

THE IMPACT OF USING REAL FUR ON PURCHASE INTENTION

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THE DYNAMICS OF A BRAND MISCONDUCT



ISABEL SPEK - 414494

ERASMUS SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

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SUPERVISOR: DR. VARDIT LANDSMAN-SCHWARZ



The dynamics of a brand misconduct - *The impact of using real fur on purchase intention*

University: Erasmus University Rotterdam
Faculty: Erasmus School of Economics
Master: Business & Economics: Marketing
Supervisor: Dr. Vardit Landsman-Schwarz
Date: June 2020

Author:

Name: Isabel Spek
Student number: 414494
E-mail: 414494is@student.eur.nl

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is the eighth of January 2020, when famous Dutch popstar Famke Louise posts a rather controversial picture on her Instagram in the run-up to the launch of her own clothing line. The photo shows Famke walking on a Chinese fur farm, between rows of lined-up dead animals, creating the illusion she is shopping for fur to use for products for her new clothing line (see Appendix I). Within no time she has a lot of likes, but even more hateful comments. She received a lot of (negative) media attention. One day later, this post turned out to be a huge stunt to raise awareness. Instead of buying the fur for her clothing line, she was there together with animal rights organization Bont voor dieren¹ to expose the cruelties in the fur industry.

This example shows the different reactions of customers to certain events which could be perceived as a brand misconduct, in this case the use of real fur. Moreover, it is interesting to see that over time the perception of a brand misconduct can change. Again, the use of real fur is taken as an example. Over the course of time, the opinion on using real fur kept developing. As is explained in the paragraph 4.1, until the 60's/70's fur is mostly considered a fashionable status symbol. In the 80's and 90's, wearing fur becomes inappropriate and considered a misconduct, then around the year 2000, real fur makes a comeback. This shows that something that is first seen as completely normal becomes a misconduct, then slowly becomes normal again and later starts turning into a brand misconduct again. In this paper I call it the dynamic nature of a misconduct.

In this thesis I will investigate the dynamic nature of a brand misconduct based on the fur industry. The Netherlands are the fourth biggest mink fur producer in the world. However, from 2024 this mink farming will be totally banned and become illegal. Judges concluded that the ethical and common interest is more important than the economic interest. (Fur Free Alliance, n.d.). So, after an increase in the popularity of fur (collars) (Lindhout, 2010) (Scelfo, 2004), it has been decided that the production of it will be forbidden. Because of this radical development in the Netherlands, this thesis will concern the Dutch market.

¹Bont voor Dieren is a Dutch animal rights organization who is committed to all animals that are victims of the fur industry. Their main goal is to total ban on real fur (Bont voor Dieren, n.d.)

1.2 MANAGERIAL RELEVANCE

In the past, much research has been conducted on the effects of a brand misconduct and how managers should handle this. However, these researches all concerned obvious misconducts (like child labour (Huber, Volhardt, Matthes, & Vogel, 2010)). In some cases the perception of something being a misconduct is not that clear. In ethical discussions there are proponents and opponents. An example is the fur industry. Therefore, this thesis is relevant for managers as it can help them decide what to do in cases of brand misconducts related to ethical discussions. In this case, if and when it would be profitable to use real fur. Or would it be more beneficial to stop using real fur and search for alternatives? The most important question is more target audience related: who are the opponents and who are the proponents of using real fur? This thesis will answer this question and will advise managers how to deal with the marketing issues related to this discussion.

1.3 ACADEMIC RELEVANCE

Prior studies proved that a brand misconduct negatively affects brand image and reputation (Davies, Chun, Da Silva, & Stuart, 2003), customer-based brand equity (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000) and the effectiveness of marketing (van Heerde, Helsen, & Dekimpe, 2007). It also leads to negative word-of-mouth (Smith & Cooper-Martin, 1997). To what extent a brand is harmed by the misconduct depends on several factors: consumer characteristics, commitment, ethical ideologies, consumer idealism and relativism, expectations and the severeness of the misconduct (Laufer & Coombs, 2006) (Ahluwalia, Burnkrant, & Unnava, 2000) (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000). However, all this research concerns either defaults in products or obvious misconducts like use of child labour. In this thesis, the use of real fur is investigated. As explained in §1.1 and chapter 4, most people already question the ethical rightness of using real fur, but fur collars are still seen as a status symbol. This trade-off will be the base of this thesis research.

In addition, it is proved that social norms can change over time. In general, these changes are caused by objective circumstances and subjective changes in perceptions (Benhabib, Bisin, & O. Jackson, 2010) (Peyton Young, 2007). This could explain the dynamics of a brand misconduct (like the use of real fur). But the connection between changing social norms and the evolution of the perception of a brand misconduct has not been established in literature.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis first conducts a review of existing literature. That will be the base for the hypothesis for the research. The following subjects are interesting when looking at existing literature:

- *Brand misconduct*: Using real fur in products could be seen as a brand misconduct. Information about this subject can help get a clearer image on the possible consequences this causes.
- *Dynamics of a brand misconduct*: From the introduction can be concluded that seeing the use of real fur as a brand misconduct differs per period and per person. This indicates that brand misconducts can be dynamic (not static).
- *Purchase intention*: The research question investigates the effect of using real fur in products on the purchase intention. Therefore, literature about brand purchase intention is reviewed.
- *Status symbols and status consumption*: As will be explained in chapter four, (Dutch) customers see fur collars as status symbols. It is important to find out how this influences the buying process.

2.1.1 BRAND MISCONDUCT

In §1.3 the effects of a brand misconduct are already shortly discussed. In the paper ‘Brand misconduct: consequences on consumer-brand relationships’, a brand misconduct is described as when a brand’s behaviour does not meet customers’ expectations. A brand misconduct can be product related and service related, but it can also concern socially or ethically questionable actions (Huber, Volhardt, Matthes, & Vogel, 2010). According to this research, a brand misconduct negatively influences brand relationship (quality) and (re)purchase intention. The researchers expected to find several important factors playing a role in this process.

- Brand relationship quality; the higher the quality of the brand-consumer relationship, the smaller the deterioration in this relationship and the effects of a brand misconduct.
- Brand relationship duration; the longer the relationships exists, the smaller the deterioration and the effects of the brand misconduct.

Moreover, they expected to find that self-congruence and functional congruence in respect of a brand would influence the consumer-brand relationship. None of these hypotheses turned out to be significant. But this research is solely based on the jeans market. So, in other markets it could be different, as is also stated in the paragraph ‘limitations and future research’.

Furthermore, Hegner, Fetshering and Van Delzen researched the consequences of negative emotions towards brands. The focus of their research was the changing perspective of the consumer-brand relationship from a transactional to a relational base (Hegner, Fetscherin, & van Delzen, 2017). Continuing on the findings of Baumeister et. Al (2001), that people remember negative events more than positive events, (Baumeister, Bratslasky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001) customers tend to consider the negative information more strongly than the positive (Kanause, 1984). In their paper, Hegner, Fetshering and van Delzen distinguish three different types of customer dissatisfaction *negative past experience*, *symbolic incongruity* and *ideological incompatibility* leading to *brand hate*. Symbolic incongruity means that a brand represents an undesired image to the consumer. Ideological incompatibility happens more on a brand level and is based on the legal, social or moral wrongdoing of a company leading to negative feelings towards a brand. The main conclusion is that all these three factors lead to negative word-of-mouth, that symbolic incongruity is the main trigger for brand avoidance and that negative past experience is the main cause for brand retaliation (Hegner, Fetscherin, & van Delzen, 2017).

2.1.2 DYNAMICS OF A MISCONDUCT

What customers perceive as a brand misconduct is based on their expectations of a brand. These expectations then are influenced by social norms. Burke and Peyton Young define *social norms* as an ideal, standard or customary of behaviour to which individuals in a social group try to conform. What is necessary to hold these norms in place differs per situation (Benhabib, Bisin, & O. Jackson, 2010). In another paper about social norms of Peyton Young, he describes social norms as conventional behaviour rules that coordinate interactions between others. Norms can change over time, on the one hand by changes in objective circumstances and on the other hand by subjective changes in perceptions and expectations (Peyton Young, 2007). In this case about the fur industry, the objective circumstances could be the growing volume of fur production which causes more mass production, which results in deteriorated conditions in which animals are bred for their fur.

The subjective perceptions in this case are mainly influenced by animal rights organizations. It is possible that this caused a shift in changing norms. Other subjective changes in perceptions can be influencers. For example, famous Dutch popstars like Lil' Kleine and Famke Louise (used to) wear real fur a lot. By doing so, the image that wearing real fur is cool and fashionable is fuelled and amongst others, this may have contributed to the comeback of real fur (Bont voor Dieren, 2020).

Evolution in norms can also be caused by three types of influences: top-down influences, bottom-up influences and lateral influences. To illustrate this the writer shows the following example. The law partly operates top down, by judicial rulings identifying norms of what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. At the same time, the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is constantly fluctuating, because of how individual courts and judges handle and resolve individual cases: the bottom up influence. Lastly, precedents in one domain can be transferred to another domain, the lateral influence (Peyton Young, 2007). Banning fur production in the Netherlands is an example of a bottom-up influence. It started with the ethical discussion and opponents of the fur industry collecting evidence to prove how cruel the animals are being treated. Then the court elaborated on this and prohibited production as of 2024 (Fur Free Alliance, n.d.). From then on, the 'new' social norm can be established top-down.

It also turned out that cultural characteristics have an influence on shift in norms. Cultures with a higher need for coordination are less likely to switch norms than cultures with a low need for coordination. This is because cultures with a higher need for coordination have a higher inertia than cultures with a lower need for coordination. This low need for coordination results in less need to explore and therefore individuals are more likely to take over norms from their peers (Soham, Nau, & Gelfand, 2017).

Moreover, according to Robert Cialdini and Melanie Trost, change in the social world happens through the influence process of individuals. They found that there are three major components in the influencing process: social norms*, conformity** and compliance***. The social influence process is a central component in social interaction. This influencing process serves different goals: to behave effectively, to manage self-concept and to build and maintain relationships.

When at the same time different goals are being attained, this should enhance the influencing process. Additionally, goals can interact with social situations. Different situations can make different goals more important (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

*Social norms: They state that a norm is a construct that helps describe human behaviour and that therefore has a widespread usage. How norms emerge can be viewed from two perspectives: the societal-value perspective and the functional perspective. The societal-value perspective concludes that any behaviour that is valued and rewarded can become a norm. The functional perspective concludes that norms emerge in a similar way the natural selection of species work. *“Norms emerge through selective pressure on individuals to communicate with others about behaviour patterns that are effective, relevant and informative.”* (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Additionally, one of the most important things about norms is that they can only exist if they are shared with others (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

**Conformity: The paper concludes that people behave ‘like sheep’, meaning people are (very) sensitive to group pressure. Thus, it is common that people conform to others when they perceive real pressure from them, resulting in different behaviour from when alone. Research found that people are willing to ignore their own eyes to agree publicly with a clearly inaccurate group judgement (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

*** Compliance: This part of social influence is about a particular kind of response (consent) to a particular kind of communication (a request). The request can be indirect, but the ‘target’ knows how he is expected to respond. There are six psychological principles that influence the behavioural compliance decisions most powerful: 1) reciprocate a gift, favour or service, 2) be consistent with prior commitments, 3) follow the lead of similar others, 4) accommodate the request of those we know and like, 5) conform to the directives of legitimate authority, and 6) seize opportunities that are scarce or dwindling in availability (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

It can be concluded that a change in norms is a complex process in which the interplay of many different forces is necessary. A small change in behaviour of an individual can over time trigger a major shift in social norms (Peyton Young, 2007).

2.1.3 PURCHASE INTENTION

Purchase intention in relation to brand image

According to the theory, purchase intention is closely related to brand image (Esch, Langner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006). Brand image can be described as the perception consumers have of a brand reflected by the brand associations in consumer's minds (Chandon, 2003). Corporate brand image comes from what people associate with the brand or all the information (perceptions, inferences and beliefs) about the company that people hold (Martenson, 2007). A common understanding in branding theory is that a good brand image effects consumer's behaviour towards the brand in a positive way. For example, the company can ask premium prices, buyers will be more loyal and the company will benefit more from positive word-of-mouth (Martenson, 2007). The brand associations can be derived from scratch, but also an existing list of brand associations could be used (and if necessary adapted). For example, Aaker, developed a set of five personality aspects to measure a brand personality. These five personality facets are: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness (Chandon, 2003).

The effect of negative media attention

As is mentioned in paragraph 4.2, using real fur in products leads to negative media attention, for example caused by animal rights organizations like PETA. According to recent research, this negative attention to a brand leads to a negative effect on brand image and purchase intention (Ahluwalia & Gürhan-Canali, 2000) (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000) (Dentoni, Tonsor, Calantone, & Peterson, 2011) (Ullrich & Brunner, 2015). However, it is also stated that the brand relationship is a moderating factor in this process. Negative information is processed differently depending on the kind of relationship with the brand (Ahluwalia & Gürhan-Canali, 2000) (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000). On the other hand, some research finds that a little negative information following mostly positive descriptions of a brand, can improve the brand image (Ein-Gar, Shiv, & Tormola, 2012).

When consumers receive negative brand information, they tend to go through a process of deciding who is responsible, an attribution process (Weiner, 1983). Consumers who have difficulties in finding an attribute to blame are the most likely to switch to another brand compared to consumers who have a strong belief about who to blame for the incident (Mattila & Ro, 2008).

Ultimately, according to the research of Yu, Liu, Lee and Soutar, brand attitudes can be influenced by consumers' attribution of fault, but brand image will not be influenced by it. However, consumers' attribution of fault does have a significant impact on purchase intention. (Yu, Liu, Lee, & Soutar, 2018). Thus, the more a consumer thinks the brand should be blamed for the negative publicity, the less likely they are to buy it. This is also supported by Wu and Lo who found that purchase intention is influenced by attitude towards a brand when negative publicity is experienced (Wu & Lo, 2009). Another conclusion from the research of Yu, Liu, Lee and Soutar was that the severity of the negative publicity had no significant impact on brand attitudes, purchase intention and brand image (Yu, Liu, Lee, & Soutar, 2018).

Reference groups

Continuing on purchase intention, according to William Bearden and Michael Etzel, reference groups are also an important factor to consider when it comes to purchase intention. Depending on the kind of consumption, reference groups are considered to have a great influence (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). The article states that a reference group is *a person or group of people that significantly influences an individual's behaviour* (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). In addition, the paper distinguishes three types of influences: informational (wanting to make informed decisions), utilitarian (wanting to comply with the wishes of others in order to receive rewards and avoid punishment) and value-expressive (based on the need for psychological association with a group or person which results in acceptance of others). Additionally, the paper distinguishes two different kinds of purchase: public / private (visual / non-visual to others) and luxury / necessity. Lastly, the paper distinguishes product- and brand purchases. In the end, all three influencing types (informational, value-expressive and utilitarian) were the most impactful on public luxury purchases and the least relevant for private necessities (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). In the case of fur collars, which are public luxury purchases, it can be concluded that reference groups have a great influence on the purchase decision.

2.1.4 STATUS SYMBOLS AND – CONSUMPTION

Status symbols

American Psychological Associations defines a status symbol as: *“Any indicator of a person's prestige or high status in a group or society, such as expensive or rare possessions, an extravagant lifestyle, or membership of a prestigious club.*

The term applies particularly to those indicators that individuals deliberately choose to communicate, often to give a falsely high impression of their status level to others.” (American Psychological Association, 2019). Moreover, products that function as status symbols change in the course of time, but they are always connected to the main differences between social classes and mostly tied to monetary wealth. With a status symbol, a person indicates that he can afford (extremely) high prices. Because this is one of the functions of status symbols, increasing price could actually increase demand (Kenton, 2019).

According to Amaldoss, Jain, Eastman, Goldsmith and Friese gaining ‘status’ is one of the most important motivational forces that affects consumer behaviour (Amaldoss & Jain, 2005) (Eastman, Goldsmith, & Friese, 1995). Therefore, most people, regardless of their income, are willing to pay high prices for luxury goods to increase their status (Chan, Chester, & Chu, 2015). This goes especially for clothing, as this is a visual means to show identity and self-worth and signal wealth and social status (Husic & Cicic, 2009).

Status consumption

Status consumption can be defined as follows: “The motivational process by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through conspicuous consumption of consumer products that confer or symbolize status both to the individual and to surrounding significant others.” (Eastman, Goldsmith, & Flynn, 1999). Status consumption has as a goal to obtain prestige from owning luxury goods (Chan, Chester, & Chu, 2015).

Status consumption and repurchase intention

According to the same research, the factors ‘need for uniqueness’ (especially avoidance of similarity) and ‘materialism’ have a direct effect on status consumption. This status consumption leads to affective responses and these directly influence the repurchase intention (Chan, Chester, & Chu, 2015).

Thus, affective responses are an important factor in the luxury goods buying process. Affective responses are feelings derived when acquiring products from luxury brands. The generating of luxury goods positively effects the consumers well-being (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

This well-being is a multi-faceted construct that can be measured through the frequency of pleasant and unpleasant emotional experiences (Zhong & Mitchell, 2010). According to

Diener, affective responses realize psychological needs and increase a consumer's satisfaction concerning status (Diener, Harter, & Arora, 2010). Therefore, by purchasing luxury goods, consumers can enter a positive affective state or leave a negative affective state (Chan, Chester, & Chu, 2015).

In conclusion, buyers of luxury goods see the acquirement and the possession of luxury goods as the key to happiness. They feel that their lives will improve by buying luxury items.

2.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Learning that social norms and the perception of a brand misconduct can change per period, it is interesting to find out what this means for a brand's image and the purchase intention of customers in case of such a dynamic brand misconduct. This relationship has not yet been researched. Therefore, I formulated the following theoretical question:

“How does a changing perception of a certain brand misconduct over time affect purchase intention?”

First of all, this is a broad question which would require longitudinal research to answer it. Another option is to find historical data about the purchase intention for a product/service which could be considered as a dynamic brand misconduct. For this research I choose to look at the fur industry. The use of real fur is a good example of a dynamic brand misconduct (see chapter four), because the perception of seeing using real fur as a brand misconduct changes per period and per person. Therefore, I choose to use this as the empirical context for this research. It is interesting to see what using real fur means for a brand. For example, does it harm the identity of the brand and with that the purchase intention because of all the negative (media) attention around real fur, or does it benefit the brand, due to the popularity of fur collars as a status symbol and the ignorance of people about the fur industry? Furthermore, the focus will be on the Dutch market, because of the fact that (mink) fur production will be prohibited in the Netherlands from 2024, while the Netherlands are the fourth biggest mink fur producer in the world. Overall, this leads to the following empirical research question:

“How does using real fur in clothing affect the purchase intention of Dutch customers?”

2.3 CONCEPTUAL MODEL & HYPOTHESES

Based on the research question and the elaborated literature, the following conceptual model is set up.

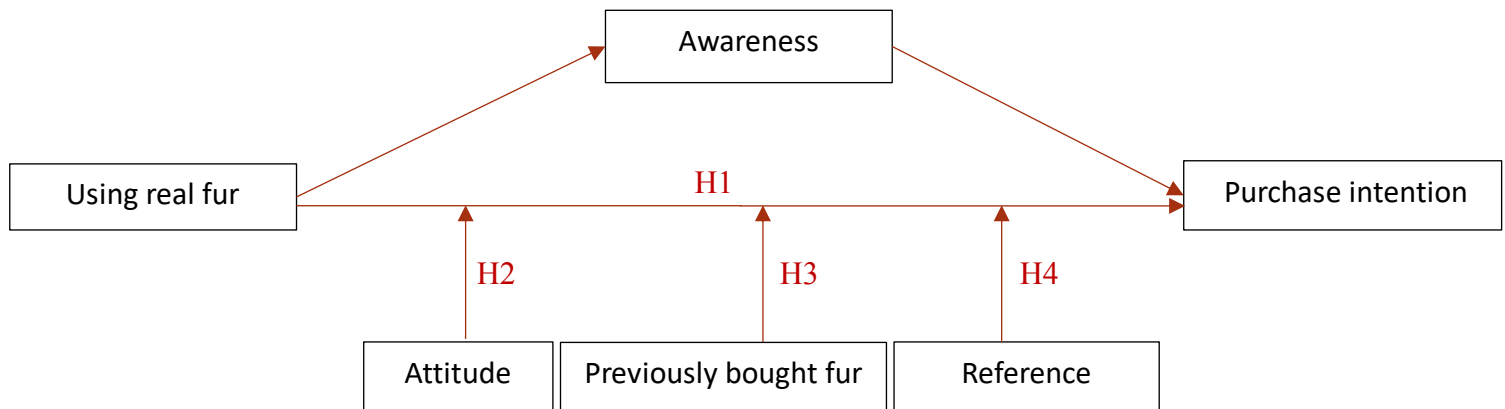


Figure 1. Conceptual model

The model consists of one independent variable ‘the use of real fur’ and one dependent variable ‘purchase intention’. The assumption is that ‘awareness’ has a mediating effect on the relationship between ‘the use of real fur’ and ‘brand image’ (if people are unaware of the use of real fur, a relationship cannot exist).

I expect to find the moderating variable ‘attitude’, because the relationship with ‘purchase intention’ can be different for people with a positive or negative attitude towards the use of real fur. In addition, based on the literature elaborated in §2.1.4, the expectation is that previously bought fur and reference groups influence the ‘purchase intention’ as well. In the end, demographic data will also be asked from participants to be able to do further statistical analyses.

The *first* hypothesis is that the use of real fur has a negative impact on purchase intention. This assumption is based on the theory that a brand misconduct has negative effect on brand image *and* purchase intention (Davies, Chun, Da Silva, & Stuart, 2003) (Esch, Langner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006). Yet again, this relationship can only exist if customers are aware of the usage of real fur in a product.

H1: The use of real fur negatively affects the purchase intention. This relationship is mediated by the customer's awareness about the use of real fur in products.

The *second* hypothesis postulates that attitude (towards the use of real fur) has a moderating impact purchase intention. Because the assumption is that the use of fur is seen as a brand misconduct. However, this probably doesn't apply to customers with a positive (or no negative) attitude towards the use of real fur in products. Also, as discussed in §2.1.3, negative media attention can be processed differently depending on the kind of brand relationship. Therefore, the assumption is made that having a positive attitude towards real fur positively moderates the negative effect of the use of real fur on purchase intention.

H2: A positive attitude (or less negative attitude) towards the use of real fur positively moderates the impact of real fur usage on purchase intention

The *third* hypothesis concerns the fact that real fur could be perceived as a status symbol. As explored in §2.1.4, the purchase of status symbols leads to positive affective responses. This means that buying luxury goods positively influences the well-being of a consumer (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Therefore, the hypothesis is that consumers who previously bought fur, will have a higher (re)purchase intention than consumers who never bought real fur before. This variable is a control variable.

H3: Previously buying real fur will have a positive effect on the negative impact of real fur usage by a firm on purchase intention.

The *fourth* hypothesis is about the role of reference groups in consumer behaviour. According to Bearden & Etzel (1982) reference groups are the most important when it comes to public, luxury purchases and the least relevant for private necessities. Since products containing real fur are perceived as status symbol (by some customers), the expectation is that when people in reference groups of a consumer wear/have products with real fur, this will moderate the (negative) relationship between using real fur by a brand and purchase intention.

H4: Reference groups (friends/family) wearing real fur containing clothing products will moderate the negative effect of real fur usage by a brand on purchase intention.

The *last* hypothesis concerns the customers age. For some reason, as is described in chapter four, mostly the youth started wearing real fur collars and see them as real status symbols. In an article in the Volkskrant an interviewee says that you do not fit in if you do not own one. Therefore, I expect to find a moderating effect of age on the purchase intention.

H5: Age will moderate the negative effect of real fur usage by a brand on purchase intention.

3. METHOD

3.1 RESEARCH PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of my research is to find out how the use of real fur in products affects the purchase intention of customers and what factors influence this relationship. In addition, the dynamics of a brand misconduct is an important factor. Because this is a new angle on the brand misconduct theory, the research is exploratory of nature. The research consisted of two parts: finding and analysing information about how Dutch customers viewed real fur in the past (see chapter four) & collecting and analysing new data about how Dutch customers feel about the usage of real fur at this moment (2020) (see chapter five).

Quantitative research – “The goal of quantitative research is to generalize the “truth” found in the samples of the population” according to the paper ‘fundamentals of quantitative research’ (Sukamolson, 2007).

For this research the population was divided into different categories based on their awareness and their attitude. Since the size of each segment is important for the relevance on the dependent variables (purchase intention), quantitative research is the most useful method. Disadvantages are that it is not possible to ask further after a certain answer is given and that it is more difficult to find underlying reasons (compared to face to face interviews for example). However, advantages of quantitative research are: Provides estimates of large population, provides results which can be used for statistics and also allows statistical comparison between groups, it is precise and can be standardized and it measures level of occurrence (Sukamolson, 2007).

Online questionnaire – The form in which the quantitative research took place is an online questionnaire. Because there is only one independent variable, an experiment makes no sense. Thus, a survey is the best method to collect data. Because of the ethical element in this research, it was desirable that the respondents remained anonymous, to minimize the chances of socially desirable answers. An online questionnaire gave this option. Other advantages of online questionnaires are that it is inexpensive and it does not require interviewer time. Disadvantages concern a low response rate, often requires follow up and respondents self-select (potential bias) (Kumar, 2014). In order to prevent follow up to be necessary, a pre-test was done. For this pre-test I asked 20 people to fill in the questionnaire and I tested all my hypotheses with the gathered information to see if all the necessary questions were asked to be able to do so. After making a few changes, the survey was ready to be distributed.

When all the data was collected, the most suitable analyses were performed. In this a Paired-sample T-test to find the difference in purchase intention for a coat with or without real fur and a regression analysis to find influencing factors of the model and because purchase intention is continuous variable.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

To be able to collect the right data, the link to the online questionnaire was spread via social media (Facebook, LinkedIn and WhatsApp) and e-mail. To make sure I got response from customers in all age categories, I spread the link at sports clubs, offices and elderly communities.

3.3 QUESTIONNAIRE & MEASURES

The questionnaire consisted of five parts. The first parts reflect constructs to measure the awareness, the dependent variable ‘purchase intention’ and the moderators: previously bought real fur, reference groups and attitude. In the last part I asked some demographic questions, like gender, age, income and level of education.

Where possible, I used questions which are already used in other studies to measure the following subjects, because those questions are already established as useful to measure a certain subject.

Awareness - The first part will look at customers’ awareness about the use of real fur in clothing products. This is ‘easy’ to answer for respondents, so I do not need a construct to measure this. This factor will be measured binary, so respondents are either aware or unaware.

Previously bought real fur & Reference groups - Because in the literature review the conclusion was found that the purchase of a status symbol causes positive affective responses, hypothesis three was developed (previously buying real fur will have a positive effect on repurchase intention of real fur). Another finding in the literature review was the effect of reference groups on purchase intention. I combined these two moderators in one part of the questionnaire, because these questions were also ‘easy’ to answer and did not need a construct, just a yes/no question was enough.

Attitude - The next group of variables researches the attitude towards the use of real fur. In this category there is a risk of socially desirable answers. Therefore, before asking it directly, a projective technique will be used prior to the direct method (McLeod, 2009). The respondent was asked on a seven-point Likert-scale to what extent they associate certain words with real fur (think about words as ‘pretty, cool, must-have, ugly, disgusting, questionable and unethical) and on a five-point Likert-scale to what extent they agree with some statements about the use of real fur. Think of statements about how people feel when they see someone wearing real fur, how they would feel about wearing real fur themselves and how they feel about the production of real fur. After these word associations and statements, the respondent was asked about their overall opinion about real fur usage. To see what influences the overall attitude the most, I performed a factor analysis.

Purchase intention – The dependent variable in this research is the difference in *purchase intention* for clothing products from brands that do use real fur and clothing products from brands that do not use real fur. Based on previous research from Brewer, Zhu & McKeith (2001) I used a 7-point Likert-scale (very unlikely-very likely) to measure this variable. So, the lowest purchase intention is 1 and the highest purchase intention is 7. To measure the influence of real fur I have created a construct. First, I presented the respondents with five types of winter coats and asked that if they *had* to buy a winter coat right now, which model they would prefer. Then I asked the purchase intention for that type of coat from a brand that uses real fur and for a brand that does not use real fur. Finally, I measured the change in purchase intention due to knowledge of the use of real fur by brands.

Demography – In the last part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked some demographic questions, namely: gender, age, education level, residence and income. For the regression analysis, I transformed the variables gender, education level and residence into dummy variables: female, higher educated and residence city.

4. EMPIRICAL CONTEXT – THE FUR INDUSTRY

4.1 HISTORY

Since the beginning of humanity (hunter-gatherer society), fur has been used in clothing (Thibault, 2018). Real fur has been used as a way to keep warm, but in the course of time it became more a way of showing economic or social status. For example, in Ancient Egypt, real fur was only used by royalty and high priests. Later, between the 1300's and 1600's, English kings actually limited the rights to wear special furs, like fox, to the noble elite only. In this way fur was not only really expensive, it was legally unobtainable for people in lower classes, which helped establishing real fur as a status symbol (Idacavage, 2018). In the middle ages fur remained a really valuable product. It was mostly used on the inside of clothing to keep the wearer warm in cold times. Only the rich could afford to wear clothes adorned with fur on the outside. The more pelts were used on a piece, the more social status it gained (History Notes, 2012).

In the 19th century the technological capabilities increased and it became easier and cheaper to produce real fur clothes, which resulted in a peak in fur clothes in the 1950's.

During the mid 1960's people began to question the fur industry and in the 1970's celebrities like Mary Tyler Moore, Doris Day and Angie Dickenson joined this movement. In 1971 Doris Day stated the following in the New York Times: *“Killing an animal to make a coat is a sin. A woman gains status when she refuses to see anything killed to be put on her back. Then she is truly beautiful”* (Thibault, 2018).

In the 80's and 90's, real fur was no longer tolerated. People wearing it on the streets even got attacked for it. At the same time, faux fur went through some major improvements, making it almost indistinguishable from real fur. As a result, according to the Fur Commission USA, this growing trend for faux fur caused the taboos around real fur to melt away (Fearon, 2014). This come back of fur is shown in the following sales numbers. The figure below concerns fur sales in the US from 1991 till 2014.

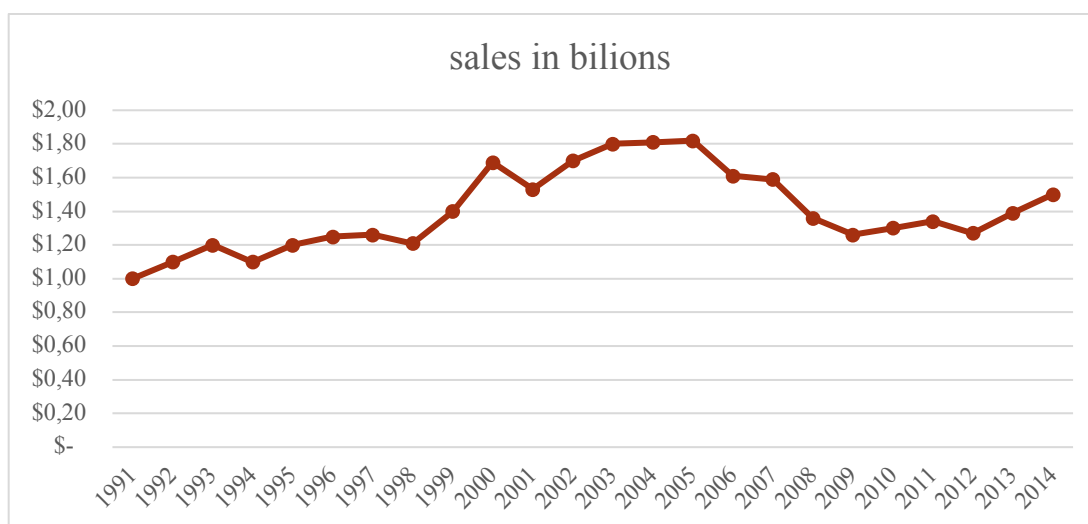


Figure 2. Fur sales (in billions) in the US 1991-2014 (Fur Information Council Of America, 2020)

In figure two, an overall increase in fur sales in the US is shown since 1991 till 2014.

Luxury fashion houses and retailers stop using real fur

For luxury fashion brands, real fur has always been a way to support their identity in term of status. Brands like Gucci, Dior and Chanel used real fur in multiple clothing items. However, the critique on using real fur grew and the self-reflection of the brands developed. Below the developments around big clothing brands and using real fur are described.

Since 2001 the trend to stop using real fur in products started, as is shown in the timeline in Appendix II, figure 12. In 2017 the movement got substantial when, amongst others, Versace and Armani became 100% fur-free. In 2019 the trend continued and 11 brands banned fur from their collections, for example, Burberry, Chanel, DKNY and Jean Paul Gautier (Peta, 2019). For most brands the reason to stop using real fur is the increasing awareness of the cruelty that goes with the production of it. For example, Donatella Versace said: *“Fur? I am out of that. I don’t want to kill animals to make fashion. It doesn’t feel right”* (Petter, Versace to stop using fur in its collections, 2018).

In addition, Marco Bizzarri, Gucci’s president and CEO, stated: *“Being socially responsible is one of Gucci’s core values, and we will continue to strive to do better for the environment and animals. With the help of HSUS and LAV, Gucci is excited to take this next step and hopes it will help inspire innovation and raise awareness, changing the luxury fashion industry for the better.”* (Furfree Alliance, 2017).

4.2 CURRENT FUR INDUSTRY

Brands that use real fur in their clothing products claim that the production of it is animal friendly, however this claim is often questioned by animal rights organizations (Animals Today, 2017) (Watling, 2019). For years it has been a discussion how ethical it is to use real fur in clothing products. To this day the story of fur production has two sides.

On the one hand, the proponents of real fur say the production of fur is not that cruel. For example, animals do not suffer as they are being killed humanely by being gasified with carbon monoxide, which should result in a painless death (Animals Today, 2015). Another widely used argument is that people also eat meat, so being against the use of real fur while eating meat would be hypocritical (Engber, 2015). Other arguments proponents of real fur use, are that the quality of real fur cannot be copied. The way the fabric breathes prevents the wearer from transpiration while keeping warm. Furthermore, the International Fur Trade Federation, in cooperation with the four biggest auction houses, introduced the OA-label (Origin Assured). This label provides consumers with the possibility to consciously choose responsible fur from countries where animal welfare rules apply. The label states which animal species it concerns and in which country the animal was kept.

Lastly, fur is a ‘green’ product. The production is much less polluting than the production of faux fur and real fur lasts a lifetime. Therefore, proponents see real fur as a sustainable product (NFE).

However, the arguments of the opponents predominate. This is mainly due to the large-scale efforts of animal rights organizations, like PETA (People for Ethical Treatment of Animals), Animal Rights, Bont voor Dieren (a Dutch organization), Animals Today and ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), put into it and the amount of negative media attention this causes. When one googles something about the fur industry, the first page mostly contains results from these kinds of organizations, especially PETA has a large share in this (see Appendix VI). Below an enumeration is shown of examples why the fur industry is questionable. It should be taken into account that most of these claims are made by animal rights organizations with an agenda against using real fur:

The documentary from BBC News ‘Inside a Russian fur farm’ shows the viewer how animals are living in small cages outside in the snow. The animals show stressful behaviour, for example running around in circles in the cages. The presenter asks the farmer why the animals act that way and he answers the presenter that the animals have to keep running to stay warm, because they are in the snow. Then a few moments later, when the presenter asks the farmer why the cages are that small, the farmer answers that the animals feel comfortable in these cages (Inside a Russian fur farm, 2016). This is a contradicting story, because the farmer claims that the animals feel comfortable in those small cages, while at the same time they have to keep running (with almost no space) to stay warm.

The brand Airforce claims their products contain fur which is produced animal friendly. However, a great deal of the fur they use comes from parts of China where there is no supervision on the fur production and which is known for the bad circumstances for animals. In 2017, the Dutch Reclame Code² has therefore summoned the brand to take back their claim of animal friendly fur (Animals Today, 2017).

² The Reclame Code is an independent foundation in the Netherlands that exists for more than 55 years. This foundation makes sure all advertisements are adherent to the rules. By doing so the reliability and credibility of the advertisement world are being guaranteed (Stichting Reclame Code, 2020).

In the uncontrolled parts of China, not only the animals suffer due to the fur production, also the workers in the factories suffer from poor working conditions (like working with toxic gasses) for less than the minimum wage (DW Documentary, 2019).

One of the claims of proponents of real fur, is that killing animals by gasifying them with carbon monoxide is painless and therefore ‘humane’. But undercover research in Dutch fur farms by foundation Animal Rights, shows that all operations that precede the gasification actually are cruel. Minks are thrown and slammed into the gas chamber, screaming and breaking bones. The fur farms say that all their workers have been trained properly and that they have received a certificate of professional competence for this. However, as undercover tapes show, employees do not adhere to this (Animals Today, 2015).

These examples show that there are a lot of arguments why using real fur can be perceived as unethical and therefore a brand misconduct.

Because of these two very contradicting sides of the story, it is difficult to get an objective view on the fur industry.

A major development in the fur industry is that as of 2024 the mink breeding for fur is illegal in the Netherlands, because it is considered unethical to breed and kill animals for unnecessary luxury goods (Animal Rights, 2019).

4.3 FUR COLLARS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Real fur collars remain a common view in the Dutch street scene. Around 2010 fur collars made a big come back in the Netherlands. Because it is only a fur collar (not a whole coat), it is affordable for a lot of customers. They see the fur collar as a status symbol, the bigger the fur collar, the more expensive it is. The real fur containing coats are mostly worn by high school students (young people), but popularity is also increasing amongst other groups of people (Lindhout, 2010) (Scelfo, 2004).

Popular brands that sell coats with fur collars in the Netherlands are for example: Airforce, Moscow, Woolrich, Nickelson, Parajumpers, and Canada Goose, see examples in Appendix V.

All together the popularity of the fur collars resulted in The Netherlands being the third largest fur producer in the world (right after Denmark and China). There are around 130 breeding farms for fur in the Netherlands with a revenue of between 120 and 150 million euro (Partij voor de dieren, 2013) (Bont voor dieren, 2019).

4.4 THE DUTCH FUR INDUSTRY

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the first mink farms in the Netherlands were created by a growing demand for quality fur. This sector grew slowly but steadily until the Netherlands became the third biggest producer in the world. Around 2010 about 1025 people work in the Dutch fur sector and achieve approximately 120 million euro's yearly revenue (Post, 2010). This year, the number of mink farms has grown to over 200 (Animal Rights, 2020). All mink farms and other stakeholders are united in the *Nederlandse Federatie van Edelpelsdierenhouders (NFE)* (translation: Dutch Federation of Fur Animal Farmers). Because nearly all farmers are affiliated with this federation, the sector is well organized and it is possible to make sector wide agreements. The federation has two main purposes: advocacy of the sector & support and guidance in the field of business management (NFE, 2017).

As previously mentioned, the Netherlands are the third biggest (mink) fur producer in the world. Most lot of the production is however being exported to other countries for international fur auctions. In 2014, worldwide, about 80 million mink furs, with a total value of 3.7 billion euros, were sold to furriers, half of which came from Europe. A part of that actually does return to the Netherlands in the form of a coat, cap, or other accessories. Also, Dutch couturiers almost only use sustainable fur from Dutch grounds in their designs (NFE, 2017). Continuing with the export of fur, in the figure below, an overview is shown of the value of Dutch mink exports to destination.

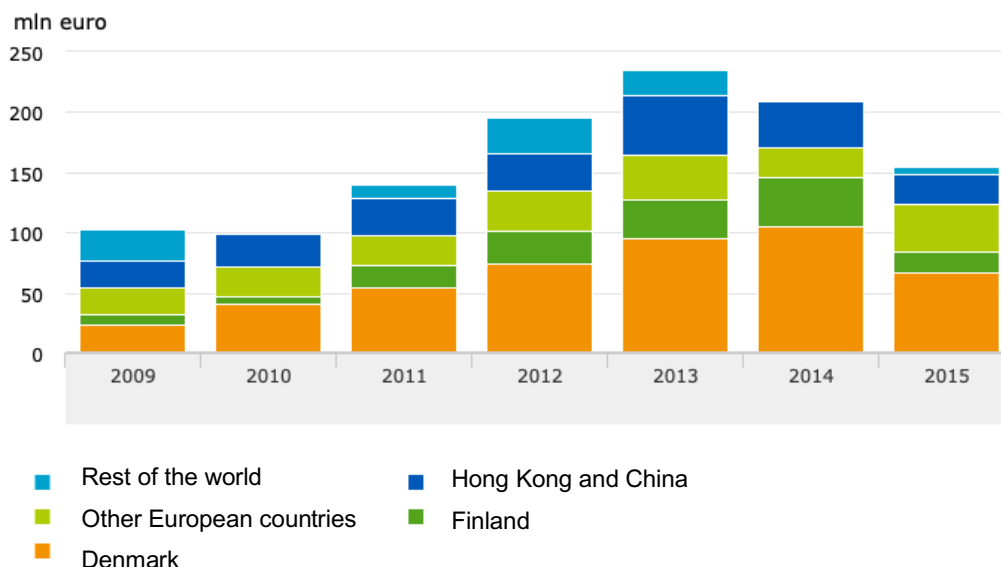


Figure 3. Value export of mink fur to destination (CBS, 2016)

From this figure we can conclude that Denmark is the most important buyer of Dutch mink fur and after that Hong Kong and China.

No import figures are publicly available, neither are sales numbers of real fur in the Netherlands³. However, some information is required to answer the research question. Therefore, the popularity of real fur in the Netherlands, as an indication of purchase intention, is mapped in the following paragraph.

4.5 ATTITUDES TOWARDS FUR (DUTCH CUSTOMERS)

As explained in paragraph 4.1, real fur was always perceived as a status symbol and a fashion item. This changed in the 1980's when wearing real fur became inappropriate. Later, however, around 2010, real fur made a comeback. In this paragraph I will show how Dutch customers felt about real fur and later connect this to the dynamics of real fur as a brand misconduct. As mentioned in paragraph 4.4 no previous research has been conducted on the purchase intention of Dutch customers of clothing containing real fur. Therefore, I will use the price of mink fur as an indication of the popularity, according to Adam Smith's demand and supply theory (Aspromourgos, 2007).

³ This is confirmed by animal rights organization Bont Voor Dieren.

In the Netherlands in the 1960's real fur is perceived as a real status symbol for elegant ladies. Real fur is also connected to a young image, like milk was to a healthy image. Campaigns heralded: "Wear fur to be young" similar to "Drink milk to be healthy". Even the big (conservative) clothing chain in the Netherlands, C&A, advertises in 1968 with the slogan "*Bont is voor iedereen*" (translation: "Fur is for everyone") with accompanying pictures of a mother and daughter in mink coats (de Baan, 2004).

In the 1970's the first signs against real fur became visible. This movement continued and got bigger in the 1980's, similar to the rest of the world, as the bloody pictures of fur production became visible to the big public. Actions people took against real fur became grimmer. As a result, 'elegant' ladies did not dare to wear real fur anymore and the youth wanted to stay as far away as possible from this torture fashion. This meaning, that the two main target groups (chic and young) disappeared (de Baan, 2004). This drastic change in public opinion about the ethical unacceptability of fur has ultimately led to a ban of the breeding of chinchillas and foxes and to the ratification of the fur breeding ban in the Netherlands (Bont voor dieren, n.d.).

In the beginning of the 1990's the aversion to fur remained. In 1995 one of the greatest fashion designers in the Netherlands, Mart Visser, used real fur in his collection. Fur processor, importer and exporter Mies Oudenaller explains that at the height of the fur trade, about 83 percent of the customers was not wearing fur, but the remaining 17 percent easily bought six to seven coats. That percentage has now changed to 15 percent, the people in the fur industry can still live on that (Huisman, 1995). Later in the 1990's we see the aversion to real fur slowly fading. An opinion poll from NIPO (data insight and consultancy company) in 1999 shows that the majority of the Dutch population has little or no idea of how things really work on fur farms. Also, the majority feels that it does not matter for what purposes farmers hold animals, as long as the well-being of the animal is taken care of. In general, the opinion is, that as long as the well-being of the animals is guarded, fur is okay (de Hond, 2006). This ignorance is a major contrast with the bloody image of the fur industry in the 1980's. At the same time, an opinion poll from Intomart finds that 88% of the Dutch think that real fur is unacceptable (Stiphout, 1999).

Since 2000 real fur is making a comeback in the Netherlands. The horror images about fur have blurred.

Big fashion designers in the Netherlands like Frans Molenaar and Mart Visser, keep using real fur for the ‘elegant ladies’ target audience. But also, the youth starts wearing fur (collars) again. Animal rights organizations like Bont voor Dieren, keep fighting the use of real fur (de Baan, 2004). According to Maurice de Hond’s opinion poll in 2006, Dutch customers still do not know much about the origin of the fur and the majority agrees with fur usage if the well-being of the animal is taken into account (de Hond, 2006).

As explained before, around 2010 lots of younger people wear real fur collars as a status symbol. This is partly caused by famous Dutch artists wearing them, setting an example (Lindhout, 2010). In 2013 another opinion poll was held by Motivication (commissioned by animal rights organization Bont voor Dieren), which showed that still 84% of the Dutch customers find it unacceptable to kill animals solely for their fur (Bont voor Dieren, 2013). Furthermore, research of RTL news in 2016 shows that mainly the young people are wearing real fur more often. Fur means status to them. They do not connect fur to its origin (RTL nieuws, 2016).

After 2016 no more information is available. In conclusion, fur is a much-discussed topic and creates a lot of commotion. Even research around the same periods of time show different results. In the 1980’s real fur was the most not done. After that, the hatred for real fur slowly blurred (mostly amongst young customers) and the status collar became a common view in the Dutch street scene again around 2010.

To be able to draw a conclusion about the dynamics of this ‘misconduct’ I choose to look at the varying price of a mink fur as an indication of the purchase intention, since no prior research has been done about this subject and also no real Dutch sales numbers are available. According to the supply and demand theory, when the overall purchase intention is low, the average price will decline and vice versa (Aspromourgos, 2007). Therefore, the fluctuating popularity of real fur is also reflected in the average price. However, we have to keep in mind that also a great deal of the Dutch produced mink fur is meant for export. But prices for real fur are determined at international fur auctions.

Below the available pricing information for mink fur pelts has been combined in figure four, together with the average inflation per year, to make sure that is not the cause of the price changes.

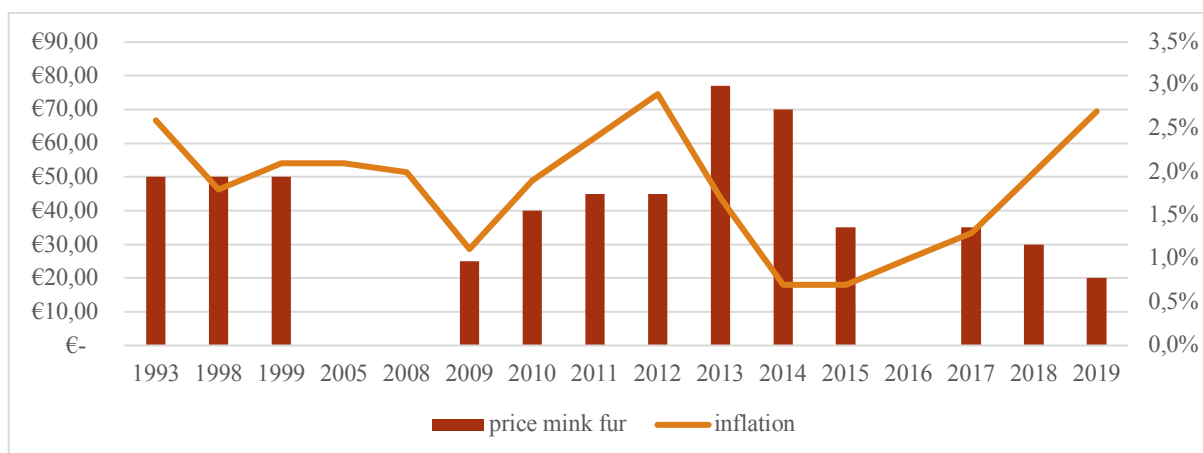


Figure 4. Price development mink fur (average price per pelt) next to the average inflation (NFE, 2010) (Moesker, 2010) (van der Zwan, 2019) (van den Heuvel, 2012) (Boerderij Vandaag, 2019) (Landbouwwattachénetwerk, 2018) (Boerderij Vandaag, 2014) (Nieuwe Oogst, 2015) (NFE, 2019) (van Noord, Nertsenfokkers voldoen aan eisen, 1999) (van Noord, 1999) (inflation.eu, 2019)

5. RESULTS

5.1 ANALYSIS INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the field research will be discussed. First, the sample will be described, followed by the descriptive statistics of the variables, and finally the hypotheses of the conceptual model will be tested.

5.2 SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The sample consisted of 207 respondents, from which four answered that they do not live in the Netherlands. This research concerns Dutch customers, so, in total, 203 of the filled-in questionnaires are usable. These remaining 203 respondents filled in all the questions, so all of them are usable for analysis. Of these respondents, 64% was female and 34% was male. The average age of respondents is 32 years old. Continuing, I asked the income of the person paying for the clothes of the respondent. More than half of the respondents answered an income above average, 27.6% answered income below average and 20.7% answered that the person paying for their clothes has an average income. We also see that most of the respondents have 'WO' (highest educational level in the Netherlands) as their highest achieved education and that only 0.5% has primary school as their highest education level.

Overall, we perceive people with HBO and WO as higher educated, the rest is considered as not higher educated (Onderwijs in Cijfers, 2018). This means that 146 respondents (71.0%) is higher educated and that 56 respondents (27.6%) is not higher educated. Lastly, the majority, namely 58.6%, lives in a big city, 17.2% lives in a small city, 12.3% lives in a big village and only 11.8% lives in a small village (see Appendix V.I, tables 17 till 23).

Based on this sample data, the market division concerning awareness about and overall *attitude towards* brands using real fur looks as follows (note: zero respondents filled in they feel positive about the use of real fur).

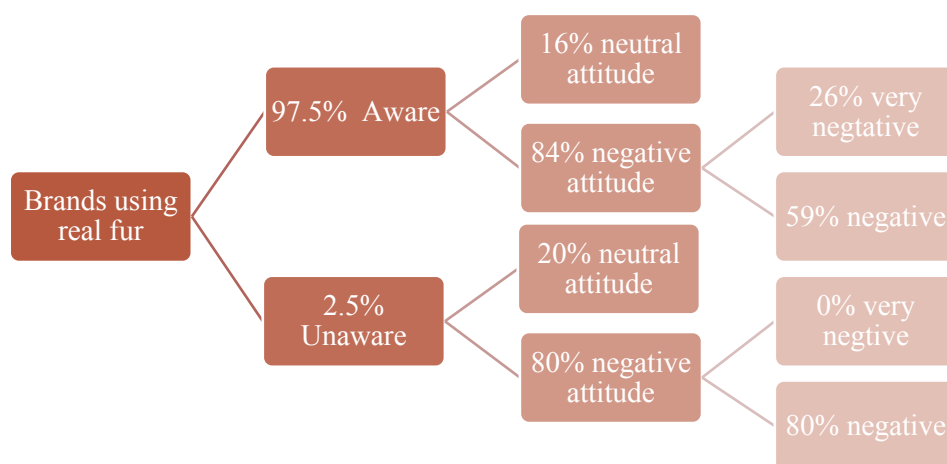


Figure 5. Market division (awareness and attitude)

Overall, from all the respondents, only five are not aware of the fact that brands still sell products with real fur. This group is too small for any conclusions, so I cannot say if this difference in attitude is statistically different between these groups.

5.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Dependent variable

As explained in §3.2, the dependent variable is the difference in purchase intention. Table 1 shows that the average purchase intention for a coat from a brand that does not sell real fur is 5.74 (on a scale of 1 to 7) and for a coat from a brand that does use real fur, the average purchase intention is 2.01. This means that the average difference in purchase intention in this research is 3.73.

Table 1. Average purchase intention

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
no fur purchase intention	203	1	7	5,74	1,652
real fur purchase intention	203	1	7	2,01	1,525
difference purchase intention no - real	203	-6	6	3,73	2,707
Valid N (listwise)	203				

Independent variable

In this research the independent variable is *the use of real fur* by a firm. This is measured as a dummy variable where brands either do use real fur or they do not. I chose to use a winter coat to represent this variable, because these are the clothing products in which real fur is most often used (Straver, 2017). Each respondent is presented with both options once.

Moderating variables

I have used four moderating variables, namely attitude towards the use of real fur, whether a respondent has previously bought fur, age of the respondent and whether friends and family wear products containing real fur.

Attitude

This variable was more difficult to measure, because I expected it to have a high risk of socially desirable answers. Therefore, I used multiple statements and associations to find out what influences the overall attitude (the overall attitude was measured on a five-point Likert-scale: Very negative / Negative / Neutral / Positive / Very positive).

The first set of associations consisted of 12 words and to what extend (on a scale of 1-7 with 1 being totally not and 7 being totally) respondents associated them with real fur. The words expensive, warm and unethical are mostly associated with real fur (with average scores of respectively 5.23, 4.70 and 4.67). The words cool, status increasing and must-have were the least associated with real fur (with average scores of respectively 1.46, 1.71 and 1.21), see Table 24 in Appendix.

I created seven statements for which respondents could fill in through a five-point Likert-scale to what extend they agree with a statement.

Overall the statement “I do not understand why people would still wear real fur” resonated the most and the statement “If money would be no issue, I would wear real fur containing products” resonated the least (respectively the average scores were 3.41 and 1.34 on a scale from 1-5 where 1 is totally disagree and 5 is totally agree), see Table 25 in Appendix.

In Table 2 is reflected that in total, no respondent feels ‘very positive’ about real fur, only 10% says they have a positive attitude towards real fur, 20% is neutral, 44% is negative and 26% is very negative.

Table 2. Overall attitude

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very negative	13	26,0	26,0	26,0
	negative	22	44,0	44,0	70,0
	neutral	10	20,0	20,0	90,0
	positive	5	10,0	10,0	100,0
	Total	50	100,0	100,0	

Next, I wanted to determine what influences the overall attitude the most. Because a lot of variables were used to measure the attitude, I used a factor analysis to determine if there are underlying factors for these variables. The following tables show the results.

Table 3. Factor analysis attitude (1)

Co mp.	Total variance explained								
	Initial Eigen Value			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4,262	22,432	22,432	4,262	22,432	22,432	2,663	14,017	14,017
2	2,248	11,834	34,266	2,248	11,834	34,266	2,143	11,276	25,293
3	1,546	8,136	42,401	1,546	8,136	42,401	1,947	10,249	35,542
4	1,382	7,272	49,673	1,382	7,272	49,673	1,885	9,923	45,466
5	1,178	6,200	55,873	1,178	6,200	55,873	1,574	8,286	53,752
6	1,045	5,500	61,372	1,045	5,500	61,372	1,448	7,620	61,372
7	,944	4,967	66,340						
8	,808	4,250	70,590						
9	,760	4,000	74,590						
10	,737	3,877	78,467						
11	,695	3,660	82,127						
12	,606	3,190	85,317						
13	,537	2,824	88,141						
14	,513	2,698	90,840						
15	,414	2,178	93,017						
16	,393	2,071	95,088						
17	,352	1,851	96,939						
18	,317	1,666	98,606						
19	,265	1,394	100,00						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Based on the Eigen Value of 1, I kept six factors. In the Rotated Component Matrix, we can find which variables belong to which factor, see Table 4.

Table 4. Factor analysis attitude (2)

		Rotated Component Matrix ^a					
		Component					
Word associations		1	2	3	4	5	6
	cool	,274	-,126	,267	-,304	,053	,442
	ugly	-,702	,254	,115	-,002	-,107	-,032
	pretty	,505	-,106	,084	,035	,536	,337
	disgusting	-,373	,603	,163	,178	,054	-,021
	must have	-,030	,094	,032	,055	-,054	,870
	status increasing	,159	-,042	,638	,127	-,042	,516
	questionable	,065	,710	-	-,052	-,053	,241
				,177			
	fashion statement	-,015	-,011	,603	-,183	,153	,057
	unethical	,055	,681	-	,267	,172	-,104
				,209			
	warm	,053	,033	,086	-,079	,693	-,059
	shameful	-,234	,741	,089	,179	,118	-,092
	expensive	-,136	,188	,102	-,028	,743	-,039
Statements	seeing it makes me angry	-,146	,265	,024	,745	-,083	,038
	like look and feel	,766	-,070	,154	-,113	,009	,036
	status increasing	,314	-,096	,758	,043	,173	,017
	wearing it makes me feel good	,588	,098	,403	-,228	-,109	-,093
	if money was no issue, I would wear it	,684	-,009	,244	-,295	-,101	,116
	fur industry is ethically responsible	,005	-,164	,365	-,646	-,223	-,046
	don't understand why people still wear it	-,265	,040	,041	,684	-,236	-,047

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

I labelled the factors as follows: 1) appearance, 2) ethics, 3) status, 4) incomprehensiveness, 5) factual characteristics and 6) must-have.

To determine what influences the overall attitude towards real fur the most, a linear regression analysis is performed⁴. The model obtained from this analysis explains 52.2% of the variation in attitudes and is overall statistically significant because the p-value is $0.000 < 0.005$. This is shown in tables 24 in appendix 25

Table 5 shows that, except for factor 3 (status) and factor 6 (must-have), all factors are statistically significant when it comes to influencing the overall attitude. However, factor 3 (status) is on the borderline of significance.

Table 5. Linear regression factors on overall attitude (3)

Model	Coefficients ^a					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	SE	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1,926	,031		61,341	,000
	REGR factor score 1 (appearance) for analysis 1	,246	,032	,381	7,653	,000
	REGR factor score 2 (ethics) for analysis 1	-,192	,031	-,303	-6,103	,000
	REGR factor score 3 (status) for analysis 1	,061	,032	,095	1,921	,056
	REGR factor score 4 (incomprehensiveness) for analysis 1	-,353	,032	-,546	- 10,966	,000
	REGR factor score 5 (factual characteristics) for analysis 1	,079	,031	,125	2,517	,013
	REGR factor score 6 (must-have) for analysis 1	,044	,032	,068	1,366	,174

a. Dependent Variable: overall attitude

Furthermore, I can conclude that factor 4: ‘incomprehensiveness’ impacts the overall attitude the most and that factor 5: ‘factual characteristics’ influence the overall attitude the least, see Table 5 again.

⁴ The data is tested and meets the assumption for linear regression.

Previously bought fur

As explained in §2.3, the purchase of status symbols (as which real fur clothing products can be perceived) has a positive influence on repurchase intention. Therefore, I am also interested in whether respondents have bought real fur in the past.

Table 6. Previously bought real fur

		Previously bought real fur?			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no	161	79,3	79,3	79,3
	yes	42	20,7	20,7	100,0
	Total	203	100,0	100,0	

As is shown in Table 6, in total 20.7% of the respondents bought real fur in the past (of which only 7.1% bought it within the last year and of which only 33.3% still uses the product).

Age

In §4.2 is claimed that mainly younger people wear real fur collars. I want to test this as well. The average age is also described in the sample description and is 32.

Reference groups

In §2.1.3 is explained that reference groups have a great influence when it comes to purchase intention (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). Therefore, this variable is expected to influence the relationship (whether friends/family wear real fur containing products). Table 7 shows that in total 25.6% of the respondents has friends/family wearing real fur containing products.

Table 7. If reference groups wear real fur containing products

		Friends/fam who wear real fur			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no	151	74,4	74,4	74,4
	yes	52	25,6	25,6	100,0
	Total	203	100,0	100,0	

Mediating variable

Lastly, the conceptual model is based on a mediating variable: awareness. That is to say, it is impossible to be influenced by something you are not aware of. However, it is practically impossible to measure this awareness in combination with purchase intention through an online questionnaire, because in some way the respondent must be asked about their awareness which would already influence their response. Therefore, this variable is included in the conceptual model, but not in the statistical tests.

5.4 TEST FOR ASSUMPTIONS

Based on the conceptual model, there are five hypotheses to test. The chosen method to do this is the Paired Sample T-Test and later the linear regression model. But before I could run the analyses, I had to check if the data meets the required assumptions.

5.4.1 ASSUMPTION PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST

According to the theory, to perform a Paired Sample T-Test, there are four assumptions the data should meet (Fields, 2014). The data meets the following assumptions:

- The dependent variable, difference in purchase intention, is measured continuously;
- Observations are independent from each other;

There are also two assumptions that the data does not meet:

- The dependent variable should be approximately normally distributed. It is not, see figure six. When I tried to square the data (figure seven) of the dependent variable or to turn it into a Log variable (figure eight), the data does not become normally distributed either.

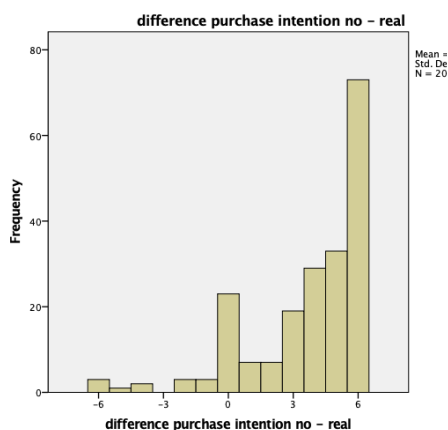


Figure 6. Original DV

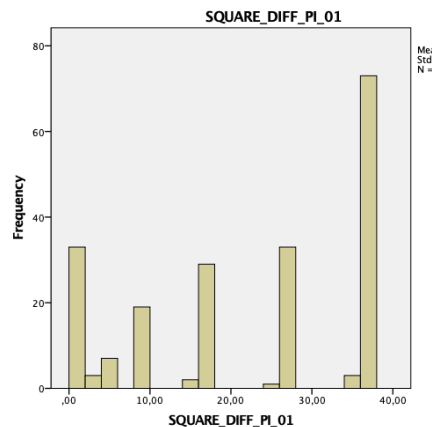


Figure 7. Squared DV

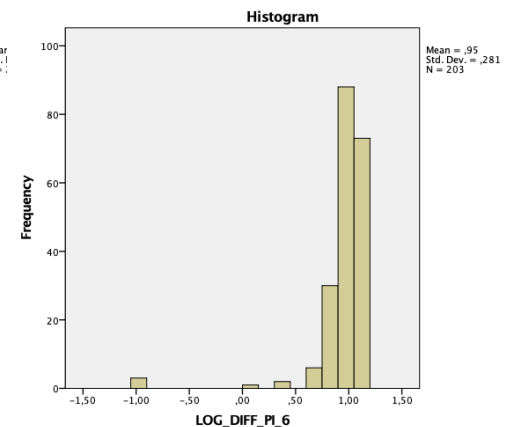


Figure 8. Loglinearized DV

- The dependent variable should not contain any outliers. Figure 9 shows that the data contains nine outliers. These all concern negative differences, so respondents who have a higher purchase intention for a coat with real fur than for a coat with no fur.

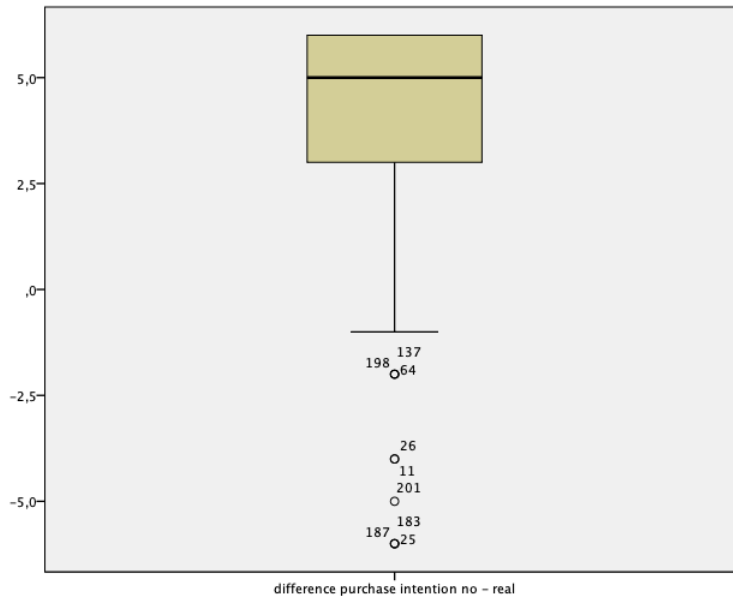


Figure 7. Test for outliers

The fact that the data is not normally distributed has not been solved, even when the outliers are removed. We need to keep this in mind when drawing conclusions from the analysis. The problem about the outliers is solved, simply by removing them. After removing the outliers, 193 respondents remain.

5.4.2 ASSUMPTIONS LINEAR REGRESSION

To perform a linear regression, there are again four assumptions the data should meet according to the theory (Fields, 2014).

In this case the data does meet all the assumptions:

- Observations are independent from each other.
- Based on the scatterplot in figure 10 we can conclude that the assumption of linearity is met.
- The data is approximately normally distributed, as is shown in figure 11.
- From the scatterplot in figure 10 can also be concluded that the assumption for equality of variance is met.

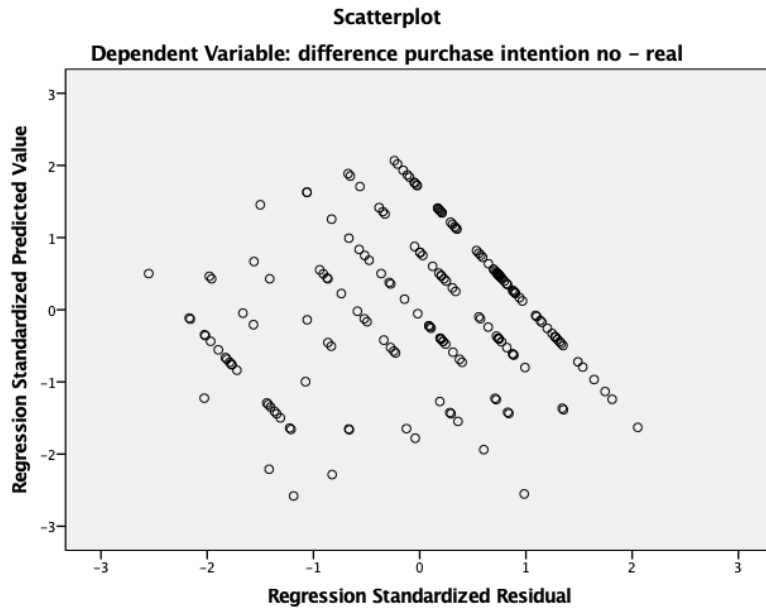


Figure 8. Test for linearity & equality of variance

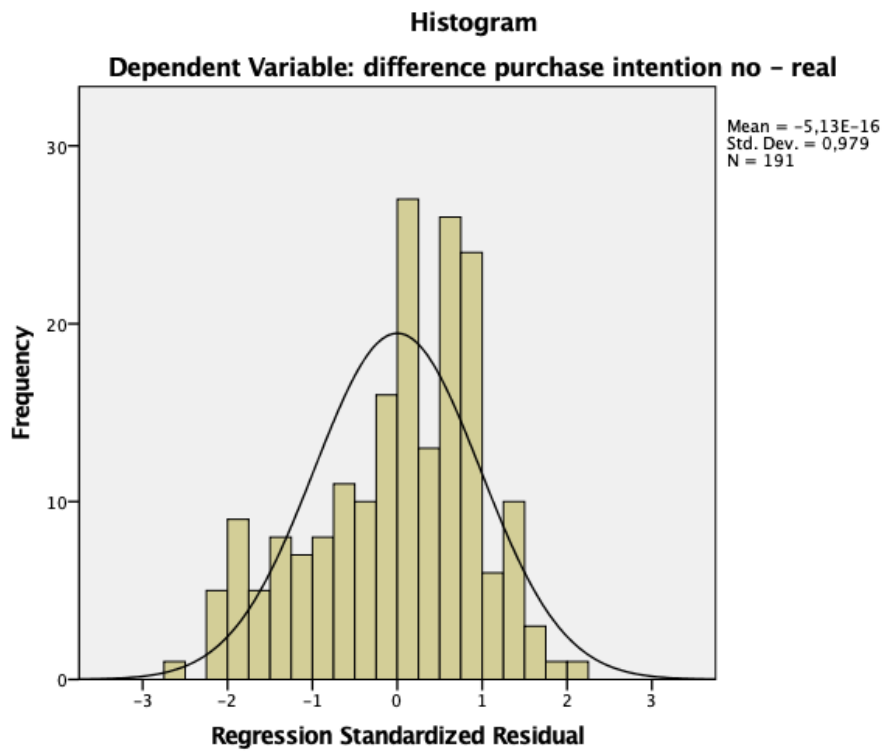


Figure 9. Test for normality

5.5 HYPOTHESES TESTING

For the entire research, I will use a significance level of 5%.

As mentioned before, the conceptual model assumes a mediation effect of awareness with the relation between the use of real fur and the purchase intention, but due to measurement issues, this will not be tested.

The first hypothesis is tested with a Paired Sample T-Test, the other hypotheses are tested with linear regression.

5.5.1 PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST

H1 The use of real fur by brands negatively affects the purchase intention.

To investigate the main effect, the influence of using real fur by firms on the purchase intention, a Paired Sample T-Test is performed.

Table 8. Paired Sample T-Test (1)

			Paired Samples Statistics				
			Bootstrap ^a				
			Statistic	Bias	SE	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
Pair 1	no fur purchase intention	Mean	5,91	,00	,11	5,69	6,11
		N	193				
		Std. Deviation	1,462	-,014	,110	1,237	1,660
		Std. Error Mean	,105				
	real fur purchase intention	Mean	1,82	,00	,09	1,65	2,01
		N	193				
		Std. Deviation	1,258	-,009	,109	1,035	1,467
		Std. Error Mean	,091				

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

Table 9. Paired Sample T-Test (2)

		Paired Samples Correlations						
		N	Correlation	Sig.	Bootstrap for Correlation ^a			
					Bias	SE	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper	
Pair 1	no fur purchase intention & real fur purchase intention	193	-,224	,002	-,007	,076	-,387	-,092

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

Table 9 shows the Pearson correlation which shows the consistency in responses. In this case this correlation is low ($r = -0.224$) but it is significant, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$. Furthermore, it has a bootstrap interval that does not include zero ($-0.387 - -0.092$).

Table 10. Paired Sample T-Test (3)

		Paired Samples Test – Paired Differences							
		M	SD	SE	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		F	DF	Sig. 2 tailed
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	no fur purchase intention - real fur purchase intention	4,083	2,132	,153	3,780	4,386	26,606	192	,000

Second, in Table 8 and 10 can be found that the difference between means is $5.91 - 1.82 = 4.083$. The significance level is $0,000 < 0,05$, so this is difference is significant. It means that $t(192) = 26.608$, $p=0.000$.

Because the data does not meet the assumption of normality, I performed a Bootstrap to get around this (Fields, 2014), see Table 11.

Table 11. Paired Sample T-Test (4)

		Bootstrap for Paired Samples Test					
		Bootstrap ^a					
		M	Bias	SE	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
Pair 1	no fur purchase intention - real fur purchase intention	4,083	,004	,158	,001	3,782	4,394

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

According to the confidence interval, I can conclude that the true mean difference lies between 3.782 and 4.394 (Table 13). It is important that zero does not lie within the confidence interval, indicating that the true value of the mean difference is unlikely to be zero. In other words, there is an effect in the population reflecting a lower purchase intention for clothing products from brands that do use fur.

Lastly, I looked at the effect size:

$$\text{Effect size } (r) = \sqrt{\frac{(26.606)^2}{(26.606)^2 + 192}} = 0.99 \text{ (Rosenthal \& Rubin, 1991).}$$

This value represents a very large effect (0.5 is the threshold). Therefore, next to being statistically significant, the effect is also a substantive finding.

In conclusion, on average, respondents have a higher purchase intention for clothing products from brands not using real fur (M = 5.91, SE = 0.091) than from brands that do use real fur (M = 1.82, SE = 0.105). This difference, 4.083⁵, BC 95% CI [3.782, 4.394] is significant $t(192) = 0.000$ and represented a large sized effect, $r = 0.99$. This means we can accept the first hypothesis.

⁵ This number slightly changed compared to the descriptive statistics in §5.3, due to the removal of the outliers.

5.5.2 LINEAR REGRESSION

To test hypotheses two till five, I regressed the difference in purchase intention (dependent variable) on the attitude, previously bought real fur and age (independent variable) and whether reference groups wear real fur containing products. I also included the control variables: gender, residence, income and higher/lower educated. To do so, I first computed the dependent variable: difference in purchase intention which is purchase intention no fur used by brand – purchase intention real fur used by brand.

Then the equation will look as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Difference in purchase intention (no fur used by brand – real fur used by brand)} \\ & = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Attitude} + \beta_2 \text{ Previously bought fur} + \beta_3 \text{ Reference groups} + \beta_4 \text{ Age} + \beta_5 \\ & \quad \text{Residence} + \beta_6 \text{ Income} + \beta_7 \text{ Gender} + \beta_8 \text{ Higher Educated} \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

Where:

- Difference in purchase intention is difference in purchase intention for a clothing product from a brand that does use real fur and from a brand that does not (measured on a scale of 1-7 where 1 is totally not likely and 7 is really likely)
- Attitude means the attitude towards real fur usage and is measured with a five-point Likert-scale, where 1 is very negative, 2 is negative, 3 is neutral, 4 is positive and 5 is very positive. This variable is treated continuously.
- Previously bought fur is 1 if yes, 0 if no.
- References groups refer to if respondent's friends wear real fur containing products where 1 is yes and 0 is no.
- Age is age in years.
- Residence distinguishes living in a village or city, where 0 means village and 1 means city.
- Income is separated into average, under average and more than average
- Gender: 1 for female and 0 for male (no respondent filled in 'other' for gender)
- Higher education is also a dummy variable where 1 is higher educated and 0 is lower educated.

Table 12. Linear regression (1)

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,535 ^a	,286	,255	1,828	1,747

a. Predictors: (Constant), higher educated, overall attitude, residence city, income, female, Friends/fam who wear real fur, ever bought real fur, age

b. Dependent Variable: difference purchase intention no - real

In Table 12 we find that the variables attitude, previously bought fur, reference groups and age (and the demographic variables): explain 28.6% of the variation in difference in purchase intention.

Table 13. Linear regression (2)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	243,963	8	30,495	9,123	,000 ^b
	Residual	608,341	182	3,343		
	Total	852,304	190			

a. Dependent Variable: difference purchase intention no - real

b. Predictors: (Constant), higher educated, overall attitude, residence city, income, female, Friends/fam who wear real fur, ever bought real fur?, age

Based on the significance level found in Table 13, I can conclude that this model is overall statistically significant, because p-value = 0.000 < 0.05)

All the results are shown in Table 14. The first conclusion concerns the intercept: If all the other variables are equal to zero, the average difference in purchase intention is predicted to be 4.261. The intercept is statistically significant (p-value = 0.000 < 0.05).

Table 14. Linear regression (3)

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	SE	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4,261	,779		5,469	,000
overall attitude	-1,003	,217	-,298	-4,613	,000
ever bought real fur?	-1,149	,372	-,213	-3,093	,002
Friends/fam who wear real fur	-,051	,340	-,010	-,149	,882
age	,019	,009	,140	1,998	,047
residence city	-,392	,315	-,079	-1,245	,215
income	,026	,168	,011	,155	,877
female	1,406	,291	,319	4,837	,000
higher educated	,940	,309	,193	3,039	,003

a. Dependent Variable: difference purchase intention no - real

H2: The attitude towards the use of real fur by brands will moderate the difference in purchase intention.

In Table 14 we see that *attitude* is predicted to decrease the difference in purchase intention by 1.003 units averagely. This effect is statistically significant (p-value = 0.000 < 0.05). So, an increase in attitude of one unit (where 1 is very negative and 5 is very positive) would decrease⁶ the difference in purchase intention with 1.003. Thus, if someone is more positive about real fur (or less negative), this decreases the difference in purchase intention. So, this hypothesis is accepted.

H3: Previously buying real fur will positively moderate the difference in purchase intention.

Next we find that the fact that someone previously bought fur is predicted to decrease the difference in purchase intention by 1.149. This effect is statistically significant (p-value = 0.002 < 0.05), meaning also hypothesis three is accepted.

⁶ An increase in difference in purchase intention means that the influence of using real fur by firms is bigger. In other words, the purchase intention for a coat from a brand with real fur is even lower or the purchase intention for a coat from a brand that does not use real fur is even higher. A decrease in difference in purchase intention means that customers are relatively more likely to buy a real fur containing coat.

H4: Reference groups (friends/family) wearing real fur containing clothing products will moderate the difference in purchase intention.

In Table 14 we find that if friends and family are wearing real fur containing products, it is predicted that the difference in purchase intention decreases with 0.051 units. This effect is statistically not significant ($p\text{-value} = 0.882 > 0.05$). This means that hypothesis four is not accepted.

H5: Age will moderate the negative effect of real fur usage by a brand on purchase intention.

Looking at Table 14 again, age (in years) is predicted to increase the difference in purchase intention by 0.019 units. So, a one-year increase in age would mean a 0.010 increase in difference in purchase intention. This effect is statistically significant, because $p\text{-value} = 0.047 < 0.05$. This basically means that older people are relatively less likely to buy real fur. This can be seen as an indication of the dynamic nature of misconduct. Older people still view this as a misconduct while younger people less. Therefore, this last hypothesis is accepted.

Demographic variables

Lastly, from all the remaining demographic variables, gender and educational level turned out to have a significant impact on the difference in purchase intention based on this research. Residence and income do not:

- Residence: the fact that someone lives in a city is predicted to decrease the difference in purchase intention with 0.392. However, this effect is not statistically significant because $p\text{-value} = 0.215 > 0.05$.
- An increase in income (under average to average or average to above average) is predicted to increase the difference in purchase intention with 0.019. However, this effect is not statistically significant because $p\text{-value} = 0.877 > 0.05$.
- Gender: Being female is predicted to increase the difference in purchase intention with 1.406. This effect is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$).
- Being higher educated is predicted to increase the difference in purchase intention with 0.940. This effect is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} = 0.003 < 0.05$).

Moreover, gender and attitude have the biggest impact on difference in purchase intention since the standardized Beta coefficient are the biggest, relatively they are 0,319 and -0.298.

In conclusion, the intercept is statistically significant and the variables attitude, previously bought real fur containing products, age, gender and education are statistically significant when it comes to influencing the difference in purchase intention.

6. GENERAL DISCUSSION

The implications of this research are academic as well as managerial. Former research studied the purchase intention in case of an obvious static brand misconduct, concluding that the purchase intention decreases after a brand misconduct. However, some cases do not concern such obvious, static brand misconducts, and are more open for (ethical) discussion. This study finds that some events can be perceived as wrong and ethically incorrect by some customers and not by others. Also, this perception can change over time. In this chapter I will discuss the main findings of my research and explain the academic and managerial implications. Lastly, I will discuss the limitations and options for future research.

6.1 CONCLUSION

The research question for this research was:

“How does a changing perception of a certain brand misconduct over time affect purchase intention?”

Because of the broadness of this question, I formulated the following empirical question:

“How does using real fur in clothing affect the purchase intention of Dutch customers?”

Overall, we can conclude that, at this point in time, in general, real fur in clothing products lowers the purchase intention of Dutch customers (hypothesis one). Looking further, the purchase intention is moderated by several factors. This is measured by looking at difference in purchase intention (the purchase intention for a product without fur minus the purchase intention for a product with real fur).

The bigger the difference, the less likely people are to buy a real fur containing product. The following moderators were found that decrease the difference in purchase intention (meaning that customers would be more likely to buy a real fur containing clothing product): a less negative attitude towards real fur and whether someone has previously bought real fur. The factors that increase the difference in purchase intention (meaning customers are less likely to buy a real fur containing clothing product) are age, getting older, being female and being higher educated. Lastly, gender and attitude turned out to influence the difference in purchase intention the most.

It is more difficult to answer the broader research question, since there is no historical information available about purchase intention for real fur containing clothing products. There are also no Dutch sales numbers available which could give an indication of the purchase intention. However, I did find evidence that older respondents are less likely to purchase fur. This finding may imply that they still adhere to older definitions of misconduct, while younger respondents adhere to other definitions. Furthermore, I looked at the worldwide sales numbers and the fluctuating price of a mink fur as an indication. As shown in paragraph 4.4 and 4.5 these numbers reflect the change in popularity of real fur. But as explained in paragraph 6.4, more research is necessary to be able to answer this question.

6.2 ACADEMIC IMPLICATIONS

This thesis contributes to marketing, brand misconduct theory and changing social norms with a focus on the fur industry. There are multiple studies about the effect of a brand misconduct on purchase intention, but these all concern obvious, static brand misconducts, like child labour and environmental pollution. This thesis fills in the gap in literature when something is not that obvious a brand misconduct, but when the perception of something being a brand misconduct differs per person and per period (due to the questionable ethical correctness of the matter), in this thesis referred to as *dynamic brand misconduct*. My research concerns the fur industry in which status symbols play an important role. Therefore, the conclusions enable academics to understand the trade-off consumers make between status and ethical considerations. Based on the results from my research, customers value ethics more than status.

Furthermore, an important finding in my research is that reference groups did not turn out to have a significant influence on the purchase intention when it comes to real fur.

The hypothesis was that it would have a significant impact, based on former research. Thus, we learn that in an ethical questionable industry, reference groups do not necessarily influence consumers.

6.3 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Existing literature discusses the effects of brand misconducts and how managers should handle this. However, as explained in previous paragraphs, these concern obvious, static brand misconducts. In some cases, like the fur industry, the brand misconduct is not static.

Using real fur is a conscious decision, not something to do secretly. The purpose of using real fur would actually be for people to see it. Other than child labour, it is not something brands can claim not to be aware of. This brand misconduct is a more ethical discussion, with opponents and proponents. For managers it is relevant to find out what the ratio is between the proponents and the opponents in a discussion as well as who they are. In this way managers can find out what would fit their brand. Thus, this research provides managers with insights of who their customers are and what they value. For example, a result is that younger, not female (thus male), low educated customers in general have a higher purchase intention for clothes with real fur. For a brand that uses real fur this is an interesting target audience. The other way around, if a brand wants, for example, higher educated customers as their target audience, using real fur would lower the purchase intention and is therefore not interesting.

6.4 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This research draws conclusions about the consequences for the purchase intention in case of a *dynamic* brand misconduct. However, it contains some limitations and indications for future research.

First of all, this subject actually requires longitudinal research. There is no historical data available about the difference in purchase intention for no or real fur. In this research other indicators, like price of mink fur and global sales numbers, were taken to prove the dynamics of using real fur as a misconduct. However, to draw exact conclusions, this research should be replicated every five or ten years, for, for example, a century, to determine what the use of real fur does for the purchase intention for customers.

Secondly, this subject has been researched through the fur industry. The conclusion would be more accurate if the phenomenon *dynamic* brand misconduct would also be researched in other branches as well, since ‘status’ plays an important role when it comes to real fur usage. An example could be the fast fashion industry, where cotton farmers and clothing producers have to work under despicable circumstances. Furthermore, this research was conducted amongst Dutch customers, from which the majority is higher educated. This is not entirely representative for the Dutch population. Therefore, further research should take bigger and more random samples to check if my conclusion applies for larger audiences as well, also looking at other countries.

Next, in my research, the overall model only explains 28.6% of the variance (linear regression model). This means that there are more factors influencing the difference in purchase intention than I found based on the literature review. This is clearly an indication for further research, to find what other factors influence the purchase intention.

Moreover, in this model, attitude towards real fur turned out to be the second largest influence on difference in purchase intention. However, it is difficult to measure the attitude. Not only because attitude is a really subjective variable, like happiness, but also because there could be a high risk of socially desirable answers. The construct that was created to measure attitude did explain over 52% of the variance, but it still leaves room for improvement.

Finally, the data did not meet all the assumptions necessary for linear regression. Outliers were removed to improve this, but the data of the dependent variable remained not normally distributed.

These limitations and indications for future research should be taken into account by researchers who are interested in the dynamics of a brand misconduct and want to dig deeper into the matter.

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APPENDIX

I – POST FAMKE LOUISE



Picture 1. Instagram Post Famke Louise (NOS Jeugdjournaal, 2020)

Translation: *Which fur fits me #shopping @flymaker – 1 day and then the time has come #clothingline*

II – FASHION HOUSES/RETAILERS THAT STOPPED USING REAL FUR

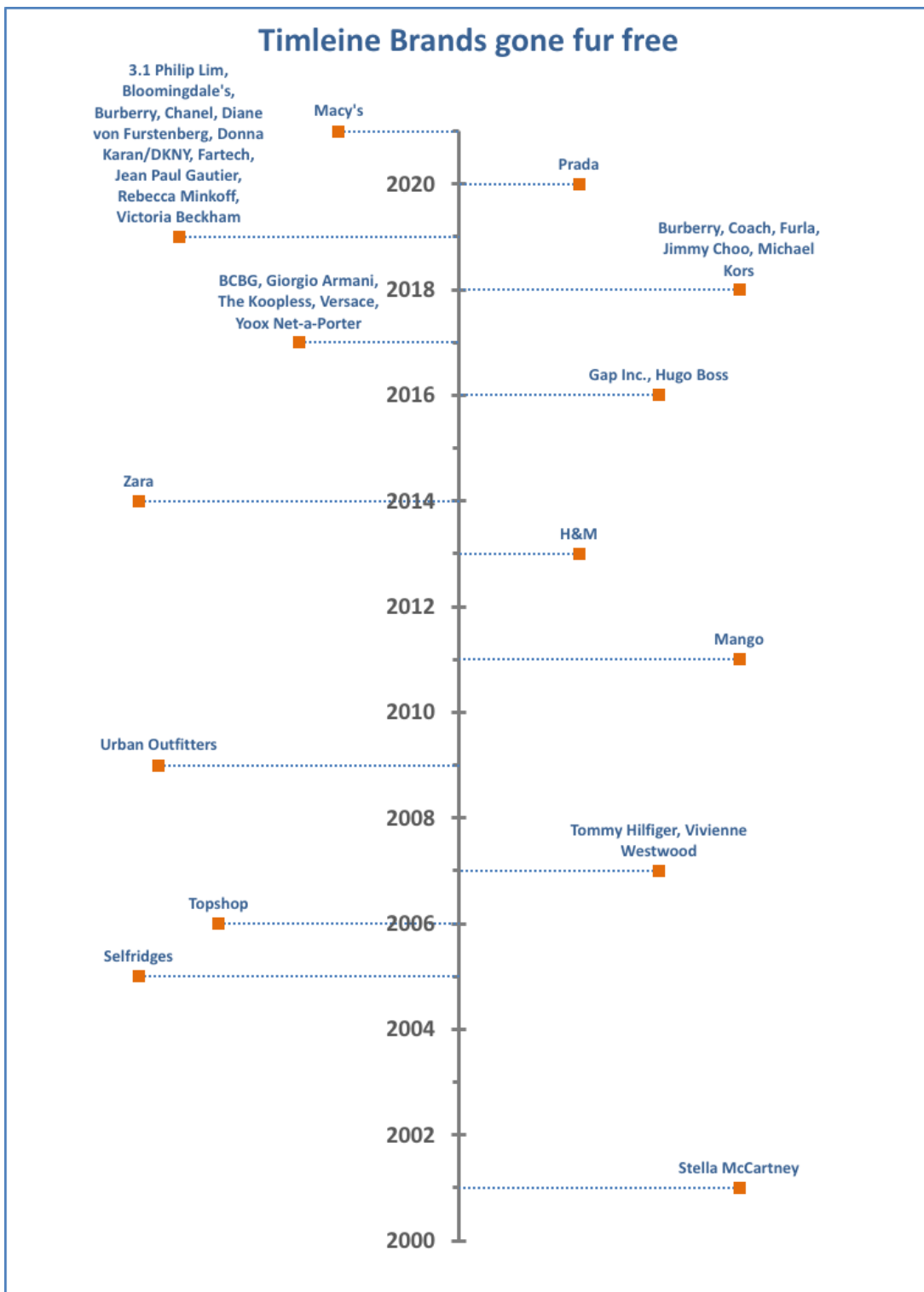


Figure 10. Timeline of when brands and retailers gone fur free (Penrose, 2019) (Peta, 2019) (Peta, 2013) (Neff, 2018) (Yotka, 2018) (Kolirin, 2018) (Petter, Independent, 2019) (Hendriksz, 2018) (H&M Group, n.d.) (Horton, 2019) (Harper's Bazaar, 2019)

III – EXAMPLES OF COATS FROM BRANDS THAT USE REAL FUR



Picture 2. Example Parajumpers coat (Parajumpers, n.d.)



Picture 3. Example Air Force coat (Air Force, n.d.)

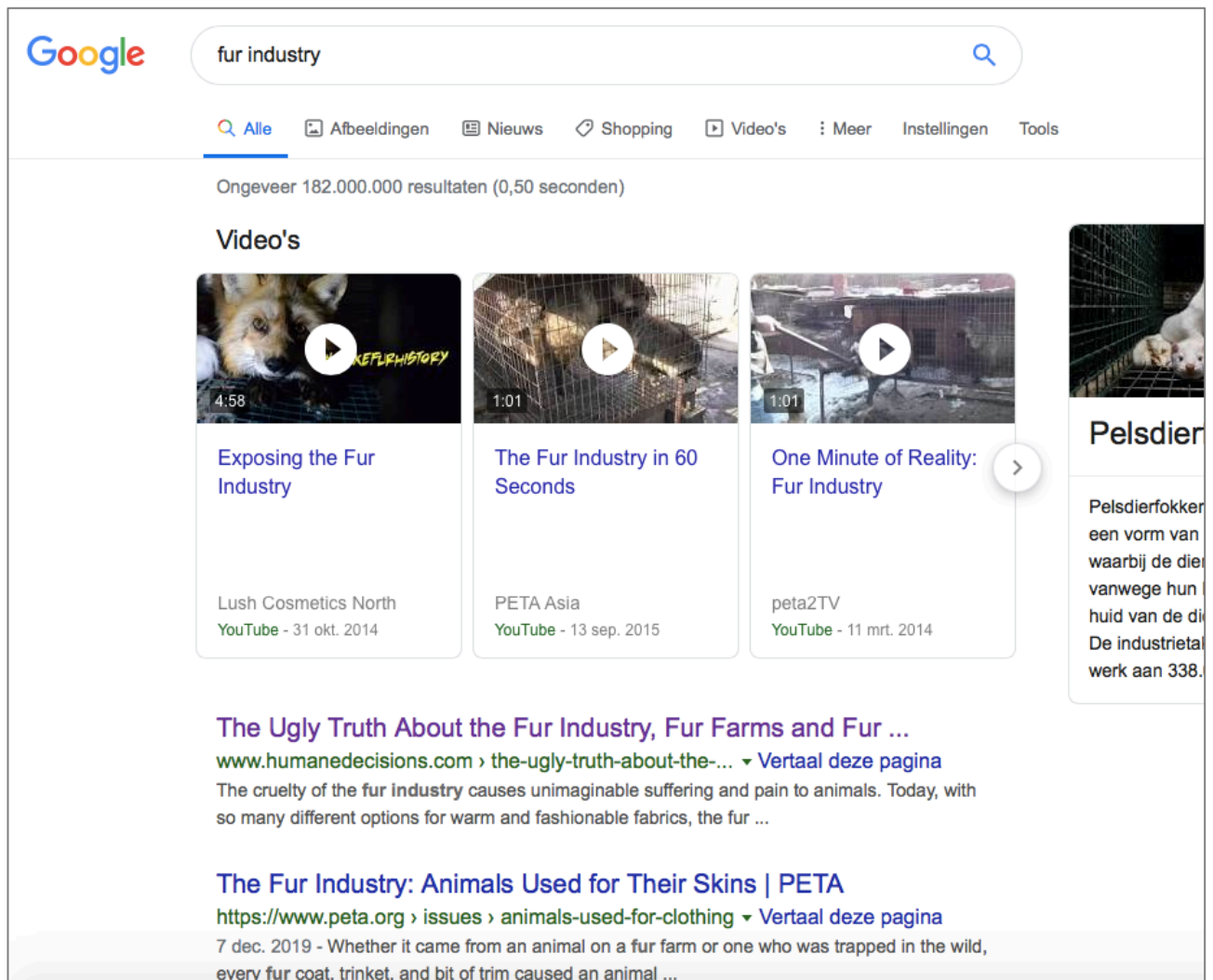


Picture 5. Example Canada Goose coat (Canada Goose, n.d.)



Picture 4. Example Woolrich coat (Woolrich, n.d.)

IV – GOOGLING THE FUR INDUSTRY



Picture 6. Screenshot googling 'fur industry'

V – SPSS OUTPUT

V.1 SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Table 15. Sample description: gender

		gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	men	73	36,0	36,0	36,0
	woman	130	64,0	64,0	100,0
	Total	203	100,0	100,0	

Table 16. Sample description: age

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Min	Max	M	SD
age	203	11	83	32,10	16,462
Valid N (listwise)	203				

Table 17. Sample description: education level

		Education level			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	basisonderwijs	1	,5	,5	,5
	lbo/vmbo/mavo	6	3,0	3,0	3,4
	havo/vwo	29	14,3	14,3	17,7
	mbo	20	9,9	9,9	27,6
	hbo	66	32,5	32,5	60,1
	wo	80	39,4	39,4	99,5
	anders	1	,5	,5	100,0
	Total	203	100,0	100,0	

Table 18. Sample description: income

		income			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	under average	56	27,6	27,6	27,6
	average	42	20,7	20,7	48,3
	above average	105	51,7	51,7	100,0
	Total	203	100,0	100,0	

Table 19. Sample description: higher educated

		higher or lower educated			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not higher educated	56	27,6	27,7	27,7
	Higher educated	146	71,9	72,3	100,0
	Total	202	99,5	100,0	
Missing	System	1	,5		
Total		203	100,0		

Table 20. Sample description: residence

		residence (city / village)			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	small village	24	11,8	11,8	11,8
	big village	25	12,3	12,3	24,1
	small city	35	17,2	17,2	41,4
	big city	119	58,6	58,6	100,0
	Total	203	100,0	100,0	

Table 21. Sample description: cross tabulation awareness * overall attitude

		Awareness about fur usage * overall attitude Crosstabulation				
		overall attitude			Total	
		very negative	negative	neutral		
Awareness about fur usage	no	Count	0	4	1	5
		% within Awareness about fur usage	0,0%	80,0%	20,0%	100,0
		% within overall attitude	0,0%	3,4%	3,1%	2,5%
	yes	Count	50	115	31	196
		% within Awareness about fur usage	100,0%	96,6%	96,9%	97,5%
		% within overall attitude	24,9%	57,2%	15,4%	97,5%
	Total	Count	50	119	32	201
		% within Awareness about fur usage	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0
		% within overall attitude	24,9%	59,2%	15,9%	100,0
						%
					%	
					%	

V.II MODERATING VARIABLES

ATTITUDE

Table 22. Attitude: word associations

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Min	Max	M	SD
cool	203	1	7	1,46	,966
ugly	203	1	7	3,74	1,996
pretty	203	1	7	2,92	1,778
disgusting	203	1	7	4,06	2,296
must have	203	1	7	1,21	,838
status increasing	203	1	7	1,71	1,360
questionable	203	1	7	3,56	2,317
fashion statement	203	1	7	1,99	1,611
unethical	203	1	7	4,67	2,389
warm	203	1	7	4,70	1,886
shameful	203	1	7	3,86	2,272
expensive	203	1	7	5,23	1,882
Valid N (listwise)	203				

Table 23. Attitude: statements

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Min	Max	M	SD
seeing it makes me angry	203	1	5	3,08	1,061
like look and feel	203	1	4	1,78	,882
status increasing	203	1	4	1,93	1,074
wearing it makes me feel good	203	1	5	1,37	,688
if money was no issue, I would wear it	203	1	4	1,34	,613
fur industry is ethically responsible	203	1	5	1,79	,968
don't understand why people still wear it	203	1	5	3,41	1,137
Valid N (listwise)	203				

Table 24. Linear regression Model Summary Table

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,723 ^a	,522	,508	,445

a. Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1

Table 25. Linear regression ANOVA Table

ANOVA ^a						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41,993	6	6,999	35,364	,000 ^b
	Residual	38,395	194	,198		
	Total	80,388	200			

a. Dependent Variable: overall attitude

b. Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1