interview according to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008). This created a similar structure to all interviews, although they did differ regarding some follow-up questions which were dependent on the answers from the interviewees. Since the study was about emotions in practices, the interviews included questions about both how consumers did the practice of omnichannel in slow fashion retail, as well as their emotions and thoughts involved, to get a wholesome understanding of the area. In line with qualitative research and emotionalism which demonstrates the importance of subjectivity by gaining access to respondent's inner world, in order to gain access to the respondent's experience and the set of emotions which as Bryman and Bell (2015) refers to Gubrium and Holstein (1997) "the inner reality of humans" (p. 393), this study is taking the stance of interviewees subjectivity into account when interviewing. The interviewed consumers might adhere to different practices depending on the context of their life situation (Halkier, 2010).

In regards to answering the research question in this study, participant observations could have been conducted in addition to the interviews to get a better understanding of what the consumers actually do in their practice of omnichannel slow fashion shopping. Although, participant observations were not conducted since the interviewees are the carriers of practices of their doings and sayings (Schatzki, 1996). Therefore, this study relies on the interviewees' own observations that represent their own doings, sayings, and emotions, which in the latter case is especially difficult to conduct as an outside observer.

Interviews were conducted instead of surveys, to answer the research question. The reason for this was that sampling online surveys includes some limitations which Bryman & Bell (2019) referred to in the difficulty of sampling towards the general population. Furthermore, with closed questions surveys, respondents might not have the opportunity to respond in a more elaborate manner which are not covered by the fixed answers of a survey (Bryman & Bell, 2019). In surveys, respondents may interpret the questions differently, therefore the validity is jeopardized (Bryman & Bell, 2019), which on the contrary through qualitative interviews the interviewee has the opportunity to ask if they did not understand the questions correctly. With surveys and closed questions, the lack of engagement among the respondents occurs, compared to having a dialogue between an interviewer and interviewee (Bryman &

Bell, 2019). To add, this further grows to the risk of not being able to capture the essence of interviewees thoughts and emotions.

### 3.2 Sampling

Through word-of-mouth from the researchers' acquaintances, recommendations were received about individuals that could be of good fit to the study. These individuals were priorly contacted through social media in order to find out if they met the criteria's of shopping slow fashion. The applied method for sampling was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability method (Bell et al., 2019), where researchers select interviewees based on their personal and individual experiences that are of interest for the purpose of the study (Goulding, 2005). To be able to understand consumers' emotions in slow fashion practices in omnichannels, the interviewees were strategically chosen using criterion sampling, which means that the interviewees need to meet specific criteria's to be a part of the interviewees for a study (Bell et al., 2019). One of the criteria's for the participants was that they needed to be consumers of slow fashion. Another criteria was that the participants for the interviews had all done slow fashion shopping the last year, so that they would be able to answer the questions during the interviews. Before scheduling interviews, the interviewees were contacted through social media to ensure that they met the criteria for participating in the study. The criteria regarding slow fashion included brands that have a higher price point, meaning, above the average prices but not considered a luxury brand. Examples of brands in this category are Filippa K, Nudie Jeans, Dagmar or Samsøe Samsøe. The interviewees were in the ages between 20-30 years, since this age group's consumption is developed towards online settings and platforms (Kang et al., 2021), and therefore deemed likely to use omnichannels while shopping. Since differences in men and women have been found regarding their shopping behavior in the customer journey (Mosquera et al., 2019) it was of importance to include both genders in this study.

Ten interviews were conducted for this study. The data collected from the ten interviews reached saturation for this specific study and the research question that was posed. All ten interviewees are presented in Table 1, with name, age, gender, and occupation, which were collected since according to previous studies that could have an impact on the emotions of the interviewees (Mosquera et al., 2019). Although, due to respect of confidentiality and ethical considerations, the names were altered for each interviewee (Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008).

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
<b>Joel</b>	26	Male	Engineer
<b>Axel</b>	26	Male	Student
<b>Matilda</b>	26	Female	Student
<b>Elisabeth</b>	25	Female	Student
<b>Vendela</b>	27	Female	HR Specialist

<b>Hugo</b>	25	Male	Student
<b>Niclas</b>	26	Male	Student
<b>Malin</b>	24	Female	Controller
<b>Odette</b>	25	Female	Student
<b>Julia</b>	30	Female	Assistant Brand Manager

Table 1. Interviewees

### 3.3 Data collection

This study applied in depth interviews with slow fashion consumers in ages between 20-30 years old. In depth interviews were conducted, since it is a common method for producing empirical in-depth data, and it is also suitable for a phenomenological data collection (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The interview method aims at understanding consumers' perception of a phenomenon which is based on social reality and personal experiences (Bhattacharjee, 2019). As individuals perceive situations in various ways, the researcher must try to understand their perception of the individual's point of view (Bell et al., 2019). In line with a phenomenological interview, the focus was on understanding the interviewees' emotions as well as the situations and contexts that influenced the experiences and how that has affected the individual (Thompson and Haytko, 1997).

Prior to the interviews, a brief explanation and description was made regarding the purpose of the study so that the interviewees were aware of the reasons for their participation in the study (Bell et al., 2019; Patel & Davidsson, 2011), which is also important to not mislead the interviewees in an unethical way (Holme & Solvang, 1996). The concepts of omnichannel, practice and slow fashion retail were also described prior to the interviews, to prevent confusions regarding the interview questions. The interviewees were asked to consider their last three purchases in omnichannels of slow fashion. In line with Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), the respondents were asked to agree on having the interviews recorded, and their approvals were recorded before the interview, which in addition, is also important in a phenomenological point of view (Thompson et al., 1989). Since all the respondents' mother tongue was Swedish, the interviews were held in Swedish. The translation from Swedish to English might have influenced the wordings, but not necessarily the content of the interviewees' answers. The interviews were conducted online, on the digital platform Zoom, due to time constraints of traveling. The average interview lasted for 40 minutes.

Regarding the outlines of the interviews, they all started with some general questions about age, gender, and occupation, which is in line with Thompson and Haytko (1997), which were followed by neutral and open-ended questions so that no pre-assumptions were made (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). As seen in appendix 1, the interview questions went more in depth regarding the interviewee's practices. The interview questions covered the customer journey and what channels they used, to finally include their emotions involved in the practice in the various situations. During the interviews the interviewers showed consent and

interest with regards to the interviewees' expressions of emotions and feelings, which is recommended by Patel and Davidsson (2011), to avoid that the interviewees feel uncomfortable or that the researchers are criticizing them.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

After the completion of interviews, the interviews were transcribed to get a better overview when doing the coding of the collected data. The transcription was done in Swedish and later translated to English when integrated in the study. The transcription of the interviews was read several times with the aim that the researchers would get a better understanding of the content. The coding in this study was aiming to have coding categories that are exhaustive enough so that all content can be categorized and mutually exclusive so that data will be placed in only one category, which is suggested by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008). The coding was done to reveal patterns between the interviewees and their answers, but also to avoid and prevent biased results and maintain the trustworthiness and conformability of the study (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The themes were based on the theoretical framework where underlying dimensions were identified as second order themes, which helped to understand how practices were performed and how emotions were involved in omnichannel shopping of slow fashion. Firstly, the results were coded with the themes of pre-purchase/anticipating, purchase/actualizing and post-purchase/assessing. Secondly, once the practices were divided into the three stages, the coding derived from searching commonalities in the practices of omnichannel shopping and emotions involved in each stage. Three different types of interviewees were identified: the online, the offline, and the indifferent group. The results were then divided into empirical themes within the areas of pre-stage of potential affective emotions, linkage between practice and emotions in the actual doing, and emotions triggered after the embodied experience, where the findings were analyzed and discussed. In this stage, underlying themes were found within those empirical themes which were based on the interviewees' practices and emotions within the slow fashion practice as a whole. Those findings were partly presented in forms of citations which gives the reader a good understanding of what was collected when doing qualitative research (Holme & Solvang, 1996), which showed how emotions were involved in the practice of omnichannel slow fashion shopping.

### 3.5 Research quality / Trustworthiness

This study has considered the research quality from four criteria's: transferability, credibility, confirmability, and dependability (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The transferability refers to the concern of finding links between previous research and the study within the field (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The documentation of the method confirms the transferability of the study and the fact that this study was analyzed in relation to previous studies. The credibility is reassured through the researcher's familiarity with the topic through their studies during bachelor and masters on the topic, and a comprehensive literature review on the topic. Confirmability is met if other individuals could understand the interpretations of the findings in the study in a similar way as the researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which was ensured in this study through presentation of quotes and findings from interviewees regarding their

practices and emotions in omnichannel slow fashion retail. Dependability in research means that the research is informative, logical and that the origin of the findings can be verified (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The dependability has been ensured through the guidance by the faculty and the documentation presentation of the process of this research.

### 3.6 Delimitations

The limitations of this study can firstly be discussed in a stance of generalizability which is limited due to this study solely having 10 respondents, therefore the results cannot represent a larger population. On the other hand, the focus on the 10 respondents enabled this study to dive deep into each individual and by therefore carefully conducting longer interviews with each respondent. This study was conducted among Swedish consumers with the age range of 20-30 which impacts the results especially due to the culturally embedded consuming patterns and the respondents' demographics which did prevail in a majority of respondents coming from larger cities in Sweden. Another limitation to keep in mind is the effect of the pandemic in the past years which could impact the respondent's previous experiences of consuming slow fashion, the respondent's answers are in accordance to past experiences which could be in a time of the recent pandemic.

Another delimitation to point out is that the interviewees' expression of emotions and their state of being in a set of situations depicts them reflecting on their emotional state from a conscious mind and perspective. However, underlying emotions or to specify, the unconscious mind cannot be presented due to the limitation of oral interviews. In order to explore underlying emotions from the subconscious, other methods would have been appropriate. These methods are within the category of Biometrical methods such as Heart Rate Acceleration or Galvanic Skin Response which showcases the emotional state subconsciously.



## 4. Results

Based on the ten phenomenological interviews conducted, this study revealed a set of slow fashion practices of how emotions are involved within the customer journey among the interviewees. The result of slow fashion practices was based on the interviewees stance on slow fashion and their omnichannel experience. These concepts are firstly based on the channel most frequently used which is either mobile, online, or offline. Secondly, the practice of slow fashion is also depicted on how interviewees switch from different channels as in a seamless experience throughout the omnichannels (see Appendix 2). Finally, the importance of this study was to analyze how emotions are involved in the practice of omnichannel shopping in slow fashion.

### 4.1. Interviewees relationship to slow fashion

When the interviewees were asked of their perception of what slow fashion is, the most prevailing answer was the high quality of slow fashion clothes. What was important for the interviewees was to buy clothes that are long lasting in terms of quality. The interviewees searched for clothes that would sustain throughout the years which indicates “seasonless”, meaning, fashion that is not dependent on trends. Furthermore, the interviewees were well aware of the higher price tag of slow fashion clothes. For them it was viewed as an “investment” and as part of their staple wardrobe. Since slow fashion was seen as an investment, interviewees spent time researching, either through mobile online or offline channels, before making a purchase. Even though all consumers considered it to be an investment, they had different motives regarding the performance of the practice. Some had more utilitarian motives when doing research, and for example, aimed to find the best price. While others had more hedonic motives which is exemplified in enjoying the process of shopping slow fashion.

One distinct difference between the interviewees when it came to their relation to slow fashion was their practice from the past of buying clothes. The practice of buying slow fashion was not always evident throughout the years. Among these, their past routines of shopping were more towards fast fashion. The practice of buying fast fashion lasted until they acquired more knowledge about the benefits of slow fashion. The interviewees that used to buy fast fashion more frequently in the past, expressed their negative experience when it came to the quality of fast-fashion clothes. They also leaned more towards trends than sustainable fashion in the past. However, they performed their practices differently when wanting to obtain more knowledge about fabrics or sustainability, as some preferred searching online, while others preferred to ask personnel in physical stores.

Other interviewees expressed their practice of buying slow fashion as something they were brought up to do, in this case the interviewees were all influenced by their parents and acquired early on knowledge about the benefits of clothes with high quality. To further stress, they brought the practice of slow fashion consumption into adulthood. The interviewees that had more experience from their parents, neither felt more or less hedonic feelings when shopping slow fashion, compared to those who did not have this previous experience.

However, the consumers that did have the most influence and experience of shopping slow fashion from their parents did prefer physical stores rather than online stores.

#### 4.2 Practices of slow fashion shoppers

In the following sections, three groups will be presented which were identified by the researchers of this study. See Table 2 for a summarization of these results. The groups were based on how the interviewees performed their practice of slow fashion and how their emotions were involved. The groups were divided into the online, offline and indifferent consumers. The theoretical perspective of this study stems from analyzing the interviewees practice based on teleoaffective structures. This provides the essence of each individual's aspiration and goals of their practice, which results in a set of emotions (Schatzki, 2002; Sahakian et al., 2020). Emotions are related to the practical outcome of doing (Molander & Hartmann, 2018), which refers back to Figure 1 in this study of an ongoing cycle that encapsulates the process of practice and emotions.

##### 4.2.1 The Online Consumer

This group consisted of interviewees that solely purchased slow fashion online. They found convenience and ease doing online shopping from their own home. The online consumer expressed the benefit of having a wide range of options online whilst doing their research in order to gain enough information. The research was based on finding inspiration, sizes and comparison of prices among different brands or websites either on their mobile or computer. This group expressed their emotional state during research as exciting and with a sense of anticipation for what they have ordered. Among the interviewees of this group, they expressed the pre-purchase phase to be extensive and thorough. Information obtained from websites could be as earlier mentioned material of clothes, technical aspects, measurements for sizes among others. The online consumers expressed their research to be an important part of buying a slow fashion item due to the high price of clothes and considered their purchase to be an investment in their wardrobe. Their research phase on mobile devices and online channels could be viewed as exciting and informational. In the phase of research, positive emotions could arise by being inspired on social media and also gaining social approval from their peers.

Once this group conducted their purchase, they usually did it on websites they were familiar with from their previous experiences. One of the interviewees continued doing their complete purchase solely on their mobile device, this was however one exception within this group. Websites that offered free deliveries and returns were favorable among the group of online consumers, this group sensed comfort of doing purchases online with the benefit of free delivery. The practice of the online consumers goes towards routines and the habits of doings (Warde, 2014), the interviewees' doings were derived from a set of habits in their online research which were dependent on their past experiences, and their end-goal is to achieve a certain emotional outcome (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Furthermore, the benefits of free deliveries and reduced costs prevailed in positive feelings towards their purchase, especially since slow fashion items are considered more expensive.

#### 4.2.2 The Offline Consumer

Consumers of the offline group conducted their practice solely offline, however, they could still begin their anticipatory phase with finding inspiration on social media or websites. Although, this group did their initial research in physical stores by searching and trying slow fashion clothes in different stores. Their practice prevailed of doing extensive research in physical stores, the positive feelings from doing research in stores stemmed from feeling and touching the material of clothes. Compared to online shopping, this group felt that they were missing out on the most important aspect of their pre-purchase phase, which is the physical presence of clothes. The offline consumer shops solely in physical stores, which is where their final purchase is always done. Additionally, they also sensed a greater security due the service stores could offer post-purchase from past experiences, interviewees mentioned their experiences of in-store service during circumstances of a defected clothing item. This group also strived for gaining service in-store from personnel which further add up to the sense of security this group strives for by purchasing offline. Once the purchase is finalized this group rarely returns, due to the extensive research in physical stores.

The negative feelings toward online shopping for this group stemmed from having to pay for delivery, waiting for the package, avoiding spending too much money and having to return the clothes. The practice therefore stems from doing offline shopping as an experience and routine from the past, they gained a sense of control when doing their shopping offline. Slow fashion clothes are considered an investment and the time and effort put into trying and searching the right clothing item in store was important for the offline group. From an omnichannel perspective this group does not take advantage of a seamless experience, this could possibly prove that the offline consumers of slow fashion do not experience the set of advantages from a seamless experience in omnichannels. The group of offline consumers gained all the benefits solely from purchasing in-store.

#### 4.2.3 The Indifferent Consumer

The final group in this study represents the consumers that switch between online and offline to their own convenience. They had the tendency to switch channels at times. Their practice consisted of either doing research online and thereafter trying the clothes in a physical store or by doing research offline in physical stores and finally buying online. The indifferent consumer in this study aimed to save more time, money, and convenience by the use of different channels. In contrast to Kang (2018) study which proved that consumers who neither engage in webrooming or showrooming strived to save time and money. The indifferent consumer could do research online to find what clothing item to buy, and finally try the clothes and purchase in a physical store, for these consumers the clothing item could be a “difficult” one that was not easily estimated online. This group of consumers could also do their research in-store by trying the clothes and later go and buy it online for the best possible price.

Either way, this group created a practice that conveyed the emotional goal of either saving money or time. As mentioned earlier, slow fashion items do require more research and

consumers are more rational in their purchasing decisions. What remains unique about the indifferent consumer is that even if some of the interviewees preferred doing online shopping above offline shopping or vice versa, they are still willing to “sacrifice” their hedonic motives of choosing their preferred channel in order to save time or money. This further goes in line with consumers being more utilitarian in their approach.

#### 4.3 Practice Emotion Linkages

The practice of slow fashion omnichannel shopping revealed emotions of ease and convenience, as well as emotions of joy when searching for inspiration in the pre-purchase/anticipating phase. Even though consumers had similar feelings in the pre-purchase/anticipating phase, their practice differed between online and offline channels. The common practice that was conveyed among slow fashion consumers was the thorough research made, the research phase could be extended through different time frames. The time of doing research was of importance for the practice of slow fashion shopping. Time was part of the routines that made it possible for the slow fashion shopper to make the right decision for their long-term investment of a clothing item. From the pre-purchase/anticipating phase, the practice of shopping slow fashion strives from routines that convey a sense of security in order to make the right choice before finalizing the purchase. As anticipation is based on previous experiences (Molander & Hartmann, 2018), the emotions of security, joy and ease could be seen to stem from the consumers previous experiences when doing the practice of omnichannel slow fashion shopping, which results in a pre-stage of affective pleasure towards the practice. This further conveys that the practice of shopping slow fashion is deeply embedded in routinized behaviors from past experiences. Slow fashion consumers tend to move towards a practice they already have past experience from, rather than trying new options in an omnichannel environment.

When actualizing the practice, the emotions begin to actualize towards the practice (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Once the research phase is done, the practice of purchasing slow fashion reveals either the emotional linkage to the practice of being “content” or as the interviewees expressed, they are in a neutral state at this moment. In the phase of purchase/actualizing, consumers were also feeling comfort when finalizing their purchase. Consumers expressed the desired emotional goals of satisfaction, by finding the best deal and saving money. Other consumers expressed that the importance of being able to touch and try clothes had an impact on their preference of purchasing in physical stores. The feeling of security when knowing what to buy was prominent for consumers that purchased in physical stores. Among the online consumers of the study there was an appreciation and excitement for purchasing online. According to Molander and Hartmann (2018), the emotions that arise during the actualizing phase are guided by teleoaffective structures which denote “acceptance” after the performance is done. This connects to the consumers’ emotions of satisfaction, security and excitement that derive from actualizing the practice, to a feeling of “acceptance” of their behavior. Which could be the reason why consumers often repeat the same practice which becomes a routinized behavior. This behavior is also evident for the feelings of stress that consumers feel while shopping slow fashion. The feelings of stress

occur at different occasions for various consumers, as some experience offline channels to be stressful, while others experience the online channels as stressful. The consumers adjusted their practice of slow fashion to involve as little stress as possible and therefore chose their preferred channel when shopping slow fashion.

The emotions aroused after a performed practice can trigger the adjustment of future practices (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). After the performed practice of slow fashion shopping, emotions were triggered. For example, delivery and returns evoked emotions for consumers after the purchase, as some felt ease and convenience, while others felt irritation when returning clothes online. Regarding the delivery, some interviewees wanted to receive their items right away in order to avoid the delivery time, while others did not mind waiting for their delivery. The interviewees that didn't mind waiting for the delivery, preferred to order online, while the consumers that did mind waiting, preferred to purchase offline. The interviewees expressed that depending on their post-purchase experience they sometimes adjusted their future practice of slow fashion shopping. An experience that evoked negative emotions during the post-purchase phase, could in that sense be seen to influence the whole practice of slow fashion omnichannel shopping. This shows that from omnichannel retail, consumers experience different emotions after performing the same practice.

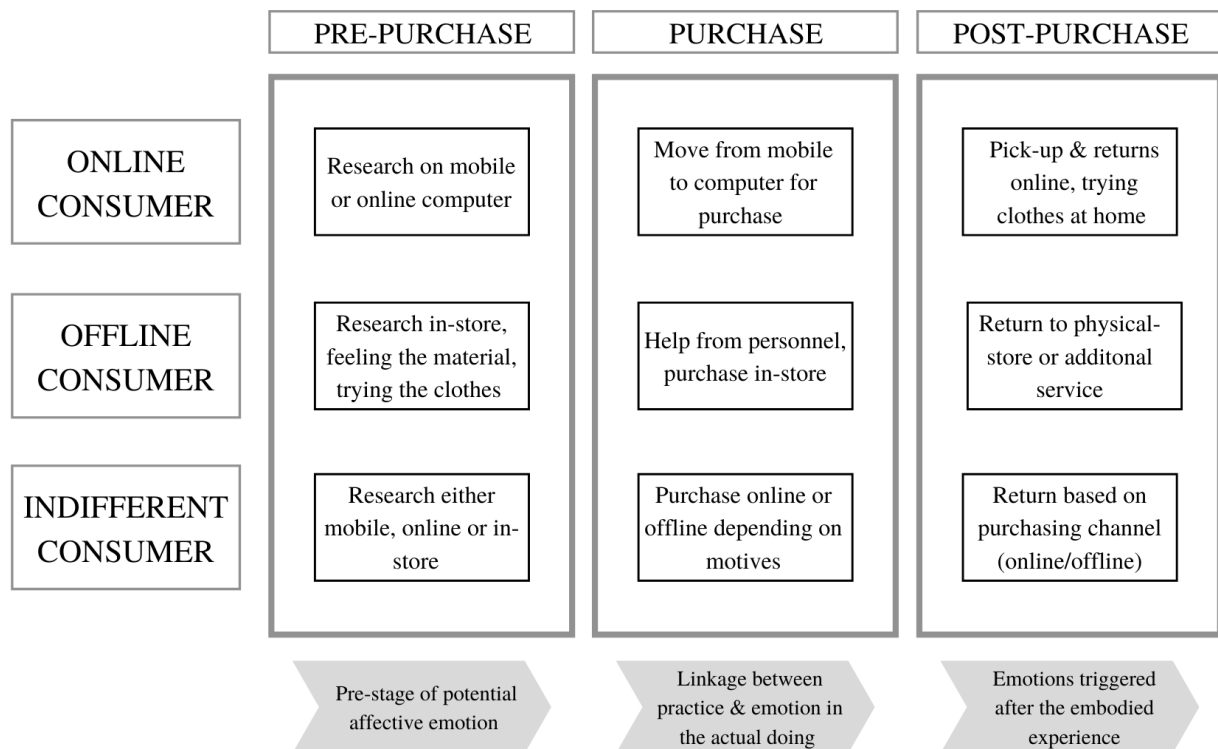


Table 2. The practice of omnichannel slow fashion shopping

## 5. Discussion & Analysis

In the following section, the results will be discussed based on the three formative groups of the online, offline, and indifferent consumer. The interviewees of all three groups expressed their preference of channel and how they conducted their customer journey. Within each group the interviewees conducted their practices in accordance with their past experiences and the routines formed, however, there will be exceptions presented in these sections in order to showcase how the emotions involved could mitigate a certain routine or behavior of the interviewees. This discussion is based on the theoretical framework (Figure 1), which explains the dynamic process of the practice of customer journey including pre-purchase/anticipating, purchase/actualizing, and post-purchase/assessing.

### 5.1. Pre-stage of potential affective emotions

To look deeper into emotions involved in slow fashion omnichannel shopping, the practice is divided into three sections. The first section is the pre-stage of potential affective emotions. This stage is linked to anticipation (Molander & Hartmann, 2018) and pre-purchase phase in the customer journey. Past experiences in the phase of anticipating have an effect on the outcome of practices, which means the aftermath of a situation triggers future outcomes of practices (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Furthermore, the anticipating phase is not fully evolved in the emotional state, but rather it prepares for the outcome (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). The interviewees reflected on their choice of channel during their phase of anticipating based on their past experiences. The prevailing instances of this was expressed by the interviewees' feelings towards online shopping, where this resulted in the division between consumers that prefer online shopping versus offline shopping, or both combined.

#### 5.1.1 The practice of doing research and the emotions involved

When asked about the research phase, the interviewees who were inclined to online shopping did sense anticipation, for example, Vendela was asked if she enjoyed doing research:

*“Ahh... well I do...it is almost more fun...I mean you have certain target image that “this can look nice” and you also get inspired by a certain website, how they have styled it, if it feels fresh...hmm I mean the emotional part in the research phase itself that is fun, and therefore also having to anticipate.” - Vendela, 27*

The pre-purchase stage within a customer journey touches upon all interactions a customer has with a brand prior to purchasing (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016) and it does not include any transactional process but solely informational (Verhoef et al., 2015). Vendela concluded that the phase of research was exciting and could be even more rewarding emotionally than the purchase itself. In the theme of online purchases, social media also integrates within an omnichannel presence (Verhoef et al., 2015). Interviewees that were inclined to online shopping did their research on their mobile devices where sources of inspiration could start from social media and websites. This further goes in line with doing extensive research prior to buying, the phase of research on mobile devices which includes social media, stems from doing extensive research in this study, considering slow fashion items as investments for a

long period of time (Pookulangara & Schepard, 2013). The interviewee Vendela solely did research online but considered it extensive and thorough. She began by finding inspiration on Instagram and Pinterest from her mobile and later on following the affiliate links on both apps. Her anticipating phase was building up towards the actualizing phase as she expresses.

*“I mean it really takes time for me before I even buy something, I do the research for thousands of years and I compare myself with the models by comparing my height and size to their so I really postpone the purchasing until I have made my decision” - Vendela, 27*

The findings showed that for Vendela, the anticipating phase was fun, and she enjoyed the process of finding inspiration online. In this phase she invested time and emotions before moving to the actual purchase where she actualized the practice. This was similar to the interviewee Julia, who also solely purchased online but her anticipatory phase could span for a longer period of time.

*“I do not think that much once I do research. However, once I am inclined to do it I begin to sit and do research by scrolling, so....I never do any spontaneous purchases if I have seen a clothing item for five minutes. I often need to think about it for a long time, sometimes even three months. I fantasize and imagine myself wearing it. I am neutral, but once I have decided I feel more excited.” Julia, 30*

As illustrated, both interviewees did extensive research prior to doing the finalized purchase. They considered the online research to be beneficial and convenient compared to the interviewees that solely purchased offline. This can be compared to the offline consumers, who's feelings towards online shopping was considered lacking in a sense of safety and it was considered time-consuming due to deliveries and returns. Whilst the online consumer considered in-store purchases to be time consuming, the difference between these two groups stems from how they convey their sense of convenience which is how their anticipatory phase is shaped. The practice of shopping slow fashion was different, but the emotions involved still derived from the same element of putting time and effort into the research phase.

*“Yes and the whole experience feels much more fun going to a store and receiving it directly, I do not have to wait, and also from a sustainability point of view it does not feel good paying for delivery and having it sent to me. The whole process feels unnecessary in different ways when I do not even know if it fits” - Elisabeth, 25*

Considering the responses of how differently the interviewees consider their choice of either online or offline channels during their pre-purchase phase, it also stems from their past experiences. Consumers are not solely driven by having an hedonic experience but rather an utilitarian aspect of research. However, this does not go in line with previous research of Forsythe et al. (2006) depiction of hedonic values which involves the excitement of trying new experiences. On this note, hedonic elements could still be obtained even if the interviewees of the online group does the same practice for every purchase by for instance enjoying environmental cues from an online perspective which is visual appeal and enjoyment (Rodríguez- Torrico et al., 2020). The depiction of how emotions are involved within the practices established among the interviewees showcases the strive for obtaining a

certain outcome of emotions which are in this sense embedded in the goal individuals strive to reach within their practices.

### 5.1.2 How emotions affect the choice of channel

A majority of the interviewees were however more in favor of doing online research solely for inspiration and reviewing of brands. This can be further depicted towards previous studies of webrooming where extensive research is made online or on mobile as in comparing prices, checking reviews or finding inspiration (Kang, 2018). The change of channel from online to offline comes to terms of being able to try and feel the products prior to purchase. This goes in line with previous research by Kang (2018) who states that webroomers are more interested in the online function of checking stock availability or inspiration and rather avoid shipping fees instead of price comparison. On the contrary, the online group that were inclined to research online and continuous shopping of online channels did not share the same feelings as the webroomers. These interviewees did not enjoy or appreciate the in-store experience of trying products, but rather found comfort in ordering online and trying their clothes at home. One of the interviewees (Axel) belonged to the indifferent group, in this case he was more inclined to shop offline, however he could change his practice due to the convenience of price:

**Researcher:** *“So do you sometimes combine online and offline during your research?”*

**Axel:** *“Yes. Definitely. I like to be able to try the clothes so I can try them in store and then purchase it online for a cheaper price”*

In the example above, Axel signifies the notion of showrooming which is the quest of searching for the best possible deal and priorly trying the clothes in store before doing the purchase online (Kang et al., 2021). In the theme of webroomers and showroomers, the interviewee Niclas belongs to the indifferent group, he bases his pre-purchase stage on extensive research both online, in-store and through the advice of his peers of family and friends. Furthermore, Niclas was also influenced by online and offline environmental cues where the surroundings had a notable effect on an emotional level which provokes senses of inspiration or unpleasant senses. This stresses the fact that surroundings are affecting consumers emotionally and cognitively towards a certain behavior (Mehrabian & Russel, 1974; Mazaheri et al., 2012). Niclas further expressed his choice of channels, either online or offline, based on the experience of the brand he is buying:

*“Depending on the type of relationship I have prior with the brand, it could be that I do not have a certain relation to a brand earlier so I would rather have a new experience with it, therefore I prefer visiting their store in order to gain a good experience, so therefore I would buy something in a physical store for a reasonable price but also gaining a nice experience in-store instead of finding the best deal. However, where I already have an established relation to a brand earlier I would rather try and feel the product and later on find the cheapest offer online” - Niclas, 26*

The interviewee Niclas bases his choice on channels depending on either brand, price or environmental cues which proves that it can either have an effect on dynamic or static



environmental cues (Schmitt, 2003). Niclas also expressed the sensitive state of being during the research stage, where he felt that his time and effort of doing research is expected to be overperformed by the staff of the store in order for him to learn more about the clothing item he is buying. This further indicates the anticipating expectancy upon the outcome of the actualizing phase in Niclas teleoaffective episodes. The dynamic element as stated by Schmitt (2003) includes human interactions between customers and personnel. For some consumers the move between online and offline environments is significant for a seamless experience that can be met by the expectations of good service in-store as well. It was not solely the social aspects that inspired consumers to go to a store, but also the ability to try on more “difficult” clothing items. From previous experiences, the interviewees knew that jeans required more research so therefore it was usually purchased in physical stores in order to try them on before the purchase. This indicates the notion of consumers bringing previous experiences to new ones (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014; Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017). This practice was similar for both groups of online and offline consumers. For example, the interviewees Malin and Joel, who both prefer online shopping had the exception of visiting stores when it comes to trying jeans due to the difficulty of the item, since they knew it was hard to find the right fit without trying it on.

**Researcher:** *“So generally, do you prefer doing research online or offline?”*

**Joel:** *“Depends what type of clothing item. Shoes or jeans are often better to try out, but other types of clothes that are not as difficult and easier in sizes I prefer doing it online.”*

**Researcher:** *“So mostly due to the fitting issues?”*

**Joel:** *“Yes, but If I had to choose I would prefer to have everything online, and not having to try clothes in-store”*

Joel indicated that his preference of online channels relies on not having to try out clothes in a physical store and the preference of doing it from his own home. The convenience of online research was expressed further by interviewees:

*“Majority of my research is online. I mean absolutely, going to stores is pleasant. However, it is much easier online, you can find everything there. Sizes are available, and it is also easy to do a return if I need it” - Julia, 30*

*“I do research using my mobile and iPad. I find it much more comfortable to sit with, especially if an ad pops up on Facebook I click on from there”- Malin, 24*

The choice of doing research online stems from convenience and availability since the majority of the interviewees have expressed social media as a source of inspiration. This further indicates hedonic motives of research within social media and the involvement of technologies (Alexander & Kent, 2022). From a slow fashion perspective, the interviewees did have an hedonic element during their research phase. However, their motives still derived from an utilitarian stance. This comes to term within slow fashion consumption, as both interviewees (Julia & Malin) showcase the hedonic elements of research online are more enjoyable, but they still considered the utilitarian aspect when it came to their own practice of online shopping. They found online shopping from an utilitarian perspective to be a more

easy and time-saving process for them. The utilitarian stance is connected to effectiveness and performance content (Barwitz & Maas, 2018). With this in mind, the utilitarian perspective was depicted in a different manner among the interviewees that were offline shoppers.

*“I do not shop for clothes necessarily because it's fun, it stems from me needing things. I am more willing to pay more for an clothing item that lasts longer” - Hugo, 25*

Hugo's overall perception of purchasing new slow fashion items was viewed from a neutral stance, it is seen as a functional need rather than a pleasurable experience. Consumers who are neither inclined to webrooming or showrooming are more likely motivated to gain convenience and time saving (Kang, 2018) which depicts the pre-purchase stage for Hugo.

### 5.1.3 Social conformity's effect on the practice

In terms of the pre-purchase phase of shopping slow fashion, the majority of the interviewees expressed an extensive research phase prior to buying the item. This research can be both online and offline. In this research several interviewees have expressed it as exciting and fun whilst a small minority of interviewees expressed neutral feelings, which denote the difference between hedonic or utilitarian motivations. Previous research has emphasized on the presence of hedonic and utilitarian motives in fashion consumption, where social media and other technologies have proved to induce the hedonic element of the pre-purchase stage in shopping (Alexander & Kent, 2022). This goes in line with the majority of the interviewees being webroomers. Furthermore, consumers that tend to have hedonic motivations of shopping, benefit from engaging socially which could be both online and offline where customers engage in discussions with the staff (Barwitz & Maas, 2018). The interviewees of this study revealed that their research is solely based on what they themselves enjoy and want. However, in the quest of the opinion of others, a majority of the interviewees did express a positive feeling towards social conformity of their peers as in either friends, family or their significant others. This goes in line with Lynch & Barnes' (2020) study which showcased how social approval was revealed in the pre-purchase stage, where consumers who seek opinions of others prior to a purchase depicts on emotional validation and conformity in the opinions of others. For example, Odette expressed her research in-store to be affected by the influence of friends, but also the sense of pressure.

*“I am probably worried, I feel like I need to do thorough checking and research extensively, because I consider this an investment. But I am not sure what type of feeling it is. Like, being precise and wanting to do my best. Positive preciseness. Like a positive and fun performance anxiety” - Odette, 25*

Derived from previous research, slow fashion has shown tendencies to provoke more emotions compared to other types of fashion consumption (Zarley Watson & Yan, 2013; Pookulangara & Shepard, 2013). The expression by Odette stems from doing the right choice, since purchasing a new clothing item is considered a long-term investment as well as consoling with her peers for approval of the style itself.

**Researcher:** “Before buying, how do you conduct your research?”

**Malin:** “My partner helps me a lot during this stage, when giving me advice I have brands that I already like so I usually turn to them, such as Tiger of Sweden and Filippa K. I go to their websites and search or at Boozt”

As stated above, Malin’s research phase is depicted by social approval which is significant for the pre-purchase stage as a social experience (Lynch & Barnes, 2020). Consumers who actively seek opinions of others before a purchase conforms to the sense of social security as well (Lynch & Barnes, 2020) which both Odette and Malin showcased.

## 5.2 Linkage between practice and emotion in the actual doing

The linkage between practice and emotion in the actual doing is referred to as actualizing (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). While anticipating is about imagining potentialities, actualizing includes practice performance and linking all practice elements to form them into one practice. Here, the practice emotions are expressed through bodily practices and vice versa (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). The actualizing part of consumption is seen as invested and sustained through emotions (Belk et al., 2003). The practice emotions are guided by teleoaffective structures which shows what emotions are “acceptable” or “correct” in relation to the performance outcome (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). Actualizing is linked to the purchase phase in the customer journey since this is when consumers actualize their purchase of slow fashion. The interviewees experienced the various channels differently, as some preferred to shop through websites while others preferred physical stores based on earlier experiences whether they were positive or negative. This showcases that everyone’s experience is personal (Andreu et al., 2006).

### 5.2.1 Convenience as an emotional influence

During the purchase, when actualizing the practice, some interviewees preferred to buy slow fashion items offline. The interviewees that bought clothes in physical stores considered it to be more convenient and managed to avoid the risk of ordering clothes online that were not suitable and having to return them.

*“Regarding slow fashion, I do not buy much online. I want to try things on and I know from experience that I know I have to, since finding clothes that fit nice is difficult on the first try. It’s annoying to order online and then have to return and buy new sizes since then I have to do double the work compared to if buying directly from a store” - Matilda, 26*

Matilda could be seen to have learnt to actualize the practice of shopping slow fashion towards the desired outcome of finding items that fit, without trouble or hassle. Her emotions are in that sense embedded in the goals and aspirations she aims for (Sahakian et al., 2020), which affects her practice of actualizing. Her routine has developed over time, and she knows how to actualize the practice in the best possible way. However, even though the interviewees knew how to actualize their practice to get their desired outcomes of emotions, they sometimes went against this in their practice and routines. One example is Axel, who as

previously mentioned belongs to the indifferent group of consumers, prefers to buy clothes from a physical store. However, at times he also buys clothes online in order to get a cheaper price or different color. Even if Axel's emotions towards online purchasing channels were negative and he considered it to be a hassle to order online, he would still consider using the online channel on some occasions. This goes against previous findings which show that consumers strive for an emotionally positive experience during purchases (Kim et al., 2016). At times consumers tend to forget about positive experiences and emotions they get from a physical store to instead purchase online for a better price. Here, Axel does not strive for a good experience when buying a slow fashion product online, since he would have gotten a better experience in a physical store where he could touch and try the product, which he normally prefers. Instead, he chose a less convenient experience but for a better price. In this case Axel had an utilitarian motive where the performance content was in focus (Barwitz & Maas, 2018). This shows that in Axel's case, the utilitarian motives sometimes exceed the hedonic motives that Axel normally has when shopping slow fashion. Axel could be seen to not be aiming for an enriched and hedonic shopping experience, which goes against findings by Savastano et al. (2016) who stated that an enriched shopping experience is the aim for consumers. Although Axel's actions were not found to be representative for all the interviewees in this study. However, this shows that sometimes utilitarian motives such as price motivates interviewees to perform their practice of slow fashion shopping, since that gives a higher emotional reward.

### 5.2.2 The influence of a pleasant experience and visual appeal on the practice

The interviewees also highlighted the pleasant experience of shopping in offline and online stores connected to the atmosphere. For them, it was the atmospheric experience that drove them to buy in either offline or online stores, which shows that there are hedonic motives in experiences for consumers during shopping of clothes (Järvenpää & Todd, 1997) that can drive the choice of channel. Differences were found between how interviewees experienced online versus offline stores.

*"I would not say that it is the same atmosphere and good experience from a website compared to an offline store. The atmosphere in an offline store affects me more. In addition, websites can sometimes be really annoying if it is difficult to navigate, which sometimes makes me avoid being online"* - Axel, 26

This shows that there are emotions involved, connected to atmospheric cues, that influence the interviewees practice. The interviewees' experiences could be seen to create a set of emotions within their practice (Molander & Hartmann, 2018), which had an effect on the final practice. The visual appeal raised emotions both in online and offline stores, which has previously been found in studies by Alexander and Olivares Alvarado (2014) and by Schmitt (2003).

*"I get a nicer experience if the store is clean and everything is folded well, that makes me feel calm and inspired to shop"* - Odette, 25

Related to the offline atmosphere, interviewees expressed that messiness could make them avoid visiting certain stores. The messiness made them feel uninspired and stressed. Although, a clean store could create a more pleasant experience and positive emotions during the purchase, which made them want to purchase there again. For the interviewees that bought slow fashion online, the visual appeal on the website was also important. Joel described that a website that was badly designed made him doubt the function and security of it and made him want to avoid purchasing from there. Joel said that the opposite occurred if the website was well designed. This finding is similar to Kim and Lennon's (2008) study which proved that creating an enjoyable environment online can encourage shoppers to purchase on the website. Several interviewees expressed their concern for websites that were difficult to navigate and had bad pictures of the clothing items, creating a sense of distrust about the website and its delivery services. In contrast to this, Malin, who belonged to the online group, stated that websites which were visually bad did not always make her avoid them. She often ordered clothes from a website called Boozt, which lacked high-quality product descriptions, pictures, and an easily navigated website. Despite this, she often ordered from this website since she had used it before and knew it was safe. In addition, Boozt often had good deals and no shipping fees. So, even if the website didn't raise positive emotions for Malin, regarding its visuals, the emotions of safety and excitement from previous experiences in terms of delivery and price made her still motivated to order from Boozt. In this case, she had both positive and negative emotions connected to the Boozt website. Malin expressed it as:

*"The user experience at Boozt's website is not good, but they compensate for their good prices and free delivery and return. Therefore I look on other websites for the same clothing item to get a better view of the items before I purchase it from Boozt" - Malin, 24*

Malin is an example that contradicts previous research concerning that creating enjoyable environments online can encourage shoppers to purchase within the website (Kim & Lennon, 2008), since she purchased items from a website with an environment that was not enjoyable or visually appealing. However, Malin's behavior was not found among the other interviewees in this study.

### 5.2.3 The sense of control during the purchase

The interviewees expressed various emotions related to control and knowing what to buy in regards to quality when purchasing slow fashion. This has also been proved by Rodríguez-Torrico et al. (2020), to be affected by emotions that appear during shopping online. The interviewees that bought products offline, considered that it was easier to compare the quality between products if they could touch and feel the fabrics, which is why they chose to purchase slow fashion items in stores.

*"I do not buy online since I want feel the quality and try the size of the items, which I can only do in a physical store" Matilda, 26*

*“When I bought an expensive jacket with good quality, I went to various different stores in Gothenburg to feel the quality of the jackets. I feel like the quality of a product is more important than finding the best price or having a visually good experience” - Odette, 25*

Matilda and Odette aimed to avoid the feeling of disappointment when buying clothes with bad quality, which could happen if they ordered online. To avoid this disappointment, they shaped their practice towards offline purchasing where they could gain control over the quality. Not all interviewees agreed with Matilda and Odette about these feelings. Other interviewees expressed that buying online felt better, since they could search online for the best deals and compare various products connected to the actual purchase in a shorter amount of time.

*“It is easier to find more alternatives when searching online compared to when going to physical stores, which is why I prefer online shopping when buying slow fashion. It is easier to find the cheapest price and I save time when I don’t have to walk around to various stores” - Joel, 26*

This behavior is similar to what Savastano et al. (2016) called task oriented customers that aim to save time in order to get an efficient shopping experience. The interviewees expressed that it was easier to compare prices online to get the best deal and doing extensive research about the clothes and their quality was easier online, this further proves that price and quality had an influence during the purchase (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Additionally, this also had an impact on the channel choice during omnichannel shopping in slow fashion. The online group adjusted their practice based on feelings of convenience and the motives of making a good deal regarding the price connected to quality. The interviewees that purchased online also preferred to actualize the practice of slow fashion shopping in a way that would make them avoid the frustrating feeling of having paid too much for an item, which was the practice included of comparing prices and purchasing the item online. The offline interviewees on the other hand purchased in store to avoid the frustrating feeling of buying a product with bad quality. This illustrates how the same emotions connected to frustration could be involved in the practice in various ways when buying slow fashion.

Related to the experience and the overview of the items during the purchase phase was the mobile usage. The majority of the interviewees did not prefer to buy products using their phone since it gave them a bad overview with the small screen compared to a computer screen. Mobile phones did not contribute to the feelings of safety when shopping. Those interviewees preferred the website on the computer instead of on their phone since they got a better layout of the website and feared to make mistakes whilst typing on their phones. Vendela, who belonged to the online group, did not prefer purchasing slow fashion on her phone.

*“It feels more serious when buying from a computer compared to buying from a phone. When buying from a phone it feels like I didn’t even buy anything. In addition, I am scared of typing wrong letters since the screen is so small” - Vendela, 27*

Interviewees expressed that they felt as if they would miss typing in necessary information when using their mobile during a purchase. This is related to findings by Wang et al. (2015)

who stated that mobile shopping is often done when consumers buy habitual products that they have a history of purchasing. Slow fashion items are not habitual products, since they are not bought that frequently and since they most often are expensive (Pookulangara & Schepard, 2013), which could be the reason why most interviewees did not prefer purchasing slow fashion through their phones. The feeling of stress has previously only been connected to mobile shopping (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017). Although one interviewee found that buying from her phone was easier and more convenient.

*“I only use my phone or Ipad while shopping, I think it is easier to browse on my phone or Ipad compared to my computer and I can do it from anywhere. In addition, I think it is easy to go from social media like Facebook to the brands website. It’s really smooth and seamless” - Malin, 24*

Malin, who belonged to the online group, appreciated the seamlessness between platforms when using her phone. This feeling guided her towards the practice of using her phone in the actualizing phase. This can be compared to the other interviewees that put forward the feeling of being in control over seamlessness. The feelings of having control over what the consumers bought were found to impact the practice for both online and offline purchasers. However, offline purchasers valued the ability to feel and try products higher than online purchasers, while online purchasers valued price and product descriptions higher. The interviewees acted differently but aimed for positive emotions during the purchase and actualizing phase, which showcase how emotions are involved in the practice of slow fashion omnichannel shopping.

#### 5.2.4 Evoked emotions of stress and excitement

Another aspect of how emotions are involved in the practice was when consumers were online shopping, they experienced thrilling feelings that did not occur when shopping in store. The physical store induced more feelings of safety when knowing what to get, but online shopping evoked a sense of excitement.

*“If I buy online I feel more of a thrill and it is exciting to see what gets delivered to my door, compared to if buying from a physical store I already know what I get” - Axel, 26*

*“I have less expectations when buying from a physical store compared to when buying online, since I know what I get. When buying online it feels more exciting” - Joel, 26*

Although, the indifferent consumers who purchased online, did not get a thrill when ordering online. This was due to the feeling of time spent on research priorly and sometimes even trying the clothes in a physical store during the research phase. As a result of extensive research they often knew what they would get. Contrary to the indifferent consumer, the offline consumers expressed emotions of stress when shopping online, which relates to lack of control.

*“I feel like I lose control when I can't feel the material if buying online, in addition I think it is a hassle to return things online, and that makes me feel stressed” - Odette, 25*

In contrast to Odette's preference of shopping in physical stores, the interviewees that preferred to purchase online did not want to feel inclined to make direct decisions in-store. Instead, they had the opportunity to order the clothes online in order to try them on at home without any stress. On the contrary, the online consumers felt that physical stores created a sense of stress which made them make impulsive decisions, which resulted in a less pleasant experience. Since slow fashion is seen to reduce the stress of shopping (Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2015), the interviewees who felt stressed during shopping in a physical store could be particularly prominent in this case, compared to if they would have bought fast fashion clothes for example. This indicates that for some slow fashion consumers an omnichannel environment where digital channels are included, could reduce the feeling of stress when shopping. However, the interviewees that often purchased items offline, valued being able to try the products and did not feel stressed about making a purchase decision while in store. In addition, offline consumers preferred to receive the clothing item right away, instead of waiting for it to be delivered. This showcases the time-saving effect of offline purchase. The interviewees had different experiences of online and offline shopping as well as emotions of stress and excitement towards the channels. This showcases how emotions are involved in slow fashion shopping.

#### 5.2.5 The influence of personnel on the practice of purchasing

Regarding the social aspects of visiting a physical store, the offline consumer appreciated the face-to-face contact, and the ability to talk directly to an employee if they had questions. It made them feel good about the purchasing situation. This is similar to findings by Bäckström and Johansson (2006) who found that store personnel do have an influence on consumer's experience. Although some interviewees expressed that they did not always talk with the personnel when purchasing in a physical store. Axel preferred buying slow fashion from a physical store but didn't always enjoy interacting with personnel. Therefore, he often wore his headphones while in stores. Although Axel preferred going to physical stores, by using his headphones he could avoid the social aspect.

*"I often have music in my headphones because if I go to a store I often want to be in my own zone. Although, if I have questions I do like the possibility of having someone to ask in the store" - Axel, 26*

Another finding was that interviewees that did prefer to purchase in online stores, did not value the social interaction. They preferred to order online to avoid interacting with the employees in the stores. Ordering online made them feel calm and less annoyed which proves that personnel and human interaction have an effect on the experience of shopping (Schmitt, 2003).

*"I think the social aspects in stores are annoying sometimes since most often it does not help me at all. Therefore I would rather stay at home to browse and purchase online. It makes me feel more calm and relaxed about the situation" Joel, 26*

Joel most often avoided physical stores due to the social aspects. Although not all interviewees conducted their shopping as Joel by purchasing online instead of offline in order to avoid interacting with store personnel. Instead, they went to the physical store another day



to shop when they had more energy to engage with store personnel. On the contrary, other interviewees expressed that one reason why they preferred buying clothes in physical stores was due to the service personnel could offer them. This was especially eminent for slow fashion items they bought which were considered more “difficult”, as previously mentioned jeans. Both groups of the online and offline consumer preferred going to physical stores for “difficult items” so that store personnel could help them. Hence, even the online consumer could at times go to a physical store for help and guidance even if they normally preferred to avoid the social aspect of shopping. The difference between online and offline consumers shows that while some interviewees appreciated the offline store surroundings, others appreciated the online surroundings when purchasing. This goes in line with previous research which showed that consumers respond to the physical surroundings and that it affects their behavior (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) and vice versa, that the surroundings affect consumers' experiences (Schmitt, 2003). This showcases how emotions are involved and embedded in relationships between people, objects, and their environment, which has an effect on their practice (Sahakian et al., 2020).

#### 5.2.6 The impact of impulsiveness and rationality on the practice

The interviewees in both online and offline groups of this study did express the side of extensive research prior to a purchase. This further reveals the slow fashion consumer as more rational rather than impulsive, however several interviewees revealed that even if they are more inclined to shopping in-store and doing extensive research, they still had a tendency of doing impulsive purchases. Overwhelming exposure of information and external factors of information overload can push the consumers towards making impulsive purchases (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014; Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017). However, in the case of the interviewees of this study, impulsive purchases were solely made online compared to in-store purchases solely for items in fashion that were considered as “staples”. Interviewees expressed that buying basics as underwear or t-shirts did not need the extensive research so therefore online was more favorable due to prices and convenience.

*“I would say it solely depends on what type of products it is, if it’s more functional such as underwear I just go online and order because I already know what I always order which is the same as usual, which is not that fun. However, if I buy a new coat I would then go to the city center and look into different stores which makes it more of an “thing”, so it really depends of what type of product I am buying so if it’s more expensive I will not just click online and buy especially since I am not sure about my size” - Matilda, 26*

This illustrates the difference between the usage of online or offline channels, Matilda here considered it a standardized practice of buying underwear online. Matilda is considered to belong to the offline group of consumers in this study when she purchases slow fashion. However, this indicates past experience and emotions of convenience influences the process, whilst doing research for a coat required going to the city and doing research.

### 5.3 Emotions triggered after the embodied experience

Emotions triggered after the embodied experience is connected to the phase of assessing (Molander & Hartmann, 2018). In the theme of assessing which also refers to the post-purchase phase within the customer journey cycle, the interviewees of this study differed within their approach of assessing. In terms of the anticipating and actualizing phase, the assessing phase manages to capture the phase of evaluation which further affects the next anticipatory phase. In line with the teleoaffective structure, assessing is depicted as the aftermath of a performance created and the outcome of emotions are adjusted to future practices (Molander & Hartmann, 2018) which in this case is referred to as practices of shopping slow fashion in an omnichannel environment.

#### 5.3.1 Emotions evoked by complaints and returns

Interviewees in this stage expressed a set of examples which verify the essence of how an either pleasant or unpleasant experience sets its tone towards the next phase of shopping. An example of this is referred to the interviewee Odette who recently bought an expensive raincoat:

*"An example is when I bought a raincoat at Vallgatan 12. However, the bar code had been printed on the jacket so I went back to the store, and then I got good service and a discount. It is a positive experience to be in a store. I think it's easier if I want to ask for help. I can always go there and talk to the staff if there has been a problem. " - Odette, 25*

This examines an experience which triggers positive emotions due to this situation, this further sets the tone towards the pre-purchase stage of anticipation. Furthermore, this induces the motives of Odette to continue doing offline purchases as well, since she appreciated the ability to get fast service face to face. Other interviewees of the online group did however, have more negative emotions towards previous experiences when it came to online shopping. This could either lead towards avoiding a certain website or solely the brand that they purchased from online. The interviewee Vendela expressed her concern when she did an online purchase and a return:

*"I was going to do a return from Zalando so I emailed customer service and got response within 4 days which is a long time and when I sent back my package I didn't get the money back in 2 months so I had to email them again, and then suddenly they called from customer service in India" - Vendela, 27*

Vendela sensed an uncertain situation as exemplified in the quote which she further assesses towards a negative association towards online purchases at Zalando. However, even if this experience was negative, it does not hinder her to continue doing online purchases. In the theme of online hedonic or utilitarian motives, this goes in line with how the lack of utilitarian motives such as interactivity, security and privacy prevail in online shopping (Rodríguez- Torrico et al., 2020). Furthermore, this example denotes how a brand is lacking

in motives of trust and sense of security within a customer experience due to an unpleasant return of order. In accordance with previous studies, emotions are treated as the main drivers of satisfaction and loyalty (Ou & Verhoef, 2017), it further affects the purchase intentions within the customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The offline consumer expressed negative emotions towards online shopping due to either returning the package or having to spend a vast amount of money whilst waiting for their return to be finalized. In the theme of a seamless experience, this further denotes something of difficulty among the offline consumers of this study. On the other hand, the online group did express a positive experience and set of emotions during online shopping. Among these, the essence of the case is due to the simplicity of doing research online and by trying clothes at home without having to rush or be in-store. An online environment therefore lacks the opportunity for consumers to feel and touch clothing items, therefore, brands need to emphasize on the environment of their websites since consumers themselves rely more on trust and their emotional state which derives from past experiences (Kim & Lennon, 2008).

*“Online shopping is more of a process, because you need to fix the package and do the return, on the other hand I need to go back to the city and in store to do the return as well. I mean it evens out, also the terms & conditions are better when I purchase something on sale online especially because slow fashion items are more expensive, so I always have the right to free returns online compared to in-store I cannot return an item that was on sale. It feels much better, because then I am not obliged to do spontaneous or impulsive purchases just because it is on sale” - Julia, 30*

In this case, Julia is more well read on the benefits of online shopping due to her past experiences, and especially on slow fashion clothes that are on sale. As mentioned earlier in the pre-purchase phase Julia’s process of anticipation could last for three months therefore, she sensed more security buying online knowing she has the right to do a return on a sales item. The assessing of interviewees differs in their thought process of the advantages and disadvantages of online or offline shopping, but their action solely stems from either acquired knowledge and past experience. When evaluating a purchase, interviewees expressed irritation towards unexpected costs.

*“I get irritated when I order something online and it's not stated that there is a return fee. That turns up as a negative surprise after the purchase when not getting my money back. This has happened a few times and makes me avoid that website” - Malin, 24*

In the case of Malin, if she got irritated due to unexpected costs, she would stop buying from that particular website. In that sense, the emotions she felt after the purchase shaped her future practices of slow fashion shopping, which is in line with Molander and Hartmann (2018) study. Although, it did not make her avoid online channels in general, just that particular website which negative emotions were connected to. The same occurs for Vendela, as previously mentioned even if she has had a negative experience when ordering from a website, she did not avoid ordering from online channels in the future, she just adjusted the websites she orders from. While Malin often returned items she bought online and felt irritated in some aspects when doing it, other interviewees of the online group almost never returned items when shopping online. The reason for interviewees that avoided doing returns

is linked to their extensive research prior to the purchase. This occurred for interviewees that bought slow fashion both online and offline.

### 5.3.2 The impact of personnel and delivery on the practice

Within the assessment stage the interviewee Niclas who belongs to the indifferent group did express neutral emotions post-purchase, he further indicated that he feels happy or as usual once he has done the purchase, however one cause did affect the aftermath towards either positive or negative emotions. Niclas expressed that if the aftermath of the purchase turned out to be above the average of the usual experience. This can be exemplified in an online shopping experience of either getting a quicker delivery or a nice package can lead towards a more pleasant experience than the usual. On the other hand, a negative experience could be related to what Niclas expressed as unfriendly personnel in-store which creates a negative impression of the brand even if he is well aware of the staff's fault in this situation. What is notable is that the assessing phase sets the tone for the anticipating phase for the next purchase. The emotional state being the usual or neutral sense of “joy” could be either increased or decreased if the situation differs. This further goes in line with the interviewee Malin who also does her purchases solely online and expressed her state of being once the purchase was done:

*“It is quite mixed feelings, because before I used to get happier. If it's a difficult clothing item, I feel more satisfied, because then I don't have to do further research after the purchase, and then I feel like the research priorly was worth it. But if it's the opposite and the clothing item does not fit well, it feels completely unnecessary” - Malin, 24*

With the above mentioned, interviewees of slow fashion of either online or offline groups, do have one thing in common which is doing extensive research prior. A further result of the research could be the amplified emotions involved once the purchase is done, which has been depicted either from a neutral state or positive and negative experiences. The set of episodes during consumption is associated with a set of feelings due to the emotional connection with objects which triggers a certain behavior (Cohen & Areni, 1991).

### 5.4 The practice of omnichannel slow fashion shopping

The switch from multi to omnichannels has triggered a change into a more seamless experience in the choice between mobile, online and offline shopping (Verhoef et al., 2015; von Briel, 2018). Looking into consumer's practices of shopping omnichannel slow fashion can give a deeper understanding of omnichannels. As seen in the previous sections, some interviewees transitioned between various channels in omnichannels when shopping slow fashion. The most common switch between channels within omnichannels was in the pre-purchase to purchase phase, where interviewees browsed online using their computers or their mobile devices, to later do the purchase either in physical stores or online. The indifferent group of interviewees agreed upon the seamlessness of doing research online or offline and later to proceed to the opposite channels. No one normally experienced the transition not to be seamless between the first two stages in the customer journey. Although as mentioned previously, when transitioning from the pre-purchase stage to the purchase

stage, there were clear differences in the interviewees' practices and the emotions they felt towards online and offline channels. Both online and the offline group of consumers were doing research online to different extent before transitioning to the purchase stage. Even though some appreciated the seamlessness from online research to online purchase, the online group experienced that the transition from online research to mobile purchasing was not convenient.

*“I would never purchase slow fashion using my phone, since I think it is more difficult to get all the information in my phone compared to online using my computer” - Joel, 26*

These negative emotions when transitioning from online pre-purchase to mobile purchase made Joel avoid this stage. Instead, he continued using the same channels, from online pre-purchase to online purchase, since he experienced that this was seamless. Most interviewees avoided using their mobile in the purchase and after purchase stage since it did not feel safe enough, which could be seen to disrupt their flow and seamlessness when shopping slow fashion. Only Malin purchased slow fashion using her phone. Her experience from mobile use when purchasing was positive which made her continue using this channel. Compared to other respondents, both Joel and Malin were positive towards the seamlessness of online channels when purchasing slow fashion. Although not all interviewees felt like the online channels were seamless when shopping slow fashion. Niclas did not always experience seamlessness when transitioning between online channels. Niclas often felt irritation when the transition between channels was not experienced as positively as expected.

*“Something that interrupts my shopping flow when purchasing online is when the ad says that there is a discount on a website, but when following the link it appears that there is no discount” - Niclas, 26*

In addition, Niclas also experienced other areas where omnichannels in slow fashion were not seamless.

*“If I want to buy something online but their payment methods on the website do not include Klarna or Swish where I already have my bank account connected, I think it could be really annoying” - Niclas, 26*

Niclas expressed that this often made him avoid that specific website and sometimes made him avoid online channels. Overall Niclas is considered an indifferent consumer and he does switch between online and offline channels when purchasing slow fashion. Niclas' experienced in some situations a lack of seamlessness between online channels which was mentioned by other interviewees too in this study. Although, even if it was expressed as irritating, all interviewees did not always completely avoid online channels. The offline group did thus avoid online channels when purchasing, due to lack of control throughout the customer journey the hassle of ordering online. Some offline interviewees expressed it as an insecurity of not knowing when to get their money back. Due to this inconvenience and previous bad experiences from purchasing online, the offline group avoided shopping online.

*“It is too administrative to purchase online, and I feel unsafe regarding the payments” - Hugo, 25*

*“I think it is way smoother to purchase in a physical store where I can also return it, in addition I get my money back almost right away” - Elisabeth, 25*

To these interviewees the seamlessness between channels when purchasing and returning was not good enough and evoked negative feelings, which made most of them avoid purchasing online. Their negative emotions towards online purchasing and returning when shopping slow fashion had an effect on their practice. At the same time, not all interviewees had even tried to combine the various channels when purchasing slow fashion. In that sense the offline group conducted their whole practice of slow fashion shopping offline and did not take advantage of the seamless experience. They preferred to stick to the offline channel they were familiar with and had a routine of using it. It could be argued that the offline group of consumers never experience the potential advantages of the potential seamless experience of using offline channels combined with online and mobile channels.

In contrast to the offline group, the online group preferred online channels and did not express lack of a seamless experience between the purchase and post-purchase phase. To some, purchasing online and doing returns online felt smoother and more convenient compared to going to a physical store. For the online group, including offline channels felt more of a hassle compared to only using online channels throughout the whole customer journey. One example is when having to spend more time going to an offline store and not knowing what products were available there.

*“I think going to a post office with my package when wanting to return something online is really smooth. I have done it many times before and it is close to where I live“ Malin, 24*

In regard to omnichannel experiences and the interviewees practices and emotions, the lack of seamlessness and the feelings of irritation that arouse, made some avoid physical stores. This was not evident for all interviewees as some continued to move between channels in omnichannels that were not seamless even though they felt irritated. In addition, there was a difference of how the interviewees experienced the various channels as some preferred using mobiles while others really preferred using offline channels or online channels. What they all had in common was that they felt irritated when the shopping did not go as smoothly as they expected, which most often affected the practice of slow fashion shopping. In this sense the findings show how emotions are embedded in the aspirations and goals that people try to reach (Sahakian et al., 2020), as the interviewees often chose to do the practice of omnichannel shopping in a way that evokes the most positive emotional outcome.

## 6. Conclusions & Contributions

The aim of this study was to analyze the practice of shopping slow fashion within an omnichannel environment through the perception of how emotions are involved. The study by Molander and Hartmann's (2018), depicts the ongoing cycle of emotions and its linkage through practices, involving anticipation, actualizing, and assessing (Schatzki, 2002). This paper links the aforementioned ongoing cycle with Lemon & Verhoef's (2016) study of the Customer Journey's three phases, to reveal how emotions are involved in the practice. The purpose of this paper derived from answering the research question: *How are emotions involved in the practice of omnichannel shopping in slow fashion?*, which contributes to the research field of omnichannel experiences within a customer journey from a perception of practice theory and the emotions involved. The practice theory takes a stance from the teleoaffective structures which connect emotions to practice (Schatzki, 2002). The results were based on the ten phenomenological interviews where the interviewees were divided into three different groups based on their choice of channels when shopping slow fashion. *The Online Consumer*, *The Offline Consumer* and *The Indifferent Consumer* were based on their practices and emotions involved within the pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase stages which connects to the teleoaffective structures of anticipation, actualizing and assessing. The results were then analyzed and discussed to find how emotions were involved in practices of slow fashion shopping.

Emotions and shopping are linked in the sense that emotions have an effect on purchase intentions (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Moreover, shopping is a form of emotional investment that gets triggered by objects, people, or events (Cohen & Areni, 1991; Goldsmith et al., 1996; Babin et al., 1994). Consumers strive for an emotionally positive experience during their purchases (Kim et al., 2016). Therefore, retailer's goal is to attract customers emotionally to create a deeper bond (Mishra et al., 2016). Slow fashion in particular is considered to make consumers more invested and emotionally connected to their items (Zarley Watson & Yan, 2013; Pookulangara & Shepard, 2013). Moreover, emotions are evident in omnichannels which play out in the different stages of the customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Aspects in omnichannel shopping that affect consumer's emotions and their practice are utilitarian and hedonic motives (Ou & Verhoef, 2017). Hedonic and utilitarian motives have been found to be associated with previous experience of a specific product (Chaudhuri, 1997). Consumers with hedonic benefits of value-in-use tend to move towards higher interactivity and social engagements for discussions (Barwitz & Maas, 2018). Hedonic motives are related to consumer's playfulness that shoppers experience from a website when online shopping (Järvenpää & Todd, 1997), and these hedonic motives increase consumer's information search behaviors (Schmidt, 1996). Utilitarian motives are related to time saving activities and convenience (Kang, 2018). Furthermore, consumers who neither engage in webrooming or showrooming often have utilitarian motives (Kang, 2018). Web characteristics have also been found to influence consumers which are connected to emotions and how they are affected by environmental cues online (Richard & Chebat, 2016) and environmental cues offline (Mehrabian & Russel, 1974). The environmental cues influence consumers' emotions (Richard & Chebat, 2016) and consumers often experience an

emotional rollercoaster while going through omnichannel shopping (Lynch & Barnes, 2020). Within the omnichannel setting it is of interest to create a seamless experience for the consumers throughout the customer journey (Yrjölä et al., 2018; Verhoef et al., 2015; von Briel, 2018). A dynamic experience between the online and offline settings are important for an integrated shopping experience (Alexander & Olivares Alvarado, 2014).

The result of this study showcased one common motive when it comes to the practice of slow fashion shopping which is the extensive research made prior to purchasing. Despite the research being conducted differently among consumers, the importance of doing thorough research was due to the idea of “investing” in slow fashion clothes. What this study resulted in was the essence of habits which creates a sense of security for slow fashion consumers. Habits are depicted from past experiences which creates the practice each group performs. The practices performed derive from obtaining a certain emotional outcome. Hence, the emotions derived from security and convenience that arise from habits of previous experience were involved in the shopping of slow fashion in an omnichannel environment. Some consumers did their research on either mobile devices or their computers in order to get more access to different brands, clothes and prices. They had a sense of control by being able to compare and have a better overview of options. While others gained a sense of control by solely doing research in-store in order to be able to feel and touch the material and also to gain proper service by personnel. Furthermore, the effort of doing thorough research and being rational in choices later on creates rewarding emotions of investing in slow fashion clothes for consumers of slow fashion.

The practice of purchasing slow fashion derives from having control and security since it is, as previously mentioned, considered an investment. Omnichannels can in this case increase this emotion for some consumers, as others do not gain any value of omnichannel presence within the practice of shopping slow fashion. However, it becomes of importance to acknowledge that the offline consumers routines are embedded in practices where omnichannel presence does not add any value. Therefore, it becomes of interest to further acknowledge how omnichannels can increase the emotional involvement for consumers that tend to switch between channels in slow fashion shopping. The feelings of excitement, convenience, security and ease could be enhanced for the online and indifferent consumers in order to experience seamlessness.

The practice of the indifferent consumer could have the potential to involve more emotions that are positively associated with omnichannel shopping, which therefore could lead to experiences that sets the tone for the anticipating phase. The indifferent consumers were willing to change channels based on external influences such as time and money. The consumers that solely purchased in-store had experience of trying to use various channels such as online or mobile channels, these consumers expressed omnichannel shopping as inconvenient and irritating. Therefore, the offline consumer preferred to stick to physical stores since they believed the process of using omnichannels when shopping slow fashion was not useful. Online consumers had a positive experience when moving between channels throughout the customer journey, they expressed the journey as exciting and convenient when



moving between various platforms online. What separates the indifferent consumer compared to the online and offline consumers, is that they are willing to give up on the hedonic elements of their preferred channel which includes visual appeal and pleasant experience of one's preferred channel. Their goal was to solely save time or get the best deal, which could explain their openness to switch between channels and their utilitarian approach. The practice of the indifferent consumer could have the potential to involve more emotions that are positively associated with omnichannel shopping.

To conclude, this study showcased that emotions are involved in the practice of shopping slow fashion. The main findings of *how* emotions were involved came to terms with the practice conducted among the consumers which derived from their past experiences. Omnichannels were proven to increase the emotional involvement among consumers that do find convenience in switching between channels. What is proven by the consumers is that emotions from past experiences are brought to new ones. Their practice of habits when it comes to shopping slow fashion within their preferred channel is not easily switched towards a different channel. How emotions are involved when shopping did not always contribute to changing the practice of omnichannel slow fashion shopping. Omnichannel within slow fashion has the potential to enhance the positive emotional outcome for consumers that do practice the switch between channels when shopping slow fashion. The difficulty relies on the fact that the consumers that solely shop in physical stores do not seem to see the potentialities of omnichannel shopping as connected to convenience and ease. Hence, their negative emotions towards omnichannels affect their practice. For this consumer group, their perception of convenience and ease is to just use one channel, which is offline. The importance relies on focusing on emotions connected to security, convenience, and ease for the consumers of slow fashion since their practice derives from an ongoing cycle of emotions which are linked towards routines. The routine for consumers of slow fashion is embedded in the chosen channel of preference, and if omnichannels can enhance more positive emotions within these routines, the end results could become fruitful for the consumers that already are positively involved in switching channels.

### Future research and limitations

The limitation of this study includes that there were 10 interviewees, which means that the results are not generalizable for a larger population. A larger set of interviewees would have been preferred to further develop the conclusions drawn. In addition, this study focused on respondents in the ages between 20-30 years old. A larger study could have included respondents of different age-ranges which could reveal similarities and differences between the age groups.

While this study identifies the emotions involved in slow fashion omnichannel shopping, future research could explore how seamless the omnichannels need to be for the consumers of slow fashion to be satisfied and to gain positive emotions. This is interesting since the results in this study indicated that not all consumers take advantage of the omnichannel seamlessness. Therefore, future studies could look into how, and to what extent slow fashion retailers could strive for integration of their retail mix in the touchpoints and channels they

use. This could continue previous research on the retailer's work on integration of seamlessness in omnichannels by Verhoef et al. (2015) and von Briel (2018).

Another area of research that could be of interest for future studies is comparing the practice and emotions involved in slow fashion omnichannel shopping to other types of retail shopping, such as fast fashion shopping. This is of interest since slow fashion has been shown to evoke more emotions compared to fast fashion (Zarley Watson & Yan, 2013; Pookulangara & Shepard, 2013). The findings might therefore be interesting if looking into emotions of fast fashion shoppers and comparing them to slow fashion shoppers.

A final suggestion for future research is to include Biometrical methods. This is also connected to the limitations of this study. Oral interviews cannot represent underlying emotions in the unconscious mind, which is why biometrical methods such as Heart Rate Acceleration or Galvanic Skin Response could be included in future research on emotions involved in slow fashion omnichannel shopping. These methods could showcase the emotional state of consumers when performing tasks (Zoëga Ramsøy, 2014).

## Managerial Implications

The findings of this study contribute to implications for omnichannel shopping within slow fashion for brands and retailers that operate from mobile, online and offline shopping of slow fashion. The adaptation for companies that sell slow fashion could evolve from redefining their business model when it comes to their omnichannel presence and how interconnected it is. This study revealed the involvement of emotions from an early stage among consumers prior to finalizing their purchase which proves that brands and retailers of slow fashion should consider a set of aspects worth considering in order to maintain a positive experience for their consumers.

- The practice of shopping slow fashion solely through online channels gains most convenience from websites online. Visual appeal increases positive emotions towards the brand or retail-website, moreover, the practice of online shopping of slow fashion is based on doing extensive research on material, sizes and inspiration in order to gain control. Websites that offer free deliveries and returns are also more favorable for this type of practice. Therefore, companies could put resources towards creating visually appealing websites that conveys the qualities of a physical store. This could be exemplified as in providing the consumer as much information as possible about the clothes and perhaps offering virtual images and comparison of sizes. Consumers thrive on the excitement of their research but they could also easily switch websites or brands when it comes to the information and service they believe is the most suitable. Companies could become more aware of what is lacking in online shopping that physical stores convey which is the physical setting, touching of materials and customer service. To conclude, these aspects are to be considered in an online shopping environment in order to maintain a positive experience and emotional connectivity in order to gain more returning customers towards each purchasing cycle.

- Companies that sell slow fashion clothes both in physical stores and online could offer a more seamless approach towards both channels in order to offer the consumers that solely shop in physical stores a sense of security which they lack from online shopping. Within the practice of shopping slow fashion in store, these consumers thrive on personnel service, the sense of touching materials and doing research in-store, however, the lack of trust for online channels is what hinders these consumers. Therefore, companies could enhance their online and offline features in order to offer a more seamless experience for these consumers and also gain more trust which could be informational or benefits that exceeds the in-store experience. This derives from creating an omnichannel setting that becomes seamless between mobile, online and offline channels which creates a higher informational flow and experience for consumers. Companies could offer live-customer service on their websites and benefits of service post-purchasing which the offline consumers sense their security from.
- The theme of a seamless experience within an omnichannel setting was prevailing throughout this study. What was evident is that among the interviewees of this study neither used nor gained a seamless experience to its fullest potential. What could therefore be optimized by companies is to lower the barriers between the channels in order to create more seamlessness among slow fashion consumers. This could be exemplified in enhancing technological aspects between online and offline settings as mentioned above, but also focusing on the aspects of how consumers of slow fashion perceive their emotional outcome. In this case, companies need to focus on aspects such as trust, convenience and visual appeal in order to create the emotional bond between their slow fashion consumers. The enhancement of seamlessness could bring potentialities among the indifferent consumers, since they already switch between channels there is a potential to connect more positive emotions towards their practice.

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## 8. APPENDIX

### Appendix 1. Interview guide

General	Customer Journey	Motivations / Experience	Emotional Evaluation
Age / Gender etc.			
Are you interested in fashion?	Describe the process before you plan to make a purchase. (spontaneously, research based webrooming/showrooming)  Where do you find inspiration for clothing? Phone, computer? in store?	If research was made: what were your motivations whilst doing research?  Do you prefer doing research online or offline? why?	Explain the anticipating feelings prior to doing the purchase
What is slow fashion according to you?  Why do you shop slow-fashion?	In the pre purchase phase, did you seek opinions of others?  Social media influence?	Did social aspects affect your actions? For example, friends/family, culture?	Describe the emotions before the purchase  Do you bring prior experiences to new ones in shopping?  Were those feelings connected to specific devices, online, offline?
When did you last purchase a clothing item?	How did you proceed once you decided to do the purchase?  What channels did you use?	Did you get a seamless experience? (explain what it is).  How was that?	Do feelings (emotions) that you have prior to a purchase affect how you act? (based on for example prior experiences)
What is your general relation to shopping clothes throughout the years? (slow versus fast) Any changes made?	Once you purchased, what happened after? (return/reviews) and how did you do these?		What emotions/feelings were triggered after the purchase?
Are you generally striving for the best deal (price, delivery) or to fulfill a pleasurable shopping experience (online/offline)?	Are you generally more impulsive than reflective when buying slow fashion clothes?	Did you get a different experience depending on how impulsive or planned the purchase was?	
If the price/delivery cost/time differs from a visually pleasing store/website, what motivates you to purchase?  Example: rather go for the cheapest price, fast delivery, or in-store experience	If the previous purchase situations differed, regarding channels etc, why did you act differently? (compare channels)	Would you consider shopping as a hedonic or utilitarian experience?  Different at different occasions, why?	Were there differences in emotions/feelings when being online vs offline during the customer journey?

General	Customer Journey	Motivations / Experience	Emotional Evaluation
	Did you feel that your emotions change based on the level of visual appeal and enjoyment?	Are you more motivated to shop in an environmentally pleasing store? (offline/online)  Example: inspirational website or visual appealing store	Which aspects do you consider positive and negative concerning online shopping?  Could it be regarding security experience on the website?  Are you bothered by cookies and collection of information?  Does the ability to interact with people online affect you?

## Appendix 2. Compilation of interviewees responses to the practice of shopping slow fashion

	Anticipating & Pre Purchase	Actualizing & Purchase	Assessing & After Purchase
<b>Joel</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Comparing prices and products online. Social media for inspiration. Enjoys the convenience of online research and shopping and is excited.	<b>Purchase:</b> Online, since it is easier compared to stores, although, sometimes likes to try on in store.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Double-checks online if there are better prices or products. Waiting before the usage of clothing items and trying at home in case of returning it. Reevaluate if they are really content.
<b>Malin</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Inspiration from websites using her mobile phone. Enjoys the smooth transitions between websites and social media.	<b>Purchase:</b> Shopping viewed as a necessity rather than fun. Buying everything online through the phone.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Neutral state of emotions however if something goes wrong with delivery, negative emotions arise or positive if something exceeds beyond expectations.
<b>Vendela</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Research on mobile as Instagram & Pinterest. Extensive research comparison of sizes online & measurement. Excited and thrilled, looking forward to it.	<b>Purchase:</b> Online, using the computer. Computers feel more serious and safe. Sense of joy once purchase is done.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Afraid of doing returns online, which is why a lot of research is done before a purchase.
<b>Niclas</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Extensive research before a purchase through magazines and online using computer and phone. Well informed of materials. Social influences from family and others	<b>Purchase:</b> Mostly online depends on relation with the brand. Rather goes for price optimization choice. Sometimes enjoys trying in-store. .	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Sensitive state of either good service or not. Does not do returns due to thorough research.
<b>Julia</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Finding convenience in mobile and online research due to more options. Usually on mobile. Neutral stance to research.	<b>Purchase:</b> Online purchase on computer. Prefers online due to beneficial terms & conditions of returns on sales items. Excited once research is over.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Does return items, but does not prefer either offline or online returns.
<b>Odette</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Influenced by friends. Extensive research in stores, and sometimes online. Feelings of joy and worry due to big investment.	<b>Purchase:</b> In store. Likes to try and to have contact with a sales associate face to face, and likes to try on before a purchase.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Using the clothing item directly after purchase. Willing to reclaim in-store in case of defect.

	<b>Anticipating &amp; Pre Purchase</b>	<b>Actualizing &amp; Purchase</b>	<b>Assessing &amp; After Purchase</b>
<b>Axel</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Inspiration from social media or series using computer. In addition, visit the store. Feeling excited.	<b>Purchase:</b> In store, since I can try and feel material, get a better wholesome experience.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Never return something when ordered online, since the item has always been tried in a store before.
<b>Elisabeth</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Inspiration through instagram using phone which leads to research websites. Enjoys shopping	<b>Purchase:</b> In stores. Needs to be in the right mood and needs to be good sales associates.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Like returning in stores, more smooth, even though she does trust the process of online returns.
<b>Hugo</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Has a clear purpose of what to buy. Research in store. Tries in-store. Might be influenced by others but rarely. Generally does not enjoy shopping.	<b>Purchase:</b> Buys in-store. Too administrative to purchase online, avoids the risk of return and having an outstanding invoice.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Keep the receipt and wait a few days. Try the clothing item in different ways and contemplate.
<b>Matilda</b>	<b>Pre purchase:</b> Research offline. Get inspiration from social media using the phone. Finds it difficult with sizes and fits online.	<b>Purchase:</b> Needs to be in the right mood. Always tries on clothes in stores and buys in stores.	<b>Post-purchase:</b> Uses the clothing item immediately after purchase due to the extensive research in-store.