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Internal CSR Support: From Bystanders to Ambassadors

A Cluster Analysis of Employees in the Retail Industry

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate how employees understand and support their employer's internal CSR agenda and communication. In order to do this, we answer three research questions: How can employees be segmented into different groups regarding CSR support? How do employees who are supportive of a company's CSR agenda differ from less supportive employees? How can an understanding of differences in employees' CSR support be used to improve internal CSR support?

Design/Methodology/Approach: This cross-sectional study collected primary data through a survey, targeting employees of a chosen retail company. The data is analysed with a non-hierarchical cluster analysis using the K-means method. Employees are segmented according to their level of active and passive CSR support. The clusters are analysed on a set of profiling and categorical variables, which have been found to be connected to CSR perceptions in previous literature; *Awareness, Perceived Fit, Organizational Identification, Personal Relevance, Job Satisfaction, Gender and Training*.

Findings: This study finds three clusters with differing levels of CSR support, predominantly in active support: The Affirmative Ambassadors, who represent the most supportive employees and show more active support, The Reserved Believers, who are supportive but lack active engagement, and The Silent Bystanders, who represent the least supportive group both actively and non-actively. Between the clusters, higher levels of *Awareness, Perceived Fit, Organizational Identification, Personal Relevance, Job Satisfaction, Age, Years in the Company*, and times of received *Training*, are positively connected to CSR support. The biggest differences between the most supportive and the least supportive groups are found in training and awareness. We argue that in order to raise awareness it is important for companies to communicate about its CSR agenda and training is an effective method to involve employees.

Managerial Implications: This study argues that companies should aim to build or maintain high levels of *Awareness, Perceived Fit, Organizational Identification, and Job Satisfaction*. In order to do this, companies must communicate continuously and frequently about their CSR agenda. The findings indicate that it is essential for companies who strive to increase internal CSR support, to provide employees with related training preferably shortly after employment. Besides from the general managerial implications, this study draws more specific conclusions for the studied company in terms of effective channels of communication.

Originality/Value: This study demonstrates that employees can be segmented according to their support of the employer's CSR. We argue that it is important to include active support and thereby distinguish between passive support and employees' active engagement. This study demonstrates the applicability of findings from consumer-focused research on studies focusing on internal stakeholders. It combines constructs from different studies and streams of literature, thereby providing a more extensive overview.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), CSR Support, Employee Support, Awareness, Perceived Fit, Organizational Identification, Personal Relevance, Job Satisfaction, CSR Training

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1 Introduction

Today, the number of companies that view Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as an integral part of their business is increasing (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; McWilliams, Siegel & Wright, 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Roper & Fill, 2012). According to Barnett (2007), CSR can be conceptualised as a 'discretionary allocation of corporate resources towards improving social welfare that serves as a means of enhancing relationships with key stakeholders' (Barnett, 2007, p.801). In previous literature, CSR has been proven to have several strategic and competitive advantages for companies, some of them being: increased sales and market share, enhanced corporate image in the minds of their stakeholders, as well as increased ability to attract and retain employees (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Kotler & Lee, 2005; McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; Roper & Fill, 2012). Further, it humanises the company by not solely caring about maximising profits (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). However, because of this increase, consumers can find it difficult to separate the genuinely responsible companies from the others, resulting in an emerged scepticism towards companies promoting their CSR activities (Parguel, Benoît-Moreau & Larceneux, 2011). Further, there is a possibility that people might think companies engage in CSR in order to cover something up (Brown & Dacin, 1997). Morsing and Schultz (2006) argue that today a greater need for CSR communication strategies exists, in order to counteract critical stakeholder attention. Therefore, previous research on this topic suggests that CSR should be institutionalised in the company's operations in order to acquire the benefits from it (Roper & Fill, 2012).

CSR has its roots in stakeholder theory and employees are an equally important stakeholder group as investors, suppliers and customers (Lee, Park & Lee, 2013). Throughout the corporate branding literature, the importance of the employees is stressed (Balmer & Gray, 2003; de Chernatony, 1999; Harris & De Chernatony, 2001; Hatch & Schultz, 2001, 2003; Ind, 1997; Wilson, 2001). If different stakeholders have varying perceptions of a corporate brand, it is considered a threat (Aaker, 2010; Bickerton, 2000; de Chernatony, 1999; Harris & De Chernatony, 2001). Harris and De Chernatony (2001) state that employees play a critically important role in promoting and encouraging a corporation's brand values. Further, it is argued that employee satisfaction plays a crucial part in communicating the values externally. If a company struggles with convincing its own employees, it will affect its ability to convince external stakeholders as well (Berry & Parasuraman, 1992; Roper & Fill, 2012). Instead of taking employees' support for granted, a company should, by using internal marketing as a tool, convince its employees and create a better understanding of the company's vision and values. Employees' understanding enables them to incorporate vision and values in their daily activities, which will enhance the chances of creating a customer experience consistent with what the company is aspiring to achieve (Mitchell, 2002).

If employees are not satisfied at their workplace or do not incorporate the company's values, this might be transferred to the customers and in turn affect their image of the company (Roper & Fill, 2012). On the other hand, if the employees are satisfied, it is more likely that they will communicate the brand values to other stakeholders, affecting how they support the brand's values and whether they recommend the brand to other people. This constant process

of reinforcement is a key to creating a strong brand and a competitive advantage (Roper & Fill, 2012). Hence, if a company claims that CSR is a value of theirs, it consequently must be incorporated by all of their employees. Otherwise, this can have a damaging effect on the corporate image. A positive image of a company's CSR will increase employees' job satisfaction (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004; Sims & Keon, 1997; Valentine & Fleischman, 2008), trust in the company (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002), attachment to the company (Lee, Park & Lee, 2013), organizational commitment (Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007), loyalty (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008), productivity (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002), and the positive attitudes amongst its employees (Sims & Keon, 1997; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002). Further, it can lead to lower absenteeism and turnover rates (Sims & Keon, 1997). In order to make CSR strategies effective, Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun (2008) argue that a company needs to empower the employees to take on the role of enactors, thereby acting as an enabler itself. Hence, knowing whether CSR communication is effectively understood by employees is of great importance for companies.

Previous studies mainly focus on the consumers' perspective on CSR; i.e. the external view (e.g. Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill, 2006; Kim & Park, 2009; Lee & Jackson, 2010; Pérez & Rodríguez Del Bosque, 2013). However, there is less existing investigation about the internal CSR perspective and more specific the employees' perspective on internal CSR communication (Lee, Park & Lee, 2013). There is even less research about what constructs or factors affect employees' support of CSR agendas. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap and proposes to study the differences and similarities between employees with different levels of CSR support by segmenting the chosen case company's employees. By discovering differences between segments, our findings will assist the studied company as well as other companies in understanding employees' perspectives and support of CSR agendas. Thereby, this study will present possible points of improvement for companies, in order to lead to higher levels of internal CSR support and make the employees ambassadors of Corporate Social Responsibility values.

1.1 Problem Formulation

Although many companies have incorporated CSR in their strategy, there are only few who have figured out how to utilise the benefits from their CSR initiatives (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). Additionally, there is usually low awareness about CSR activities among external, as well as internal stakeholders (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2010). So far, many companies focus on how to effectively communicate their CSR initiatives externally to attract more customers, engage with external stakeholders and increase profitability. However, little focus is on the employees as receivers of their CSR communication (Ellen, Webb & Mohr, 2006). How do companies effectively communicate their CSR initiatives internally to retain and attract employees? This is of great importance since the employees play an integral and critically important role in communicating, promoting and encouraging a company's CSR visions and values (Brunton, Eweje & Taskin, 2015; Harris & De Chernatony, 2001). Without employees' support of CSR, the customers will not be convinced either (Berry & Parasuraman, 1992; Roper & Fill, 2012), which is especially important in the retail and service industry where employees interact with customers (Elg & Hultman, 2016). Berry and Parasuraman (1992) argue that in order to get the support of employees, the organization

needs to create a clear vision, which needs to be communicated often and personally by top management.

A common mistake in using CSR initiatives as part of a business strategy is to not include employees in these, but instead use a top-down approach when executing, formulating, and maintaining such initiatives (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015). According to previous studies, engaging the employees in the company's CSR initiatives will positively affect their work quality and increase efforts to communicate CSR values to customers (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Mirvis, 2012). Additionally, if a company is effectively communicating their CSR initiatives to employees, the employees are more likely to defend the company in hostile environments. Organizations can create a "reputation shield" by engaging employees to educate external stakeholders (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). However, if employees are not supportive of their employer's CSR agenda, this opportunity is lost. When investigating companies' CSR initiatives, Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun (2008) discovered that many organizations are not communicating their CSR initiatives internally in a consistent manner. As a result of ineffective CSR communication, employees are often unaware of what the company is doing, thereby not understanding their initiatives (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008).

De Roeck, El Akremi and Swaen (2016) argue that the mere presence of CSR in a company is a sufficient reason for the employees to identify with the organization. Contradictory, Kim et al. (2010) argue that CSR associations do not directly impact employees' identification with companies. The authors state that the positive correlation between CSR activities and organizational identification is intervened by employees' participation in CSR activities, which is necessary for them to identify with the organization through CSR.

Previous research has studied the effectiveness of incorporating CSR into an organization's strategy and how this is affecting the overall workforce's perceptions. They concluded that a CSR strategy has several positive outcomes, i.e. decreased turnover rate, and employees' feeling of well-being and job satisfaction (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015; Lee, Park & Lee, 2013). These outcomes give an overview of employees' CSR perceptions, implying that at least some of the employees understand and support a company's CSR strategy, thereby raising the overall level of support. However, communication is perceived subjectively on an individual level and it is unlikely that every employee understands and supports a company's CSR values in the same way (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015). One can only imagine the positive outcomes of a CSR strategy that is understood and supported by every employee. In order to reap all the benefits of a CSR strategy, companies need to understand their employees' needs and characteristics that determine CSR support. Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun (2008) argue that CSR initiatives are not an effective internal marketing tool unless they fulfil the different needs of employees. By not considering the diversity among their employees' needs, the power of a CSR strategy can be lost (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). Literature has identified several factors which significantly impact stakeholders' perceptions, some of them being; company and CSR congruence, personal characteristics, and corporate credibility (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill, 2006; Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Brunton, Eweje & Taskin, 2015; Lee, Park & Lee, 2013; Pérez & Rodríguez Del Bosque, 2013). However, this does not imply that these factors are equally influencing CSR support for every employee. In marketing research, it is common to segment customers based on their needs in order to gain a deeper understanding of them and improve communication (Beane & Ennis, 1987). Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun (2008) suggest that a company should view their employees as "internal customers"

in order to fulfil their needs since these are equally as important as the customers' needs. Similarly, employees could be segmented into groups according to their CSR support to internal CSR communication by identifying differences and similarities between groups.

1.2 Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how employees understand and support their employer's internal CSR communication and its CSR agenda, by segmenting the employees into different groups according to support. Thereby, it will discover the significant differences between the segments in terms of socioeconomic and psychographic characteristics. In doing so, this study will explore what constructs possibly influence employees' CSR support and if some employees support the company's CSR agenda more than others. Further, this study will provide a deeper understanding of which employees are more supportive while exploring which constructs affect the level of support. Thereby, this study will present possible points of improvement for companies, in order to lead to higher levels of internal CSR support and make the employees ambassadors of Corporate Social Responsibility values.

This research has several theoretical contributions. Firstly, this study investigates which constructs affect employees' support of CSR communication and whether employees can be grouped into distinct segments according to their support of their company's CSR agenda. This builds upon previous research on CSR perceptions and contributes with an extensive view of the employees' perspectives. Hence, this study extends previous research by not solely focusing on what factors drive and influence the majority's CSR perceptions, but instead categorising the workforce to obtain a complete picture including the differences and similarities of employees. Secondly, instead of focusing on how the employees respond to perceived CSR (Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007; De Roeck, El Akremi & Swaen, 2016; Glavas & Godwin, 2013; Gond et al., 2010; Lee, Park & Lee, 2013; Morgeson et al., 2013; Rupp & Mallory, 2015), this study focuses on what constructs are connected to their CSR support. Thirdly, it combines measurements from different studies, (i.e. Organizational Identification, Perceived Fit, Job Satisfaction and Awareness), in order to achieve a deeper analysis. We contribute to previous literature in the fields of marketing research and corporate communications, focusing on the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility.

This research is of practical importance to companies, as it can assist them in understanding the differences of their employees' CSR support. Thus, this study provides companies with necessary insights to further improve their internal CSR communication, in order to reach all of their employee groups and enhance the understanding of its corporate CSR values throughout the whole workforce. Pérez and Rodríguez Del Bosque (2013) argue that to make communications and business activities more effective, it is relevant for marketing managers to identify customers' relations to CSR and their elaborations of CSR perceptions. Further, the authors argue that companies need to segment the market and use different strategies for different kinds of customers, in order to not make their CSR efforts useless. Based on these assumptions, we argue that by defining employee segments of CSR perception and support, companies will be able to identify which groups may require a different communication approach or which constructs are equally influential for all segments. This in turn, can assist them in addressing different groups of employees. In doing so, companies can increase

employees' job satisfaction, decrease its employee turnover rate, and increase the productivity (Bhattacharya, 2008).

1.2.1 Research Questions

Based on the problem formulation and previous literature, we suggest the following research questions:

- How can employees be segmented into different groups regarding CSR support?
- How do employees who are supportive of a company's CSR agenda differ from less supportive employees?
- How can an understanding of differences in employees' CSR support be used to improve internal CSR support?

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

To answer the above-stated research questions, this thesis first discusses previous literature on topics connected to CSR support in the second chapter. Thereby, we can suggest possible distinguishing factors between groups with high and low CSR support. In the third chapter, this thesis introduces the case company, research approach and design. Further, sampling method, survey and measurements of variables as well as methods used for analysing the data and a reflection upon validity and reliability are presented. In the fourth chapter, the results of the data analysis are discussed and interpreted. The three clusters are introduced, analysed and compared according to the previously defined constructs. The fifth and last chapter provides conclusions and reflects on the theoretical contributions, managerial implications, as well as limitations of this thesis and presents possible directions for further research.

2 Literature Review

This chapter consists of a review of previous literature, where different topics connected to perception and support of CSR are extracted and discussed. Based on this thesis's research purpose the following literature review will serve as a theoretical base for collecting the relevant data and answer the research questions.

CSR communication is connected to many different stakeholders, e.g. customers and shareholders. Previous research mainly focuses on the external view of CSR communication, hence the consumers' perspective and how the topic of CSR is marketed to them. The view of internal stakeholders is not as deeply investigated, therefore this study focuses on the employees' understanding and perspectives of CSR agendas. This study applies consumer-oriented literature to investigate the internal perspective of CSR. The employees are also exposed to external communication, i.e. in-store advertising, and are thereby affected by the external communication. Therefore, studies on consumers' perspectives of CSR communication are applicable on employees' perspectives as well. Moreover, the employees can be viewed as internal customers of the company (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008), which further justifies the relevance to use the consumer literature for this study. Therefore, this study gathers inspiration from literature focused on the consumer perspective of CSR communication. The topics included in this literature discussion are chosen since they represent the most frequently mentioned constructs connected to CSR perceptions and support. The chapter is structured as follows: 2.1 Perception and Support of CSR, 2.2 Awareness, 2.3 Perceived Fit, 2.4 Organizational Identification, 2.5 Personal Relevance, 2.6 Job Satisfaction, 2.7 Gender and 2.8 Training. Chapter 2.9 consists of a summary of all topics.

2.1 Perception and Support of CSR

Stakeholders who support a company tend to approve of, encourage, stand behind, stand up for, endorse or recommend a company's purposes and practices (Urde & Greyser, 2016; Vidaver-Cohen & Brønn, 2015). According to Berry and Parasuraman (1992), a company needs to communicate its meaning with passion for internal marketing to be successful. Mitchell (2002) outlines several suggestions to make internal corporate communication efficient. The author emphasises the importance of not preaching since this may result in the communication being perceived as patronising. Instead, it is important to investigate what moves employees and use their language when communicating with them. Further, the author argues that a company should convey its beliefs, hence the essence of the brand, rather than their intentions. According to Morsing and Schultz (2006), it is not enough for a company to engage in one-way communication about CSR initiatives in order for the communication to be effective. However, a one-way communication strategy is still necessary, but it should be strengthened through a two-way strategy as well. The information strategy involves informing the stakeholders about their decisions, initiatives and actions, in order to ensure positive stakeholder support (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). Elg and Hultman (2016) stress the

importance of employees' engagement in a company's CSR work by arguing that the positive effects of incorporating CSR will be weakened if employees are not aware and actively participating in their company's CSR work.

According to Ashforth and Gibbs (1990), too much convincing of a company's CSR intentions can be counterproductive and instead result in scepticism. Morsing and Schultz (2006) suggest that proactive third-party endorsement is the most efficient CSR communication strategy, i.e. that external stakeholders are involved and express their support of the Corporate Social Responsibility activities, actively taking part in the sense making and sense giving process. According to De Roeck et al. (2016), employees' perception of fairness in the organization can be reinforced by both internal and external CSR activities. It is important that different stakeholder groups are considered to ensure the organization's credibility and integrity. Therefore, CSR communication should be integrated into the organization, in order to encourage stakeholders to advocate the corporate brand and nurture their identification with the organization.

2.2 Awareness

Stakeholders' awareness of a company's CSR activities is necessary in order for the company to reap the benefits of these (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2010). Further, building awareness is often a big hurdle for companies when communicating their CSR agenda. Previous studies demonstrate a need to communicate about CSR more effectively since CSR awareness is generally low among external and internal stakeholders (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2010). However, in order to be effective, communication must be received and decoded by the receiver of the communication message (McLuhan, 1964; Shannon & Weaver, 1949). Moreover, communication is most effective when the sender communicates through a channel preferred by the receivers. Previous literature suggests that different receivers prefer different channels of communication, which is why communication through a specific channel can be more effective for one group, but not for another (McLuhan, 1964; Westmyer, DiCioccio & Rubin, 1998). In internal marketing, the receivers of the message are internal stakeholders, i.e. employees. Thus, this study includes awareness and received as well as preferred channels of communication as a possible factor distinguishing more supportive from less supportive employees.

2.3 Perceived Fit

Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun (2008) argue that stakeholders' general responses to Corporate Social Responsibility activities are positive. However, this highly depends on the characteristics of the company. According to Hatch and Schultz (2001), there needs to be an alignment between corporate culture, reputation and the organization's strategy in order to build a strong brand, implying that one main element of the corporate brand is the corporate culture. Roper and Fill (2012) state that corporate culture is built on corporate values and a value system. In fact, it is argued that the corporate values are the greatest manifestation of corporate culture (Parker & Bradley, 2000). The corporate culture is defined as "the way we

do things around here” and is thereby closely connected to the employees (Roper & Fill, 2012).

Speed and Thompson (2000) investigated consumers’ attitudes towards sponsorships and discovered that their perceptions of the fit between the event and the company affected their responses to the sponsorship. Similarly, this study does conceptualise fit in a general sense, indicating that this construct focuses on to which degree the respondents perceive the congruence between the company and the CSR as a good fit. In other words, it refers to how well they think that CSR fits with the company’s CSR activities and the way the corporation carries out their business (Lee, Park & Lee, 2013), as well as if compatibility exists between a company’s activities and skills (Porter & Kramer, 2006). If the consumers view the company’s actions as appropriate for the company, indicating high levels of perceived congruence, their attitudes towards the company will be enhanced (Aaker, 1990; Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill, 2006; John, Loken & Joiner, 1998; Keller & Aaker, 1992; Mandler, 1982; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Speed & Thompson, 2000; Till & Busler, 2000)

A majority of previous research focuses on how the consumers perceive the fit between the CSR activities and a company to be, and how it affects the consumers’ attitudes (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill, 2006; Brown & Dacin, 1997; Forehand & Grier, 2003; Menon & Kahn, 2003; Pérez & Rodríguez Del Bosque, 2013; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). According to Becker-Olsen, Cudmore and Hill (2006), a perceived low fit can result in negative thoughts for the consumers, implying that if there is no fit between the company and its CSR activities, this can result in negative thoughts about both the activities and the company itself. Further, it also results in negative attitudes towards the company (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill, 2006). Contradictory, Ellen et al. (2000) suggest that the higher the level of congruency between a company and a cause is, the more sceptical or cynical consumers will be. This can be a result of consumers’ belief that the company is engaging in a CSR activity in order to increase its profits, i.e. for their own good. Regarding donations, if it is not related to the core business, i.e. incongruent and perceived as altruistic, the consumers’ will, on the other hand, evaluate the cause more positively. This contradicts the previously mentioned research, which argues for the positive effects of higher congruence levels, as this will result in more positive evaluations of the company by the consumers. However, Ellen et al. (2000) find a difference between retailers, suggesting that the effect of perceived congruence depends on what kind of products a retailer sells.

Although Ellen et al. (2000) suggest that causes should be incongruent, this study still suggests that a higher congruence level between company and CSR activities will enhance employees’ attitudes. Similarly, Lee et al. (2013) find a positive relationship between the perceived cultural fit and perceptions of CSR activities, illustrating that when an employee perceives a cultural fit, it therefore perceives the CSR activities more positively. Since this research focuses on the employee’s perspective, it examines whether the perceived fit between CSR activities is a distinguishing factor between groups of employees showing high and low CSR support.

2.4 Organizational Identification

According to Social Identity Theory, individuals identify themselves through the groups which they belong to (Tajfel, 1978). Thus, the group membership becomes part of their identity. Consequently, employees who are members of an organization often build their identity partly on this membership (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Organizational identification refers to an alignment of corporate values with personal values and to what degree an employee identifies with the same attributes that they believe to describe the company (Drumwright, 1996; Pratt, 1998).

A high degree of organizational identifications has several benefits for the company (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Chatman, 1989; Drumwright, 1996; Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). If an employee identifies with its employer, the company's success will be viewed as its own (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). This identification has both internal and external outcomes. When employees identify with the company, this can increase *job satisfaction* (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; De Roeck et al., 2014; De Roeck, El Akremi & Swaen, 2016; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015; Lee, Park & Lee, 2013; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991; Sims & Keon, 1997; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002), employees' *well-being* (Ashforth, Harrison & Corley, 2008; Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; De Roeck, El Akremi & Swaen, 2016; Pratt, 1998), and *organizational commitment* (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007; Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994; Kim et al., 2010; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991), which are positive internal outcomes. The external benefits include *improved employee work attitude* (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008), *productivity* (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008), *intra-organizational cooperation* (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994), *higher employee quality focus* (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008) and *higher retention* (Jones, 2010). Accordingly, employees portraying a high degree of organizational identification are more likely to support the organization's CSR values (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008).

Previous literature has stressed the positive correlation between CSR and organizational identification (Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007; Brunton, Eweje & Taskin, 2015; De Roeck, El Akremi & Swaen, 2016; Glavas & Godwin, 2013; Jones, 2010; Kim et al., 2010). Organizations should communicate about their CSR activities, in order to nurture employees' job satisfaction and organizational identification (De Roeck et al., 2014; Morsing & Schultz, 2006). If a company is believed to be socially responsible, employees are more likely to view a company's values as admirable, which facilitates the identification process (Lichtenstein, Drumwright & Braig, 2004; Marin & Ruiz, 2007). Hence, the presence of CSR activities can strengthen employee's identification with the company. Whilst some authors argue that the mere presence of CSR is a reason for employees to identify with the organization (De Roeck, El Akremi & Swaen, 2016), others find that the positive correlation between CSR activities and organizational identification is intervened by employees' active involvement in these (Kim et al., 2010).

Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail (1994) argue that two perceptions of the organization shape the level of organizational identification. Firstly, the identity of the organization, hence the distinctive, central and persistent attributes of the company, based on the employees' perceptions. Secondly, the constructed external image, referring to employees' perceptions about what outsiders of the company think about it. The level of organizational identification

is much higher if both these perceptions are attractive, distinctive and homogeneous with the attributes the employees use to identify themselves with (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994). An organization's identity which is built on unique or specific values not incorporated by others, is distinctive and therefore more attractive (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Kim et al., 2010). Correspondingly, a company which is perceived to have high ethical and social values, setting it apart from others, may have a higher identity attractiveness, making it easier for employees to identify with these values (Greening & Turban, 2000).

2.5 Personal Relevance

Speed and Thompson (2000) discover that personal liking of a sponsorship event positively affects consumers' image of the company or the brand. Similarly, this study investigates to what extent personal liking, or referred to as personal relevance, affects the perception and support of a company's CSR efforts. However, this study focuses on employees. Furthermore, Speed and Thompson (2000) argue that consumers' attitudes towards a sponsorship event, will affect the consumers' responses to this event.

According to previous literature, employees view CSR initiatives as an opportunity for personal growth, indicating a positive attitude towards CSR. From an organizational perspective, CSR activities can enhance employees' job effectiveness, by letting them work on projects outside of their daily routine (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). Öberseder, Schlegelmilch and Gruber (2011) argue that consumers who do not care about CSR initiatives, will not consider CSR in their purchasing process. This relates to what extent the consumers value CSR and these findings could be of relevance when studying the employee perspective. If employees believe that their employer is socially responsible and shares the same values as they do, this facilitates the integration of work and personal life, which makes employees feel less stressed (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). Similarly, Peterson (2004) discovered that if the employees believe that social responsibility is of importance for the business, this leads to a stronger organizational commitment.

2.6 Job Satisfaction

As evident from the previous discussion, job satisfaction positively correlates with organizational identification and CSR perceptions (Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015; Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004; Sims & Keon, 1997; Valentine & Fleischman, 2008). The more satisfied employees are with their current job, the more strongly they identify with their company. Further, job satisfaction can determine whether employees communicate about company values, such as sustainability, with external stakeholders (Berry & Parasuraman, 1992; Harris & De Chernatony, 2001; Roper & Fill, 2012). Hence, this study takes job satisfaction into account when analysing the clusters with differentiating levels of CSR perceptions.

2.7 Gender

According to Pérez and Rodríguez Del Bosque (2013), previous studies show that women and men can have different ways of processing information, affecting their decision-making processes, which in turn might affect their CSR perceptions. Supposedly, men tend to form their CSR perceptions based on fewer concepts and focus more on corporate ability associations, such as the company's delivering of outputs. In contrast, women focus their attention on a greater amount of concepts (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Pérez & Rodríguez Del Bosque, 2013).

There are different views on how gender affect CSR perceptions. Peterson (2004) investigates whether gender affects organizational commitment and its relation to corporate citizenship based on four measures of corporate citizenship: Economic, Discretionary, Legal and Ethical. Previous research suggests that male employees might believe that the economic measures of organizational commitment are of higher relevance, while female employees believe that the discretionary measures are more relevant (Ibrahim & Angelidis, 1994; Smith et al., 2001). Concerning ethical measures of corporate citizenship, female employees tend to respect higher ethical standards more than male employees (Peterson, 2004; Robin & Babin, 1997). According to Schwartz and Rubel (2005), women value social and environmental well-being more than men. Brammer et al (2007) suggest that companies with a large proportion of female employees should focus on procedural justice and external CSR. On the other hand, companies with a large proportion of male employees should focus on arrangements of training. However, in contradiction to previous research, Peterson (2004) does not find any gender differences, except in discretionary measures, which female employees found to be of higher relevance than male ones. These measures include flexible hours, charitable donations and workforce diversity. Pérez and Rodríguez Del Bosque (2013) argue that impact on CSR perceptions is greater in regards to the psychological features than the demographic features. In accordance with Peterson (2004), the authors postulate a similar conclusion, arguing that CSR plays an increasingly important role for both men and women and that people, in general, are more conscious of the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility. Because of these contradictions in previous research, this study takes gender into consideration when investigating employees' CSR perceptions and support.

2.8 Training

To use a top-down approach when executing, formulating and maintaining CSR initiatives and thereby not actively including the employees, is a common mistake when using CSR initiatives as part of a business strategy (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015). Training can be seen as an active involvement of employees and according to previous studies (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Mirvis, 2012), engaging the employees in the company's CSR initiatives will positively affect their work quality as well as increase efforts to communicate CSR values to customers. To implement ethical programs or training is a way for companies to form their ethical climate (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). According to Valentine and Fleischman (2008), an organization can show commitment to its CSR activities by incorporating elements of social responsibility in its training. Further, ethical organizations are typically valued and therefore many companies offer different kinds

of training and ethical programs, in order to enhance individual work attitudes (Valentine & Fleischman, 2008). Brammer et al. (2007) argue that training has benefits for both the individual and the organization and can be seen as an investment. Further, studies suggest that ethics programs, as well as the availability and amount of training, affect employees job satisfaction positively (De Roeck et al., 2014; Valentine & Fleischman, 2008).

2.9 Chapter Summary

By reviewing literature about the effect of Corporate Social Responsibility and the perceptions of both consumers as well as employees, this study identifies several topics that could determine levels of employees' perception and support. A positive perception along with a high level of support of CSR can be a result of effective communication. A high perceived congruence between a company's culture, values and their CSR efforts are expected to enhance employees' support of CSR agendas. Furthermore, employees who show high levels of CSR perception and support are expected to have a strong organizational identification. Similar to previous research focusing on consumers' perspectives, this study suggests that employees' personal interest in CSR topics and the relevance they assign to CSR can determine perception and support of their company's CSR agendas. Additionally, job satisfaction is found to correlate with CSR perceptions as well as organizational identification. Furthermore, previous literature has different views about whether gender influences an individual's CSR perceptions. As a special type of corporate communication, training is expected to influence employee's CSR perceptions and support. Hence, this study investigates whether employees who are more supportive of a company's CSR agenda differ from less supportive employees in terms of gender or CSR related training.

3 Methodology

As evident from the literature discussion, this study suggests several topics potentially determining levels of employees' perception and support of CSR agendas and communication: Awareness, Perceived Fit, Organizational identification, Personal Relevance, Job Satisfaction, Gender and Training. The following sections will explain the studied company, our philosophical positioning, choice of research design and method. The method includes primary and secondary data, sampling and data collection, survey design and data analysis. Lastly, we discuss the validity and reliability of this research.

3.1 IKEA

This study chooses to investigate a global retailer since previous literature stresses the importance to study employees' support of CSR in this context (e.g. Elg & Hultman, 2016; Lee, Park & Lee, 2013). With the aim to find the underlying dimensions of employees' support of the company's CSR agenda, this research studies IKEA to investigate whether employees could be grouped into different segments. Therefore, in order to draw conclusions about the employees' perspectives and support of CSR communication, it is of importance to study one single company, since the employees are thus exposed to the same kind and level of external and internal CSR communication. Hence, the level of CSR communication and the company itself will not be factors influencing the results and conclusions of this study.

IKEA is a relevant company to study since they state that sustainability is deeply embedded in their strategy and business. In order to investigate the employees' perspectives and support of CSR communication, the company needs to actively communicate about these topics, which IKEA is strategically doing. At IKEA, the world's largest furniture retailer (Business Insider, 2016; Loeb, 2012), sustainability - environmental, economic, and social well-being - is deeply embedded in their strategy and business (IKEA Group, 2014). Further, IKEA is offering sustainability training to their employees, which according to previous studies, has positive effects on both the employees and the organization (Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007). Therefore, this study can investigate to what extent this training helps to form a more supportive workforce. Further, the results of this study could be used as a pre-study for future studies of IKEA and other companies with a CSR strategy.

IKEA has developed a sustainability strategy for 2020, called "People & Planet Positive" and states that: "through our sustainability strategy, "People & Planet Positive", we use sustainability to drive innovation, transform our business, steer our investments and unleash new business opportunities" (IKEA Group, 2014, p.8). IKEA uses the term "Sustainability", which the company defines as:

"Sustainability at IKEA means ensuring environmental, economic and social well-being for today and tomorrow. It means meeting the needs of people and society,

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs – acting in the long-term interests of the many people and not just the few. It is about living within the limits of the planet and protecting the environment. It means promoting a strong, healthy, inclusive and just society where people can prosper and fulfil their potential.”(IKEA Group, 2014, p.8).

Hence, this study focuses not only on environmental issues but every CSR activity within the scope of IKEA’s defined sustainability activities. This thesis uses the term *Corporate Social Responsibility* since this refers to the environmental, economic and social responsibility of a corporation (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). However, in interaction with IKEA’s employees, the term sustainability is used as this is the term they are familiar with.

3.2 Research Approach

This study takes the ontological perspective of internal realism. In contrast to relativism, which is concerned with the subjective truth, internal realism deals with the truth and facts which cannot be observed directly and have to be studied objectively to be found (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

In contrast to constructivist researchers, who view themselves as part of reality making them inseparable from the context studied, positivists separate themselves from reality believing that reality exists independently to their role. While constructivists are concerned with understanding the world through interpreting subjective constructs, positivists aim to expose correlations which exist beyond human understanding (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015; Weber, 2004). This is achieved through quantitative data analysis of large samples, which allow for testing propositions by identifying patterns and regularities in behaviour. Outcomes of tests depend on the probability that the collected data represents the underlying situation accurately. From there, researchers can define the objective truth and develop new ideas (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). This research takes inspiration from both positivists and post-positivists.

With investigating the underlying dimensions of CSR perception and support by segmenting employees using theories defined in the literature review, we are inspired by positivistic studies. Theories influencing CSR perception and support, as found in previous literature, are used to segment employees. In doing so, this study identifies driving forces in each segment, therefore testing the theories. Testing previously defined theories is a deductive process in line with a positivistic research approach (Gill & Johnson, 2010). Hence, this study is inspired by factor as well as cause-effect studies. However, by using cluster analysis we analyse these factors beyond their effect power. Even if some of the factors correlate positively with CSR support, this might hold true more for some groups than for others. In this sense, exploring underlying dimensions of CSR perceptions by investigating individuals’ differences through cluster analysis indicates scepticism towards a purely positivistic approach. Further, within cluster analysis researchers take control of the process. By pre-defining the number of clusters before starting the analysis, we influence the outcomes of the study. Similarly, the interpretation and labelling of identified segments are influenced by our judgments (Malhotra, 2008). Although the findings obtained through quantitative data analysis can be recreated at a later point in time, the interpretation of these relies on the researchers. Thus, the findings of

this study are not entirely independent from our judgments. Therefore we take inspiration from post-positivistic research, where researchers accept that findings are not independent of themselves (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

3.3 Research Design

This study aims to segment employees according to their CSR perceptions and level of support. As identified from previous literature, the constructs that potentially allow for such a segmentation are; *CSR Awareness*, *Perceived Fit* between CSR activities and company, *Organizational Identification*, *Job Satisfaction* and employees' *Personal Relevance*. Additional variables taken into consideration are; *Age*, *Nationality*, *CSR Training*, and *Time of Employment*.

In coherence with our philosophical considerations, this study's objective is to quantitatively test the differences between segments demonstrating a high or low level of CSR support. Segmentation typically follows either a priori or post-hoc methods. In a priori segmentation, the groups are predefined inductively according to the researcher's judgement, whereas segments in post-hoc segmentation are found through cluster analysis of empirical data (Green, 1977). Since this study makes no assumptions about possible segments and the optimal theoretical framework, segmentation will be deduced according to a post-hoc method. Therefore, this descriptive research has some exploratory character. By defining segments with homogeneous levels of CSR perceptions and support that differ in levels of one or more other variables, this study finds correlations between these variables. Finding correlations among variables through quantitatively analysing data drawn from a sample at only one point in time is characteristic for single cross-sectional studies (Malhotra, 2008).

By using a cross-sectional research design, this research has several limitations. First, the results cannot be used to determine cause and effect relationships. Since the data is collected at a specific point in time, it might only be accurate for this specific point in time (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). Therefore, the findings of this study are limited, as they cannot describe developments over time. In contrast to a longitudinal study, this study might not be representative in terms of timing and cannot give any clarification regarding cause and effect relationships. However, the fact that the data is collected at a specific point in time can also be considered as an advantage, as it captures data at a moment in time. Further, the data collected can be used for different types of research. Due to time limitations, a cross-sectional research design is the most appropriate one for this thesis, since this research design is neither time-consuming nor costly (Malhotra, 2008).

3.4 Sampling and Data Collection Method

The population of this study consists of male and female IKEA employees working in stores within Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland and United Kingdom, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Romania, Russia, and United States, in 2017. Hence, the findings of this study have limited generalisability in terms of cultural and geographical biases, as well as types of employees. The survey was distributed

by IKEA through channels of email and intranet, as well as distributed by us through online social networks of IKEA employees.

Due to time restrictions and cost limitations, this research conducted a non-probability sampling, as this was the most convenient approach to collect an appropriate amount of data from the predefined target group. Advantages of non-probability sampling are inexpensiveness, easiness in design and distribution as well as distribution speed (Burns & Burns, 2008). However, since the sample frame is not known in convenience sampling, the sample is not likely to be representative of the whole population (Burns & Burns, 2008). By distributing the survey via email, intranet and in online channels, where employees can be found, we followed convenience sampling. According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2015), by using convenience sampling there is a higher chance of the sample being biased, indicating that some people within the population are more likely to be included in the sample than others. Hence, one cannot be assured that the sample is representative of the wider population, implying that this study has limited generalisability. Further, participants in the survey may be biased in a way that they are more interested in the topic of sustainability than other employees, who did not participate (Burns & Burns, 2008; Malhotra, 2008). Hence, we do not know the motivations behind the respondents' choice to answer the survey, or why the rest of the employees did choose to not answer the survey, which is a common bias in convenience sampling (Burns & Burns, 2008). Furthermore, since our respondents are employees, they might answer the survey within their professional role, implying that they are more restrained with critique or more cautious with identifying as less supportive, as it concerns their employment and employer. However, this is expected when studying employees in their work environment, but must be taken into consideration.

3.5 Survey Design

The survey was created in a web-based survey tool used by IKEA for internal surveys. By using a web-based survey tool it was possible for us to constantly monitor the survey and the response number. Further, it was easy to create access for and reach out to IKEA's employees world-wide by simply sending out links to the surveys.

The survey was created in both Swedish and English. Since neither of us is a native English speaker, we sent the survey to a native speaker for a language check. Further, because the constructs found in the literature review are in English, i.e. perceived fit, organizational identification etc., the survey was first constructed in English and thereafter translated into Swedish by a native speaker. However, we are aware that the results of the data collection can be affected by translation errors. Further, by only providing the surveys in Swedish or English and thereby excluding people who cannot read these languages, might introduce bias in our sample. Moreover, the respondent might know English on different levels, which also can result in a biased sample (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). In order to guarantee the validity of content, we asked experts to judge whether the questionnaire covered an appropriate range and if the language of the survey matches the internal language of the company. This was done through a test run of the survey on three employees of IKEA. By testing the survey, we assured that there were no preferred answering options missing. After a first test run, some changes were made, which resulted in the final survey (*see Appendix A*,

Appendix B). According to IKEA, the average time used for taking the survey was five minutes.

The survey consists of two parts. In the first part, participants were asked about demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, which are measured on a nominal or ratio scale, depending on the characteristic. This part consists of structured questions with different amount of answer alternatives or texting options. In order to assess the sustainability communication a number of questions about how the employees communicate about IKEA's sustainability agenda and how they receive, as well as perceive this kind of communication were added. The second part of the survey consists of a 21-item, 6-point Likert scale to measure the psychographic characteristics and behavioural patterns of the respondents according to their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements (*see Appendix A, Appendix B*). A 6-point Likert scale was chosen to avoid impartial answers and instead make the respondents choose either an agreeing or disagreeing answer. The advantage of using a Likert-scale is that the answers are easy to code and thereby easy to interpret and analyse (Malhotra, 2008). In order to increase the response rate and minimise the burden of taking the survey, we shortened the first draft of the survey by decreasing the number of statements as much as possible without affecting the outcome (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). However, by shortening the survey we might not be able to create the variables we intend to create because these might not be statistically possible to combine.

The final survey questions are a combination of questions from previous articles, the management at IKEA and us (*see Tables 1 - 3*). By adding statements which have not yet been tested, we cannot be certain that these are reliable. Further, surveying employees of a company might affect their willingness to be critical towards their employer. However, we try to mitigate this risk by making the survey anonymous.

3.5.1 Measurements of Clustering Variables

The clustering variables are used for creating the clusters. This study aims to find groups with differing levels of CSR perception and support. Hence, we use CSR perception and support as a clustering variable. It is measured on a 6-point Likert scale according to employees' level of agreement with 11 statements (*see Table 1*). The statements below are adapted from Pérez and Del Bosque's (2013) measures of CSR support and extended with the two first statements by us to include the focus on employees' active engagement in CSR activities.

Question/Statement	Source
<i>I have taken the opportunity to participate in IKEA's local sustainability activities</i>	Researchers
<i>I have mentioned sustainability when talking to customers within the past 30 days</i>	
<i>Treats its customers honestly</i>	Pérez and Rodríguez Del Bosque (2013)
<i>Makes an effort to understand customers' needs</i>	
<i>Tries to ensure long-term success by maximizing its profits</i>	
<i>Treats its employees fairly (financially and socially)</i>	
<i>Offers training and career opportunities for co-workers</i>	
<i>Offers a pleasant work environment</i>	
<i>Plays a role in society beyond generating economic benefits</i>	
<i>Cares about having a positive impact on society</i>	
<i>Cares about respecting and protecting the natural environment (saving energy and water, reducing waste, sourcing materials [like wood and cotton] sustainably)</i>	

Table 1 – Clustering Variables

3.5.2 Measurements of Profiling Variables

In order to find differences between the clusters, we compare them based on profiling variables, which are *Awareness*, *Job Satisfaction*, *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification*, and *Personal Relevance*, which are measured on a 6-point Likert scale according to respondents' agreement or disagreement with the statements. In order to be able to make valuable statements concerning the effectiveness of IKEA's internal CSR communication this study measures employees' level of CSR *Awareness* as a profiling variable. According to our literature discussion, *Job Satisfaction* is likely to influence CSR

support, which is therefore included as a profiling variable. Similarly, the psychographic profiling variables of *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification* and *Personal Relevance* are included.

Variable	Statement	Source
Awareness	<i>I believe I am well informed about IKEA's sustainability agenda.</i>	Researchers
Job Satisfaction	<i>I am satisfied with my present job</i>	Du, Bhattacharya and Sen (2015)
Perceived Fit	<i>Has a sustainability agenda which is in line with its corporate culture</i>	Lee, Park and Lee (2013)
	<i>Has sustainability deeply embedded in its business operations</i>	
Organizational Identification	<i>I experience a strong sense of belonging to IKEA</i>	De Roeck, El Akremi and Swaen (2016)
Personal Relevance	<i>I am interested in our company's sustainability activities</i>	Öberseder, Schlegelmilch and Gruber (2011)
	<i>I find our company's sustainability agenda relevant</i>	
	<i>I place high value on sustainability</i>	

Table 2 – Profiling Variables

3.5.3 Measurements of Categorical Variables

This study introduces a set of categorical variables in order to find differences in clusters beyond the differences in profiling variables. The categorical variables consist of demographic, socioeconomic and additional variables, which are measured on different scales as explained below.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Variables

Demographic variables are an important input for this study as they possibly allow description and differentiation of clusters. The demographic variables of age and gender are included in this study, since these variables have been discovered as variables affecting organizational identification (De Roeck et al., 2014; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Meyer et al., 2002). Gender along with the variables of country and store location are measured on a nominal scale to identify and classify objects (Malhotra, 2008). The level of education and level of received

CSR training are measured on an ordinal scale. The variables of age and time in the company are measured on a ratio scale.

Additional questions

Some additional questions were added by us and IKEA. The questions by IKEA concern information they requested for internal studies; i.e. customer interaction and preferred as well as received channels of communication. We included question number 11 to target the employees' individual engagement of communicating about IKEA's sustainability agenda. Question number 8 was added as an inspiration from Brammer et al (2007), as training is suggested to influence this topic.

Question	Source
<i>In your role, are you directly interacting with customers on a daily basis?</i>	IKEA management
<i>Through which channels have you been informed about IKEA's sustainability activities?</i>	
<i>Which channels do you prefer for this kind of information?</i>	
<i>I have talked about IKEA's sustainability agenda with the following people:</i>	Researchers
<i>How many times have you received sustainability training in any format (facilitated group training, e-learning, introduction training, workshops) within the past 5 years?</i>	Brammer, Millington and Rayton (2007)

Table 3 - Additional Questions

3.6 Data Analysis

In order to address the research problem, this study uses cluster analysis to classify respondents into homogeneous groups called clusters. In cluster analysis, researchers examine a set of clustering and profiling variables. The aim is to identify groups where the objects within clusters are similar to each other and differentiate themselves from objects in other clusters based on a set of considered variables (Malhotra, 2008).

The collected data is analysed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Software. In order to combine the different measures into our variables, we perform a reliability analysis using the Cronbach's alpha (α) test in SPSS. In a first step, we calculate univariate statistics (means, frequencies and standard deviations). The nine perception and support statements suggested from Pérez and Rodríguez Del Bosque (2013), were extended with two new statements with more "active support" of the sustainability agenda. Hence, we have 11 statements measuring perception and support, i.e. the main clustering variable, and it needs to be investigated which statements can be grouped into variables. Therefore, factor analysis is conducted to examine a possible separation of these statements into different variables. By doing this, we investigate whether perception and support are better explained by a set of variables rather than one single variable. The factor analysis can further guarantee the validity of the grouping of the nine statements obtained from our literature review regarding perception and support. Thus, in

the second step, we carry out a factor analysis of the statements of perception and support by undertaking a principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The factors are extracted based on an eigenvalue greater than one, instead of a fixed value in order to allow for the most accurate solution. When segmenting IKEA's employees according to their perception and support of IKEA's sustainability agenda, a non-hierarchical cluster analysis using the K-means method is conducted. Due to the large data set (297 respondents), K-means is the more appropriate clustering method, compared to hierarchical clustering algorithms (Malhotra, 2008). As part of the K-means clustering method a decision on how many clusters should be obtained needs to be made. We start by dividing the sample into three, four and five clusters; grouping each observation to the group with the closest centre. The final cluster solution depends on which grouping generates the greatest difference between respondents while allowing for a meaningful interpretation of clusters. The final clusters are examined according to their respondents' answers, mean scores and ratings on the Likert scales. A One-Way ANOVA is conducted to investigate significant differences in profiling variables of the clusters. Lastly, in order to analyse these differences pairwise for each cluster, a Multiple Comparison Bonferroni post-hoc test is conducted to obtain more information on which means significantly differ across clusters. Thereby, we are able to describe the cluster profiles and appropriately name the clusters according to their characteristics. By identifying similarities within clusters beyond their members' level of support, we can draw implications for an improvement of IKEA's internal sustainability communication. In order to analyse the clusters on the categorical variables and discover possible differences, several Crosstab analyses are conducted.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

In order to assess the quality of the contributions made in this thesis, we need to critically reflect on validity and reliability. We refer to validity as the accuracy of our measurements and whether our research design allows us to rule out possible alternative explanations (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). Assessing validity requires an evaluation of each measurement by us. Since most of the measurements are taken from previous peer-reviewed literature, their validity has been tested and is therefore reinsured. For variables based on newly introduced statements (*see chapter 3.5.1-3.5.3*), validity will be tested with factor analysis and the calculation of Cronbach's alpha. If a Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.6 is obtained, the statements can be combined into different variables (Burns & Burns, 2008; Malhotra, 2008).

According to Kirk and Miller (1986) there are three types of reliability which quantitative research has to ensure: first, the possibility to replicate the obtained results under same measurement conditions; second, the stability of a measurement over time; and third, the similarity of measurements in a given time period. In terms of replicability, a similar study could yield varying results, since the findings are very dependent on the employee's perception of the respective employer. The overall fairly homogeneous answers of our sample support reliability, as strongly differing answers can challenge such (Burns & Burns, 2008). For non-hierarchical clustering, the order of the cases in the dataset can influence the cluster solutions (Malhotra, 2008). In order to further ensure reliability of our cluster solution, we ran multiple cluster analyses on the same dataset, differently ordering the cases each time. Since

the cases were assigned to the same cluster in every run, we can be assured that our solution is stable and reliable.

3.8 Chapter Summary

As the aim of this study is to find the underlying dimensions of employees' support of the company's CSR agenda, this research studies IKEA. It is necessary to study a single company since the employees are then exposed to the same kind of internal CSR communication. Due to its strategic implementation of CSR (internally referred to as Sustainability) in its values and also in its business operations, IKEA is a relevant company to study. The ontological perspective of this study is internal realism. We aim to expose correlations which exist beyond human understanding, which is why quantitative data analysis is conducted in order to define the objective truth. However, we cannot distance ourselves from our findings, since our cluster solutions and the interpretations of them will be affected by our judgments. Thus, the findings of this study are not entirely independent from our judgments, and we thereby take inspiration from post-positivistic research. This study uses a cross-sectional research design since this is neither time consuming nor costly. In order to investigate the theoretical framework, this research collects primary data. By collecting primary data, the validity of our research can be increased and can contribute with new insights to the research field. This study uses a non-probability convenience sampling. This method is chosen due to the time limit of this thesis as well as the speed of the distribution process. However, we are aware that this sampling method will affect the representativeness of the population, and thereby the generalisability of this research. In order to collect our primary data, we conducted a survey in both Swedish and English, which was distributed internally by IKEA as well as through online social network groups of IKEA employees. The different measurements are described thoroughly in chapter 3.5 *Survey Design*, which is based on previous literature, as well as statements added by IKEA and us (*see complete survey design in Appendix A & B*). The data is analysed with a K-means cluster analysis, since the aim of this study is to segment the employees of IKEA into groups according to their perception and support of IKEA's CSR agenda. In order to assess the validity and reliability of this study, different tests are applied.

4 Analysis and Discussion

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented, which are based on the methodology chapter where we describe how the analysis is performed. Firstly, the results of the factor analysis and reliability test are presented, on which the combinations of statements into variables are based. Secondly, a description of the whole data set is provided, with means and percentages based on the descriptive statistics. Thirdly, the results of the cluster analysis and the chosen three-cluster solution are presented and discussed.

4.1 Factor Analysis and Reliability Test

As the purpose of the study is to segment IKEA's employees according to their perception and support of the company's sustainability agenda, the 11 statements need to be combined into variables. The factor analysis suggests splitting the statements into two variables (*see Appendix C*). The statements added by us; "I have mentioned sustainability when talking to a customer within the past 30 days" and "I have taken the opportunity to participate in IKEA's local sustainability activities", are combined into one variable which we decide to name *Active Support* and the rest of the statements into a second variable named *Passive Support*. The *Passive Support* variable consists of statements representing IKEA's employees' perceptions and non-active support of the sustainability agenda, while the *Active Support* variable consists of statements based on the employees' active participation and engagement, hence the chosen variable names.

In order to investigate the possibility to combine other variables with more than one statement, a reliability test by calculating Cronbach's alpha is conducted. The two *Perceived Fit* statements result in a Cronbach's alpha of 0.803 (*see Appendix C*). Since this value is above 0.6, the two statements are combined. The three statements measuring *Personal Relevance* result in a Cronbach's alpha of 0.821 and are therefore combined into one variable (*see Appendix C*).

4.2 Data description

Our data set consists of 297 respondents, across 18 different countries. However, the distribution between the countries is not equal, mainly due to limitations in the sampling method. Therefore, the country variable will not be taken into consideration for the analysis. The age range of our respondents is from 19 to 68 years old, with the mean age being 35.61 and the median 34, which indicates a young sample. Regarding the gender distribution, there are 64.3% women, 33.7% men and 2% who did not specify, indicating an unequal distribution

with a female majority. In 2016, 54.4% of IKEA’s employees are women (IKEA Group, 2016), indicating that our sample is limited in terms of representativeness. Concerning the level of education, 2% of the respondents have not completed secondary school, 39.7% have completed secondary school, 44.4% have a bachelor’s degree and 13.8% have a master’s degree or PhD. However, the level of education is not taken into consideration for further analysis since it does not vary across clusters. Further, the level of training differs between the respondents, as 22.9% have never received sustainability training, 51.1% have received it once or twice and 25.6% have received it three or more times. The respondents spent between 0-30 years, working for IKEA, with the mean being 7.22 years and the median of 5.

The mean values of the two clustering variables, *Passive Support* and *Active Support*, and the five profiling variables *Personal Relevance*, *Perceived Fit*, *Job Satisfaction*, *Organizational Identification* and *Awareness*, are high (>4). This indicates an overall positive attitude towards IKEA’s sustainability agenda. Standard deviations vary, implying bigger differences among the employees’ responses in *Active Support*, *Job Satisfaction*, *Awareness* and *Organizational Identification*, when compared to the other variables (see Table 4 below). *Active Support* has the highest standard deviation, implying that the dispersion of responses around the mean is the biggest. The mean value of *Personal Relevance* is 5.37, which is the highest overall mean, indicating that most of IKEA’s employees think that sustainability is highly relevant. Similarly, the mean values of *Perceived Fit*, *Passive Support* and *Organizational Identification* are high, with values of 5.02, 5.04, and 5.10. The variable with the lowest mean is *Active Support*, indicating that the employees of IKEA are less actively involved in communicating about or participating in IKEA’s sustainability agenda than suggested by their *Passive Support*. The mean value of the profiling variable *Awareness* equals 4.58, indicating that the employees of IKEA feel less informed about the sustainability agenda than they feel that it is relevant. The mean of *Job Satisfaction* is 4.80, suggesting that most IKEA employees agree that they are satisfied with their present jobs. The mean values of all clustering and profiling variables are overall high. However, there are significant differences between the variables, means and the clusters, which are analysed and discussed in the next chapter.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Active Support	4.09	1.36	297
Passive Support	5.04	.72	297
Awareness	4.58	1.17	297
Perceived Fit	5.02	.91	297
Organizational Identification	5.10	1.01	297
Personal Relevance	5.37	.75	297
Job Satisfaction	4.80	1.2	297

Table 4 - Descriptive Statistics

4.3 Cluster Analysis

The clusters are obtained by clustering according to the variables *Active Support* and the *Passive Support*. The solution with three clusters is the most appropriate, since a higher number of clusters results in unfavourable cluster size ratios. The final clusters depend on which grouping generates the greatest difference between respondents while allowing for a meaningful interpretation of clusters.

The three-cluster solution is obtained with 13 iterations after no or only minimal changes are observed in the cluster centres (see *Appendix D*). The first cluster consists of 104 cases, the second of 146 and the third cluster consists of 47 cases. The final cluster centres in cluster one for the *Passive Support* variable is 5.25, and for the *Active Support* variable 5.24. In cluster two, the *Passive Support* variable has a cluster centre of 5.02, and an *Active Support* cluster centre of 3.49. Finally, the third cluster has the centres at 4.44 for *Passive Support* and 1.83 for *Active Support* (see *Figure 1*).

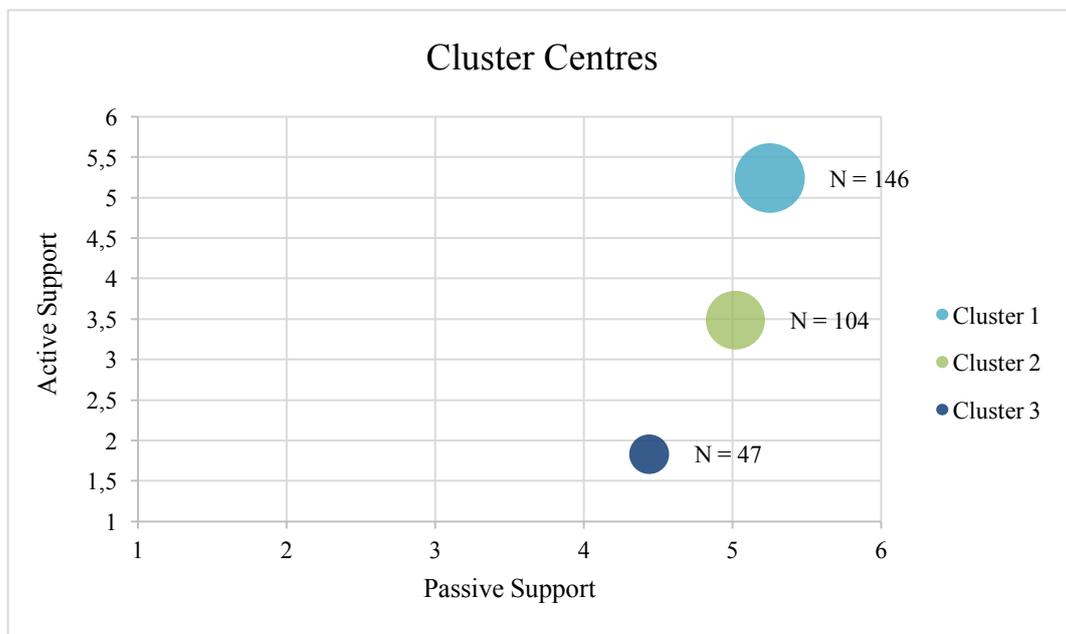


Figure 1 - Cluster Centers

To investigate whether the differences between clusters are significant and can be explained further, the clusters are compared through One-Way ANOVA and Bonferroni tests. The results of the One-Way ANOVA (see *Appendix D*) indicate that all differences in mean values between the three groups are significant. Therefore, we continue to compare the three groups based on the Post-hoc Bonferroni multiple comparison test. The results indicate that the mean differences are significant at the $p < .05$ level for all the pairwise cluster comparisons, except for *Organizational Identification* between clusters one and two (see *Table 5*). The findings of the Bonferroni test along with the comparison of mean values across the clusters (see *Figure 2*) are used to analyse the clusters in the following chapters.

Multiple Comparisons					
Bonferroni					
Dependent Variable	Cluster (I)	Cluster (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Active Support	1	2	1.75415*	.06650	.000
		3	3.40994*	.08692	.000
	2	1	-1.75415*	.06650	.000
		3	1.65579*	.09110	.000
	3	1	-3.40994*	.08692	.000
		2	-1.65579*	.09110	.000
Passive Support	1	2	.22811*	.08584	.025
		3	.80289*	.11220	.000
	2	1	-.22811*	.08584	.025
		3	.57479*	.11759	.000
	3	1	-.80289*	.11220	.000
		2	-.57479*	.11759	.000
Awareness	1	2	.773*	.129	.000
		3	1.663*	.169	.000
	2	1	-.773*	.129	.000
		3	.890*	.177	.000
	3	1	-1.663*	.169	.000
		2	-.890*	.177	.000
Perceived Fit	1	2	.42018*	.11029	.001
		3	.84735*	.14415	.000
	2	1	-.42018*	.11029	.001
		3	.42717*	.15108	.015
	3	1	-.84735*	.14415	.000
		2	-.42717*	.15108	.015
Organizational Identification	1	2	.259	.119	.091
		3	1.213*	.155	.000
	2	1	-.259	.119	.091
		3	.955*	.163	.000
	3	1	-1.213*	.155	.000
		2	-.955*	.163	.000
Personal Relevance	1	2	.32288*	.08621	.001
		3	.99160*	.11267	.000
	2	1	-.32288*	.08621	.001
		3	.66871*	.11808	.000
	3	1	-.99160*	.11267	.000
		2	-.66871*	.11808	.000
Job Satisfaction	1	2	.391*	.148	.026
		3	1.018*	.194	.000
	2	1	-.391*	.148	.026
		3	.626*	.203	.007
	3	1	-1.018*	.194	.000
		2	-.626*	.203	.007
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.					

Table 5 - Multiple Comparisons Post Hoc Test; Bonferroni

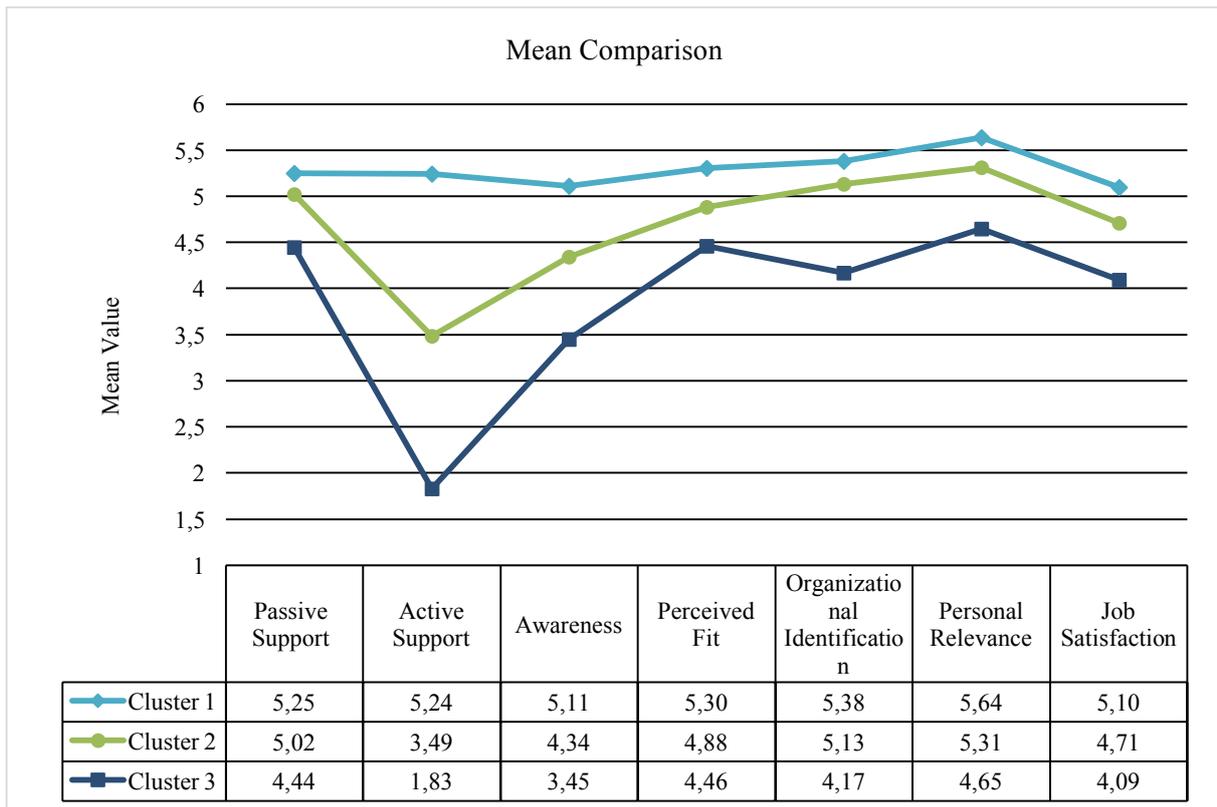


Figure 2 - Mean Comparison

4.3.1 Cluster One – The Affirmative Ambassadors

In the first and biggest cluster (N=146), mean values of the variables *Passive Support*, *Active Support*, *Awareness*, *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification*, *Personal Relevance* and *Job Satisfaction* range from 5.10 to 5.64 (see Figure 2). These consistently high values suggest that the respondents in this cluster highly value CSR (*Personal Relevance*; 5.64), identify with their employer (*Organizational Identification*; 5.38), and find that the CSR agenda fits IKEA’s corporate culture and values (*Perceived Fit*; 5.30). Moreover, they feel very informed about the company’s sustainability agenda (*Awareness*; 5.11) and are very satisfied with their current job (*Job Satisfaction*; 5.10). The employees in cluster one not only believe in IKEA’s sustainability agenda (*Passive Support*; 5.25) but also seek to actively take part in CSR activities and communicate about topics related to sustainability (*Active Support*; 5.24). Therefore, this group has a very positive attitude towards IKEA and sustainability, whilst actively taking part in communication and activities connected to this topic. Hence, this cluster is named The Affirmative Ambassadors.

4.3.2 Cluster Two – The Reserved Believers

In the second cluster (N=104), mean values of the variables *Passive Support*, *Active Support*, *Awareness*, *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification*, *Personal Relevance* and *Job Satisfaction* range from 3.49 to 5.31 (see Figure 2). The mean values of the variables *Passive Support* (5.02), *Organizational Identification* (5.13) and *Personal Relevance* (5.31) are the

highest of this cluster, suggesting that the respondents are supportive of IKEA's sustainability agenda, identify themselves with the company and personally value sustainability. The relatively high mean values of the variables *Job Satisfaction* (4.71) and *Perceived Fit* (4.88) imply that employees assigned to the second cluster are satisfied with their current job and find IKEA's sustainability agenda to fit the company's culture, values and operations. Respondents of the second cluster feel somewhat informed about IKEA's sustainability agenda as represented by the mean value of the variable *Awareness* (4.34). The clustering variable *Active Support*, which has the lowest mean score in cluster one (3.49), indicates that employees in this cluster do not show much active support in the company's CSR activities and do not actively communicate about the topic of sustainability, albeit having a supportive view according to the clustering variable *Passive Support* (5.02). Therefore, this group can be described as having a positive attitude towards their employer and sustainability, but not actively engaging in IKEA's sustainability agenda. Hence, this cluster is named The Reserved Believers.

4.3.3 Cluster Three – The Silent Bystanders

In the third and smallest cluster (N=47), mean values of the variables *Passive Support*, *Active Support*, *Awareness*, *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification*, *Personal Relevance* and *Job Satisfaction* range from 1.83 to 4.65 (see Figure 2). The mean values of the variables *Organizational Identification* (4.17), *Job Satisfaction* (4.09) and *Perceived Fit* (4.46) suggest that employees who are assigned to the third cluster somewhat identify with their company, are somewhat satisfied with their current job and to some extent find IKEA's sustainability agenda to fit its corporate culture and business operations. Albeit being relatively interested and appreciative of CSR topics, they do not feel very informed about IKEA's sustainability agenda, as indicated by the mean values of the variables *Personal Relevance* (4.65) and *Awareness* (3.45). The respondents in this cluster show little to no active support of the company's CSR activities and do not actively communicate about sustainability (*Active Support*; 1.83). However, they are not unsupportive of IKEA's CSR values (*Passive Support*; 4.44). Therefore, this group is named The Silent Bystanders as they do neither engage in, nor reject the company's sustainability agenda. Overall, this cluster consists of more sceptical employees, as they rate lower in all of the profiling variables. However, this cluster represents a minority when compared with the clusters of The Reserved Believers (N=104) and The Affirmative Ambassadors (N=146).

4.4 Cluster Comparison

When comparing the mean values of all clusters, it becomes evident that by clustering the cases according to the clustering variables *Passive Support* and *Active Support*, three groups, which show significant differences ($p < .05$) in the profiling variables, are obtained. However, the variable *Organizational Identification* is only significantly different between clusters two and three and one and three, but not between one and two (see Table 5). Further, the comparison of mean values shows that The Affirmative Ambassadors have the overall most positive attitudes, whereas The Silent Bystanders represent the overall most negative attitudes. Concurring, Affirmative Ambassadors have the highest mean values for each variable and the Silent Bystanders the lowest. Accordingly, the mean values of all three

clusters are either consistently the highest, lowest or in between, but never overlapping. As a deduction, we can assume that all variables are correlated. This was supported by a Spearman correlation test, indicating significant positive relationships between all variables at the $p < .01$ level (see Appendix E). Consequently, it appears that The Reserved Believers and The Affirmative Ambassadors rate very similar on all clustering and profiling variables except for the variables of *Active Support* and *Awareness* (mean difference > 0.7). The Silent Bystanders show similar characteristics in the variables of *Passive Support* and *Perceived Fit* but differ from the other groups more clearly on the other variables.

4.4.1 Active Support

The disparity between the three clusters is especially evident for the clustering variable *Active Support*, where the mean difference is the biggest of all variables (1.75 between clusters one and two; 3.41 between clusters one and three, 1.66 between clusters two and three) (see Table 5). *Active Support* divides the respondents into one very actively involved group, one somewhat actively involved group and one inactive group. The Affirmative Ambassadors seek to actively engage in and communicate about IKEA's sustainability agenda, whereas The Silent Bystanders refrain from doing so. The Reserved Believers show only minimal active support. Previous studies stress the importance of active involvement of employees (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Mirvis, 2012); something which is especially critical in a retail environment, where employees interact with customers on a daily basis (Elg & Hultman, 2016). Lacking active support may imply missing out on benefits connected to CSR (Elg & Hultman, 2016); e.g. losing the opportunity to rely on outspoken support by employees in times of distress, as suggested by Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun (2008).

4.4.2 Passive Support

The second clustering variable, *Passive Support* shows only a small difference in mean values between The Affirmative Ambassadors and The Reserved Believers (0.23), suggesting that both groups believe and stand behind the company's CSR values, albeit not showing an equal level of active engagement (see Table 5). However, the mean differences between The Silent Bystanders and The Affirmative Ambassadors (0.80) and The Reserved Believers (0.57) are higher, indicating less support, but no disagreement with IKEA's CSR values. Although being distinct in their levels of *Passive Support*, all three groups are supportive rather than non-supportive. Hence, all groups have a positive perception of IKEA's CSR values and activities. As evident from previous literature, integrating CSR into business activities and corporate values strengthens employees' perception and support (De Roeck et al., 2014; Roper & Fill, 2012). Since IKEA has incorporated sustainability as a core value and describes it as a fundamental business driver, the findings regarding the overall positive perception are in line with the arguments made in preceding literature.

4.4.3 Awareness

The mean values of the profiling variable *Awareness* significantly differ between all clusters. A big difference in mean values is found between The Affirmative Ambassadors and The Silent Bystanders (1.66), suggesting that the more informed the employees feel about a

company's CSR initiatives and the more aware they are of it, the more likely they will actively communicate and engage in them (*see Table 5*). *Awareness* demonstrates the second biggest mean difference between these clusters, implying to be one main driver for *Active Support*. Concurring, the mean difference in *Awareness* between the less actively supportive clusters, The Reserved Believers and The Silent Bystanders (0.89), implies that receiving information regarding topics of CSR influence employees' perception and active support. Thus, we argue that internally communicating about CSR topics, and thereby raising awareness of the company's initiatives and strengthening the understanding of corporate values within the company will aid in building a more actively supportive workforce.

4.4.4 Perceived Fit

The small but significant differences in mean values on the variable of Perceived Fit (*see Table 5*) are in line with findings from the literature discussion, which suggest that the more congruent CSR initiatives are with corporate values and business operations, the more positive the perception and the higher the level of internal CSR support (Aaker, 1990; Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill, 2006; Keller & Aaker, 1992; Lee, Park & Lee, 2013; Meyer et al., 2002; Pérez & Rodríguez Del Bosque, 2013). Although some authors state the cause of the CSR initiative a company supports should be incongruent to business goals (e.g., Ellen, Mohr & Webb, 2000; Ellen, Webb & Mohr, 2006), other studies stress the importance of fit between CSR agenda and corporate culture (Lee, Park & Lee, 2013; Pérez & Rodríguez Del Bosque, 2013). By looking at our clusters, we can agree with the latter – a higher perceived fit was found in the clusters with an overall higher level of support (*See Figure 2*).

4.4.5 Organizational Identification

The mean difference of the variable *Organizational Identification*, between The Affirmative Ambassadors and The Reserved Believers (0.26), is small and not significant (*see Table 5*). Accordingly, both groups strongly identify with their employer. Nevertheless, the mean value for *Organizational Identification* of The Silent Bystanders significantly differs from the other more supportive groups (The Reserved Believers: 0.96; The Affirmative Ambassadors: 1.21). However, The Silent Bystanders identify with IKEA even though the level of identification does not match the other groups'. Subsequently, we can agree with previous literature, which states that CSR positively correlates with organizational identification (Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007; Brunton, Eweje & Taskin, 2015; De Roeck, El Akremi & Swaen, 2016; Glavas & Godwin, 2013; Jones, 2010; Kim et al., 2010). Over and above this, our findings show that higher organizational identification is connected to employees' CSR support. However, the non-significant difference between The Affirmative Ambassadors and The Reserved Believers suggests that although *Organizational Identification* positively correlates with CSR support, it is not the main driver for Active Support. A high level of *Organizational Identification* may lead to a more positive perception of a company's CSR agenda, but not promote active engagement in such.

4.4.6 Personal Relevance

The overall highest ranking variable, *Personal Relevance*, suggests that all clusters value CSR and sustainability. However, there are small significant differences in the mean values of all three clusters (see Table 5), with The Affirmative Ambassadors being the group showing the highest personal relevance and The Silent Bystanders being the group with the lowest. Similar to Öberseder, Schlegelmilch and Gruber (2011), who found that consumers who are more interested in CSR topics consider sustainability aspects in the purchasing process, we find that employees who show higher personal relevance for these topics show a higher level of support. Accordingly, employees who strongly value sustainability are more likely to communicate about it and show active engagement in related activities. Since IKEA incorporated sustainability as a core value, employees with high personal relevance are more likely to work more efficiently, be more committed towards their company, whilst being less stressed (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008).

4.4.7 Job Satisfaction

Similar to all other profiling variables, *Job Satisfaction* is highest among The Affirmative Ambassadors. The mean values of The Reserved Believers and The Silent Bystanders are significantly lower (0.39; 1.02). Hence, we can support findings of previous literature stating that *Organizational Identification* and *Personal Relevance* of a company's CSR initiatives are positively connected to *Job Satisfaction* (Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015; Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004; Sims & Keon, 1997; Valentine & Fleischman, 2008). All in all, the employees, who are most satisfied with their job are also the most supportive and actively engaged ones considering sustainability topics. Concurring, we agree with Roper and Fill (2012) who argue that when employees are satisfied with their job, they are more likely to communicate brand values to external stakeholders, thereby showing *Active Support*. Within the group of The Affirmative Ambassadors, *Job Satisfaction* is the lowest among the clustering and profiling variables. Thus, the clustering variables of *Active Support* and *Passive Support* are higher than *Job Satisfaction* for this group. On the contrary, The Reserved Believers and The Silent Bystanders show less support than job satisfaction. This might imply that *Job Satisfaction* positively influences CSR support, but only to a certain extent. In order to become an Affirmative Ambassador of a company's CSR, other variables might be more influential.

4.4.8 Categorical Variables

From the cluster comparison, we conclude that effectively communicating the CSR values and initiatives internally will make employees more actively supportive, thereby acting as company supporters, who positively reinforce the corporate image to external stakeholders. When analysing the different received and preferred channels of communication, in order to investigate which channels are the most appropriate or efficient for each cluster (see Table 6), the least preferred and received channel of communication in all of the three clusters is *Customer Advertising*. Since this channel mainly focuses on customers, i.e. external receivers, and the communication is not targeting the employees, the results suggest employees' preference for communication addressed to them exclusively. However, the second least preferred and received channels differ between the clusters. Cluster one, The Affirmative

Ambassadors, prefer communication from their managers the second least, but they receive Newsletters the second least. Cluster two, The Silent Believers, both prefer and receive *IKEA.com* (i.e. website) as a channel of communication about the sustainability agenda the second least. In cluster three, The Silent Bystanders, both prefer and receive communication from their managers the second least. Thus, we can conclude that the least preferred and received channels of communication differ to some extent between the clusters and therefore, the least efficient channel is hard to determine. However, according to this data set, the least efficient one (except for customer advertising) is communication through their managers, since the more sceptical employees in cluster three least prefer and receive this form of communication. Nevertheless, it needs further investigation to determine this.

Regarding the most preferred and received channels of communication, The Reserved Believers would prefer *Email* the most but feel that they receive communication via *Store Advertising* the most. Therefore, we can suggest IKEA to increase the communication via email. The Affirmative Ambassadors, signal that they would prefer and do receive the most communication from *IKEA Inside* (i.e. IKEA’s intranet) and *Yammer* (i.e. internal network), which therefore indicates that these two channels are effective since this cluster is the most supportive one. Yammer is an internal social network used for private communication within organizations (Microsoft, 2017). The Silent Bystanders show similar results. However, The Affirmative Ambassadors still feel that they receive more communication about IKEA’s sustainability agenda than The Reserved Believers, which in turn receive more communication than The Silent Bystanders indicating that the more communication one receives, the more supportive one is. Further, we conclude that IKEA overall choose the right channels of communication, since the percentage for the preferred channel, usually match the received percentage. However, in cluster two, a higher percentage of employees prefer communication via Email than the percentage that receives it. Similarly, a higher percentage of employees in cluster one and three prefer communication through Newsletter, than the percentage that receives it. Here, IKEA could improve by making the preferred and the received channels correspond.

Cross tabulation of Clusters and Preferred and Received Communication						
Channel of Communication	Clusters					
	The Affirmative Ambassadors		The Reserved Believers		The Silent Bystanders	
	<i>Preferred</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Preferred</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Preferred</i>	<i>Received</i>
Store Advertising	50.0%	76.7%	39.4%	65.4%	27.7%	59.6%
IKEA Inside	62.3%	82.2%	49.0%	64.4%	55.3%	63.8%
Yammer	58.9%	79.5%	35.6%	61.5%	55.3%	78.7%
Manager	32.9%	49.3%	28.8%	44.2%	19.1%	21.3%
Adv. In Co-worker rooms	50.7%	54.1%	33.7%	40.4%	34.0%	42.6%
IKEA.com	36.3%	54.1%	22.1%	25.0%	25.5%	36.2%
Email	54.8%	57.7%	55.8%	43.3%	34.0%	38.3%
Customer Adv.	27.4%	27.4%	16.3%	15.4%	12.8%	19.1%
Newsletter	47.3%	46.6%	33.7%	26.9%	25.5%	23.4%

Table 6 - Cross Tabulation of Clusters and Preferred and Received Communication

The crosstab analysis of the clusters and age groups (*see Appendix D*) reveals that most of The Silent Bystanders are below 30 years of age (53.2%). The overall age in cluster three is lower than in cluster one and two, which differentiates this cluster from the other two. However, in all of the clusters, most respondents are below 40 years of age (65.1% in cluster one, 74.1% in cluster two, and 83% in cluster three), implying that the respondents are rather young. The Affirmative Ambassadors have the highest percentage of respondents above 41 years of age (34,9% compared with 26% in cluster two and 28,8% in cluster three). One conclusion based on these findings is that older employees seem to be more supportive. However, this could be interpreted as a result of the number of *Years in the company*, which is supported by the positive correlation between the variables (*see Appendix E*).

Further, the findings of the crosstab analysis suggest that the number of years in the company and the times of received training influence the employees' support of the sustainability agenda, as they markedly vary across the clusters (*see Appendix D*). Many employees within the groups of The Reserved Believers and The Silent Bystanders worked less than one year in the company (28.8% and 31.9%), indicating that time of employment affects their support of the sustainability agenda since these clusters rate lower on support. On the contrary, most of the employees within The Affirmative Ambassadors have worked at IKEA for a longer period of time, which could explain their higher level of support. Only 13.1% of The Affirmative Ambassadors have worked less than one year in the company. Similarly, the times of received training vary across the clusters. 44.7% of The Silent Bystanders have never received training, whereas in cluster one and two the proportion of employees who have never taken part in sustainability related training is remarkable lower (11.6% cluster one and 28.8% in cluster two). Previous research suggests that by engaging employees in executing, formulating and maintaining CSR initiatives (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Brammer et al. 2007; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2015; Mirvis, 2012), will benefit the CSR strategy. Since The Silent Bystanders consist of 44.7% employees who have never received sustainability training and The Affirmative Ambassadors, representing the opposite, with 39% who have received training three or more times (compared with 13.5% in cluster two and 10.6% in cluster three), the factor training might explain support. Thereby, we suggest that CSR training, which actively involves employees, affects their support of IKEA's sustainability agenda and that it is an effective mean of communication about CSR initiatives. Therefore, we conclude that it is of great importance for IKEA to ensure that their employees receive the sustainability training preferably shortly after entering the company. Hence, the more training they receive, the more supportive they will be.

According to the literature review, there are different views of how gender affects peoples' perception and support of CSR activities (Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007; Brown & Dacin, 1997; Pérez & Rodríguez Del Bosque, 2013; Peterson, 2004; Robin & Babin, 1997; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). The gender distribution in our sample is uneven (64.3% women, 33.7% men), possibly resulting in the majority of the employees being more supportive, since according to previous literature, women value social and environmental well-being more than men (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005) and respect higher ethical standards more than men (Robin & Babin, 1997). However, there are no gender differences between the clusters. Instead, female and male respondents are distributed very similarly between clusters (*see Appendix D*). Therefore, we conclude that gender does not affect the employees' support and perception of the sustainability agenda, which is in line with Petersons (2004) findings that CSR plays an increasingly more important role for both men and women, and that people, in general, are more conscious about the importance of CSR. However, since this study collected data at a

specific point in time we cannot draw any conclusions regarding the increased consciousness. However, this could be of interest for further research.

4.5 Chapter Summary

The sample is rather homogeneous, indicating that there are no large differences between the respondents. Most of IKEA's employees agree on the profiling variables, as the mean values of all the profiling variables are high (above 4). Based on factor analysis and reliability tests, we divide the 11 statements for perception and support into two different ones; *Active Support* and *Passive Support*, with *Active Support* indicating participation and communication, and *Passive Support* representing the perception. A summary of all the findings and conclusions is provided at the end of this chapter (see Table 7).

As the purpose of our thesis is to segment IKEA's employees according to their perception and support of IKEA's sustainability agenda, we conduct a non-hierarchical cluster analysis using the K-means method. We choose a three-cluster solution, which is based on the clustering variables *Active* and *Passive Support*. Cluster one is named The Affirmative Ambassadors, because this group has a very positive attitude towards IKEA and sustainability, whilst actively taking part in communication and activities connected to this topic. This cluster rates very high in all profiling variables. Cluster two consists of employees who have a positive attitude towards their employer and sustainability, but not actively engage in IKEA's sustainability agenda. Hence, this cluster was named The Reserved Believers. The respondents in cluster three show little to no active support towards the company's CSR activities and do not actively communicate about sustainability. However, they are not unsupportive of IKEA's CSR values. Therefore, this group was named The Silent Bystanders as they do not engage, but also do not reject the company's sustainability agenda. Overall, this cluster consists of more sceptical employees, as they rate lower in all profiling variables.

Although the data is rather homogeneous, there are significant differences between our chosen three clusters based on the clustering variables, *Active Support* and *Passive Support*. The difference between the three clusters is especially evident for the clustering variable *Active Support*, where the mean difference is the biggest of all variables. Albeit being distinct in their levels of *Passive Support*, all three groups are supportive, suggesting a positive perception of IKEA's CSR values and activities. The same does not hold true for *Active Support*, where The Silent Bystanders show a negative attitude towards active engagement and The Reserved Believers appear to be much less engaged than The Affirmative Ambassadors. Regarding the profiling variables, the clusters are significantly different as well. The mean values of the profiling variable *Awareness* significantly differ between all clusters. The mean difference in *Awareness* between the less actively supportive clusters, The Reserved Believers and The Silent Bystanders, implies that receiving information regarding topics of CSR influence employees' perception and active support. Internally communicating about CSR topics, thereby raising awareness of the company's initiatives and strengthening the understanding of corporate values within the company will aid in building a more actively supportive workforce. The small but significant difference in mean values of the variable *Perceived Fit* are in line with findings from the literature discussion, which indicate that the more congruent CSR initiatives are with corporate values and business operations, the more

positive the perception and the higher the level of internal CSR support. The mean difference on the variable *Organizational Identification* between The Affirmative Ambassadors and The Reserved Believers is small and not significant. Therefore, we conclude that *Organizational Identification* cannot be the main driver for *Active Support* since both clusters significantly differ in their level of active engagement but not in the extent to which they identify with the organization. From our findings we can agree with previous literature, which states that CSR positively correlates with organizational identification. Moreover, our findings show that higher organizational identification is connected to employees' CSR support. Regarding Personal Relevance, similar to previous research, we find that employees who show higher personal relevance for these topics show a higher level of support. Accordingly, employees who strongly value sustainability are more likely to communicate about it and show active engagement in related activities. Similar to all other profiling variables, *Job Satisfaction* is highest among The Affirmative Ambassadors. Hence, we can support findings of previous literature stating that *Organizational Identification* and *Personal Relevance* of a company's CSR initiatives are positively connected to *Job Satisfaction*. Our findings imply that *Job Satisfaction* positively influences CSR support, but only to a certain extent. In order to become an Affirmative Ambassador of a company's CSR, other variables might be more influential. Overall our data supports findings from previous literature, which suggest positive correlations between our clustering and profiling variables.

When analysing the categorical variables, we find that both preferred and received communication through different channels vary between the clusters. It seems that Yammer and IKEA Inside are the most preferred channels and that overall, the preferred channels coincide with the received ones. Although there are some exceptions, where the preferred channel has a higher percentage than the received one, which IKEA could improve by increasing the communication through the preferred channel. We conclude that The Affirmative Ambassadors feel that they receive more communication than the other two clusters, which indicates that the more communication one receives, the more supportive one will be. Regarding the age of the respondents, the least supportive cluster, The Silent Bystanders, has the biggest proportion of young employees, whereas the most supportive cluster, The Affirmative Ambassadors, consists of mostly older employees. Since age is correlated with the years spent in the company, this indicates that the longer employees have worked at IKEA and the older they are, the more supportive they seem to be. Concerning the sustainability training, we find that the number of times employees have received training positively influences their support. Hence, IKEA needs to ensure that all their employees receive sustainability training shortly after entering the company in order for them to be more supportive. We cannot draw any conclusion based on the gender variable and its effect on support of CSR since the gender distribution is uneven with a similar proportion as found in the clusters.

Summary of all Findings and Conclusions		
Variable	Findings	Conclusions
Passive Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passive Support is highest among The Affirmative Ambassadors, lower for Reserved Believers and lowest for Silent Bystanders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees show different levels of Passive Support. However, all groups are supportive of IKEA's sustainability agenda, which can be seen as a result of effective integration of CSR into corporate values.
Active Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Support shows the biggest differences among the clusters. Active Support is highest among The Affirmative Ambassadors, lower for Reserved Believers and lowest for Silent Bystanders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to separate Passive from Active support when investigating levels of internal CSR support. Active Support positively correlates with all profiling variables.
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness is significantly different between all clusters with especially big difference between Affirmative Ambassadors and Silent Bystanders (mean value >1.6). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective internal CSR communication is crucial in order to raise awareness about CSR topics and consequently make employees act as Affirmative Ambassadors.
Perceived Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with previous literature, Perceived Fit of a company's culture, their business operations and their CSR initiatives positively correlates with CSR support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to integrate CSR into corporate culture and choose CSR initiative that fit business goals and operations in order for the employees to support them <u>inactively and actively</u>.
Organizational Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Identification is significantly different for Silent Bystanders and both other groups. No significant difference between Affirmative Ambassadors and Reserved Believers for Organizational Identification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees who strongly identify with their organization show higher levels of support. However, levels of Organizational Identification only differ among groups with differences in Active Support, not between groups with high Passive Support.
Personal Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All groups show relatively high Personal Relevance. However, there are small but significant differences between clusters. In line with previous literature, we find a positive correlation between Personal Relevance and CSR support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The more employees value CSR, the more likely they will actively and inactively support a company's CSR causes and communication.
Job Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job Satisfaction is significantly different among all clusters. Within the group of Affirmative Ambassadors, Job Satisfaction has the lowest mean value and support is higher than job satisfaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees who are more supportive, are more satisfied with their current job. Hence, Job Satisfaction could promote CSR support.

Channels of Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least preferred and received channel is Customer Advertising. • Second least and most preferred and received varies between clusters. • The most supportive cluster, The Affirmative Ambassadors prefers communication via managers the second least, but receive communication through Newsletters the second least. • Similarly, The Silent Bystanders both prefer and receive communication from managers the second least. • IKEA Inside and Yammer seem to be the most preferred channels for this kind of communication. • The Affirmative Ambassadors overall receive more communication than the other two clusters. • Overall, the preferred channel match with the received channel, except for some exceptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more communication an employee receives about Sustainability Agenda, the more supportive he or she is. • Communication through Newsletter and Email could be increased in order for the preferred and the received to match. • IKEA Inside and Yammer seem to be the overall most effective channels, which therefore are the ones IKEA should focus on to communicate through.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the respondents is below 40 years of age. • The least supportive cluster, The Silent Bystanders, consists of younger employees than the other two clusters. • The most supportive cluster, The Affirmative Ambassadors, consists of a higher percentage of respondents with an age above 41. • Age is positively correlated with number of years in the company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The older the employee is, the more supportive he or she is. • However, this is positively correlates with years in company.
Years in Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserved Believers and The Silent Bystanders consists of a majority that worked a shorter amount of time compared with cluster two. • The Affirmative Ambassadors has the highest percentage of people that worked more than eight years. • The Affirmative Ambassadors also has the highest percentage of employees that worked less than one year and the least that worked more than eight years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more years an employee has worked in the company, the more supportive he or she is.
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Silent Bystanders have the highest percentage of employees that never received training, whilst The Affirmative Ambassadors have the lowest. • More than a third of The Affirmative Ambassadors consist of more have received training three or more times, compared with the other two clusters where only less than one out of seven employees has received training three or more times. This might explain their high support, indicating that engaging employees benefits the CSR strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IKEA needs to ensure that their employees receive the training as quickly as possible in order to increase Active Support. • The more training the employees receive, the more supportive they are. • Training as an effective mean of communication.
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven gender distribution, with a majority of women. • Similar distribution within the different clusters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No conclusions can be drawn for the gender differences between and within the clusters.

Table 7 - Summary of all Findings and Conclusions

5 Conclusion

In this final chapter conclusions based on the analysis of the data are presented. Firstly, it is discussed whether this study fulfils the aim of this thesis and answers the research questions, leading to this study's theoretical contributions. Secondly, managerial implications for companies are provided. Thirdly, this chapter reflects on methodological implications. Finally, limitations of this research and suggestions for further research are discussed.

5.1 Theoretical Contribution

As the purpose of this study is to investigate how employees understand and support their employer's internal CSR communication and CSR agenda, this study segments IKEA's employees into different clusters. By doing so, we discovered significant differences between the clusters of employees in regards to socioeconomic and psychographic characteristics. Thereby, we investigate what constructs possibly influence employees' CSR support.

When investigating how the employees can be segmented into different groups regarding their CSR support, our empirical material evidently shows that these three different clusters, based on the clustering variables *Active Support* and *Passive Support*, exist. The three clusters differ significantly across six out of seven profiling variables, with the most supportive cluster being named The Affirmative Ambassadors, the second most supportive cluster being named The Reserved Believers and the least supportive The Silent Bystanders. We conclude that it is essential to differentiate between active and passive support since the difference in the variable *Active Support* is larger between the clusters than compared to *Passive Support*. The overall positive rating on *Passive Support* can be seen as a result of an effective integration of CSR into IKEA's corporate values, which thereby seem to be absorbed by the employees.

When investigating how employees supportive of a company's CSR agenda differ from less supportive employees and how an understanding of differences in employees' CSR support can be used to improve internal CSR support, we conclude that both psychographic and sociodemographic variables can be influential. This is especially evident for *Active Support* where our clusters differ the most out of the psychographic variables. All profiling variables positively correlate with the clustering variables, suggesting that higher levels of *Awareness*, *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification*, *Personal Relevance* and *Job Satisfaction*, lead to increased support. The three clusters differ in their levels of *Awareness*. Thereby, we argue that effective internal CSR communication is crucial in order to raise awareness about CSR topics and consequently make employees act as Affirmative Ambassadors. Further, we argue that it is important to integrate CSR into the corporate culture and choose CSR initiatives that fit business goals and operations, in order for the employees to support them inactively and actively. Regarding *Organizational Identification*, we argue that employees with a higher level of support generally identify more strongly with their organization. However,

Organizational Identification does not seem to be the main driver for *Active Support* as it is not significantly different between The Affirmative Ambassadors and The Reserved Believers. The clusters with a high level of support showed higher personal relevance for CSR topics. Thus, in line with previous literature (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch & Gruber, 2011), we find that employees who strongly value CSR are more likely to actively and inactively support a company's CSR agenda. Regarding *Job Satisfaction*, we argue that employees with higher levels of support of CSR tend to be more satisfied with their current jobs.

When investigating the different channels of communication, we find that the most supportive employees perceive that they receive more communication about the CSR agenda. This indicates that the more communication the employees receive about related topics, the more supportive they are. Our findings suggest that age as well as years in the company both influence CSR support and that they are positively correlated. On average, The Affirmative Ambassadors, who have worked in the company for the longest time, is the oldest of all groups and showed the highest level of support. In contrast, The Silent Bystanders, representing the youngest and newest employees is the least supportive group. Further, the clusters showed differences in terms of received sustainability training with The Affirmative Ambassadors being the group which has received the most training, compared with The Silent Bystanders who received the least. It seems as the more training they receive, the more supportive they are. We suggest that CSR training, which actively involves employees, affects their support of IKEA's sustainability agenda and that it is an effective mean of communication about CSR initiatives, which possibly increases awareness about these. Therefore, we conclude that it is of great importance for IKEA to ensure that their employees receive the sustainability training preferably shortly after entering the company. Further, we can conclude that training is a very important factor for raising awareness about CSR agendas as it seems to make a difference in CSR support. Additionally, we can argue that communication, in general, is of great importance, as a high level of awareness is connected to a high level of support. As for gender, we find no differences in distribution between the clusters and can therefore not support previous literature which suggests a connection between gender and CSR support (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). Overall, we agree with previous research which suggests that CSR support is positively connected to the profiling variables. Concluding, we argue that employees who show more support of a company's CSR agenda, also have higher levels of *Awareness*, *Perceived Fit*, *Personal Relevance*, *Job Satisfaction*, are generally older, have been employed longer, and have received more communication about the agenda.

Our conclusions contribute to the ongoing discourse about employees and CSR within business research. First, our study demonstrates that employees can be segmented according to their support of their employer's CSR. Thereby, we extend previous literature by categorising the workforce to obtain a complete overview including the differences and similarities of employees' CSR support. We argue that it is important to include active support and thereby distinguish between passive support and employees' active engagement, which has not been extensively studied by previous research. Furthermore, this study demonstrates the applicability of findings from consumer-focused research on studies focusing on internal stakeholders. Additionally, we combine constructs from different studies and streams of literature thereby providing a more extensive view.

5.2 Managerial Implications

This study has several practical implications for companies. Firstly, this study demonstrates how companies can segment their employees according to the differences and similarities in internal support and how these are connected to other factors, such as *Awareness*, *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification*, *Job Satisfaction* and *Personal Relevance*. Since the more supportive groups are more aware of the CSR agenda, companies should focus on frequently and continuously communicating this agenda and make their employees more aware, indicating the importance of communicating about different CSR aspects for companies. The more the employees are aware of the CSR agenda, the more supportive they can be. Regarding *Perceived Fit*, this study suggests that a CSR agenda which matches a company's culture and business operations is promoting internal CSR support. Therefore, our findings suggest that companies should communicate about the reason why they engage in CSR and why this is a fit for the company. However, this research cannot give any explanations concerning the causal relationships between these factors and CSR support. Hence, a company should aim to build or maintain a high level of *Awareness*, *Perceived Fit*, *Organizational Identification* and *Job Satisfaction*, since these are positively connected to CSR support. As for *Personal Relevance*, if a company has CSR embedded in their values and operations, it should recruit employees with similar mindsets, as this will reinforce internal CSR support. Secondly, this research discovered training to be a distinguishing factor between highly supportive employees and less supportive employees. Therefore, training seems to be an effective form of communicating about CSR agendas, since this makes the employees actively involved in the agenda. These findings indicate that it is essential for companies who strive to increase internal CSR support, to provide employees with related training preferably shortly after employment. Further, this is in line with previous research (e.g. Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008; Elg & Hultman, 2016), which states that active involvement of employees is of importance for CSR work. The overall aim should be to make every employee supportive, which can only be the case if companies genuinely care about CSR. Hence, companies with less developed CSR agendas and possibly more sceptical or unsupportive employees, might prefer bystanders as opposed to actively unsupportive employees.

Further, besides from the general implications, more specific suggestions can be made for the studied company IKEA. The differences found in employees CSR support, can be used to improve internal CSR support. Firstly, the fact that these three distinct groups of employees exist in terms of CSR support, indicates the need for managing them. The Affirmative Ambassadors should be encouraged to maintain their high level of active and passive support by frequently and consistently communicating about the company's CSR activities and values. For The Reserved Believers, who lack active involvement and awareness, it is important to increase communication in the preferred channels, as well as provide training opportunities. The Silent Bystanders, who have the lowest level of both active and passive support, especially lack awareness and organizational identification, which requires IKEA to focus on retaining them, involving them in training and informing them about CSR activities. Secondly, by investigating the different preferred and received channels of communication, IKEA can adapt its internal communication according to these results. They can focus on communication in the most efficient channels, which seem to be IKEA Inside and Yammer, since these are the overall most preferred channels. By comparing preferred and received channels of communication, we find gaps indicating employees' request for more information in certain channels; Email for The Reserved Believers and Newsletters for The Silent

Bystanders. The Affirmative Ambassadors feel that they overall receive more communication than the other two groups do and that the preferred and received channels match, which indicates that the more IKEA communicates about its CSR agenda, the more supportive its employees are. However, in general, IKEA's employees seem to be satisfied with the internal CSR communication, since the channels they prefer equal the channels they receive communication from. Therefore, it is of importance for IKEA to maintain their level of communication, although an increase in communication might even enhance the awareness and support, thereby possibly turning The Silent Bystanders into Affirmative Ambassadors. Moreover, this communication could be targeted towards the non-active supporters, directly encouraging them to actively communicate about IKEA's CSR. Since we did not find any extremely unsupportive employees, IKEA will benefit if every employee becomes more actively involved. Thirdly, our findings can be used by IKEA and similar retailers to categorise and understand employees' support of CSR and thereby individually assisting them in becoming Affirmative Ambassadors. By using our framework, companies can immediately after recruiting new employees, set out targets for them to develop their CSR support.

5.3 Methodological Implications

As researchers, we experienced some challenges during the process of conducting this study in terms of *access*, *control* and *bias*. By investigating a company as external researchers, we did not have access to the data, i.e. the employees of IKEA, ourselves. We were dependent on the company to provide us with the necessary data needed. Thereby, we were not in control of the data collecting process, which possibly affected the outcome. To gain access to and investigate a company's employees can be a difficult task for researchers, as well as a sensitive topic for employers. However, by being persistent and communicating frequently with the company, we managed to gather an adequate sample size, although initially aiming for a larger and randomly collected sample. We believe that our sample is biased in several aspects. Firstly, by not distributing the survey randomly and instead using convenience sampling, which was necessary as explained in the methodology chapter, the respondents are biased to some extent. Secondly, since the overall support of IKEA's sustainability agenda is very high, this might indicate that the respondents who participated in our research are interested in sustainability or have positive attitudes in general. Further, this might be explained by the respondents being employees and participating the survey within their professional role, thereby being more restricted with critique or less supportive answers, as it is related to their employment and employer. One approach to mitigate the biases, would be to reach the employees outside their work environment. By doing so, they might disregard the sensitive employer-employee relationship. Further, by being in control of the contact information and using an external survey tool, researchers can administrate their own sampling and oversee the whole data collection process. Additionally, the results might have been different if the survey was being advertised as completely independent from IKEA and not being administered by the company.

5.4 Limitations and Further Research

When reflecting on the limitations of this study, we find that our data set is very homogeneous in terms of positive attitudes towards the company's CSR agenda. This is demonstrated by the less supportive group being the minority, representing only 16% of the sample. Even though our analysis resulted in three clusters with significant differences, the clusters show very similar patterns and supportive attitudes. This could be a result of our sampling method or the company's strong focus on CSR. Therefore, further research could investigate a different company where CSR or sustainability is less embedded in the business operations and values. Nevertheless, CSR should be of importance for the studied company in order to obtain relevant findings. Such a study might yield different results, which allow for more diverse clusters. Therefore, the generalisability of this study is limited, both in terms of representing IKEA's whole workforce and other similar companies. However, this is a solid preliminary study, encouraging further studies. We cannot draw any conclusions about whether certain groups of employees require different channels of communication since the results are very similar across the whole sample from IKEA. One main limitation of this study is the shortage of focus on communication since our survey mainly focused on the support factor. Therefore, we suggest further research to conduct qualitative studies investigating the employees' perceptions of different channels of CSR communication in order to find which channels employees believe are the most efficient. Additionally, as our sample did not have an equal gender distribution, this research could not provide any conclusions regarding gender as a factor. Therefore, in order to investigate this further, it is of importance to have an equal gender distribution. Based on our findings we conclude that it is important to differentiate active from passive support and we suggest further research to investigate the active support factor and the relationship between these two.

Since this study is based on a cross-sectional research design, which collects data at a specific point in time, we cannot draw any conclusions about causal relationships between the factors. In line with previous literature (Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007; Glavas & Godwin, 2013), we find that CSR is positively connected to employee's identification with the company. However, we do not know whether the employees believe in CSR values because they already identify with the organization or whether they identify with the company because of the organization's CSR values. It is a question of what came first; the chicken or the egg - identification or CSR? Therefore, we suggest for further research to investigate these different factors connected to CSR support by conducting a longitudinal study of a company which has or is going to implement CSR in their strategy. In doing so, given the ability to investigate the development of these variables over time, might result in discovering the causal relationships of these factors. Further, since we conclude that all studied factors are positively connected to CSR support, such a study can also provide a deeper understanding of which factors increase the support more, thereby discovering the ones that companies should focus on in order to achieve their employees' high support of their CSR agenda. Moreover, our findings suggest that there might be additional factors influencing employees' active CSR support. As the example of The Reserved Believers indicates, employees can have a high passive support of a company's CSR values, strongly identify with that company, value CSR and be satisfied with their jobs, but still choose not to actively engage in and communicate about CSR. Future research could study whether this is only a matter of awareness or if there are additional motivators turning Believers into Ambassadors. Furthermore, it could be of interest to investigate how unsupportive employees deal with communicating about their companies CSR agendas, since our study cannot conclude about unsupportive employees.

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Appendix A – Survey (English version)



IKEA and sustainability

At IKEA our vision to create a better everyday life begins with our co-workers. We are continuously striving to be better, and today you have the chance to help us! Please take five minutes to provide us with feedback on our sustainability efforts, so that you can help us better understand our co-workers and make a difference in the IKEA culture. This study is a cooperation between IKEA and Lund's University to improve our sustainability communication. We look forward to finding out what you think.

Thank you!

Please note that all information will be treated confidentially and cannot be traced back to you.

How to fill in the paper survey

Below you can see how you mark an answer option in the check boxes, and how you change a selection.

- The answer option has been marked correctly
- The answer option has been marked incorrectly, the cross must be in the middle of the box
- The answer option has been marked incorrectly, the cross is too strong
- Changed selection, the answer option will not be counted as being marked

1. Age (in years)

2. Gender

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other

3. Level of education

- Not completed Secondary School
- Completed Secondary School
- Undergraduate Degree (e.g. Bachelor's Degree)
- Graduate Degree or higher (e.g. Master's Degree)



4. Which country do you work in?

- Sweden
- UK & IE
- Canada
- United States
- Switzerland
- Austria
- Netherlands
- Belgium
- Australia
- Other

5. Store location (please name the city in which the store is located)

6. In your role, are you directly interacting with customers on a daily basis?

- Yes
- No

7. How many years have you worked with the company? (Please state the number of years, not a range. If less than one year, state "0")

8. How many times have you received sustainability training in any format (facilitated group training, e-learning, introduction training, workshops) within the past 5 years

- Never
- Once or twice
- Three or more times





9. Through which channels have you been informed about IKEA's sustainability activities?

- Instore communication
- IKEA inside
- Yammer
- Manager
- Advertising in Co-worker rooms
- IKEA.com
- Email
- Customer advertising
- Newsletter (digital or via mail)
- Other
- None

10. Which channels do you prefer for this kind of information?

- Instore communication
- IKEA inside
- Yammer
- Manager
- Advertising in Co-worker rooms
- IKEA.com
- Email
- Customer advertising
- Newsletter (digital or via mail)
- Other

11. I have talked about IKEA's sustainability agenda with the following people:

- Managers
- Friends & Family
- Customers
- Co-workers
- Others
- None



12. Please rate the following statements from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewh- at Disagree	Somewh- at Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe I am well informed about IKEA's sustainability agenda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have taken the opportunity to participate in IKEA's local sustainability activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have mentioned sustainability when talking to customers within the past 30 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am interested in our company's sustainability agenda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I find our company's sustainability agenda relevant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I place high value on sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I experience a strong sense of belonging to IKEA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with my present job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





13. I believe that IKEA...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Treats its customers honestly	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Makes an effort to understand customers' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Tries to ensure long-term success by maximizing its profits	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Treats its employees fairly (financially and socially)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Offers training and career opportunities for co-workers	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Offers a pleasant work environment	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Plays a role in society beyond generating economic benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Cares about having a positive impact on society	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Cares about respecting and protecting the natural environment (saving energy and water, reducing waste, sourcing materials [like wood and cotton] sustainably)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Engages in sustainability activities to maximize its profits	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Engages in sustainability activities to support the society and environment	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Has a sustainability agenda which is in line with its corporate culture	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Has sustainability deeply embedded in its business operations	<input type="checkbox"/>					



Appendix B – Survey (Swedish version)



IKEA och hållbarhet (sustainability)

På IKEA börjar vår vision att skapa en bättre vardag tillsammans. Vi strävar efter ständig förbättring och idag har du möjligheten att hjälpa oss! Genom att ta fem minuter av din tid för att ge oss din feedback om vårt hållbarhetsarbete, kan du hjälpa oss att förstå våra medarbetare bättre och göra en skillnad

i IKEA:s kultur. Den här undersökningen är del av ett samarbete med Lund's Universitet vars syfte är att förbättra vår hållbarhets kommunikation. Vi ser fram emot att få höra vad du tycker.

Tack!

Notera att all information är konfidentiell och kan inte spåras tillbaka till dig.

Så här fyller du i pappersenkäten

Nedan ser du hur du markerar ett svarsalternativ, och hur du avmarkerar ett redan gjort val.

- Korrekt markerat svarsalternativ
- Inkorrekt markerat svarsalternativ, krysset ska vara mitt i rutan
- Inkorrekt markerat svarsalternativ, krysset är alltför kraftigt
- Ångrat val, svarsalternativet räknas inte som markerat

1. Ålder (antal år)

2. Kön

- Kvinna
- Man
- Föredrar att inte svara
- Annat

3. Utbildningsnivå

- Lägre än gymnasieutbildning
- Gymnasieutbildning
- Kandidatexamen
- Mastersexamen eller högre



4. I vilket land arbetar du?

- Sverige
- Storbritannien & Irland
- Kanada
- Schweiz
- Österrike
- Australien
- Nederländerna
- Belgien
- USA
- Annat

5. I vilken stad ligger varuhuset där du arbetar?

6. I ditt arbete, är du i direktkontakt med kunder dagligen?

- Ja
- Nej

7. Hur många år har du arbetat på IKEA? (Var god och ange antal år och inte ett intervall. Om du har arbetat mindre än ett år, var god och ange "0")

8. Hur många gånger har du fått någon typ av hållbarhetsutbildning (workshops, e-utbildning, introduktionsutbildning) inom de senaste fem åren?

- Aldrig
- En eller två gånger
- Tre eller fler gånger



9. Genom vilka kanaler har du blivit infomerad om IKEA:s hållbarhetsaktiviteter?

- Varuhusreklam
- IKEA inside
- Yammer
- Chef
- Reklam i personalrum
- IKEA.com
- Email
- Kundreklam
- Nyhetsbrev (digitalt eller via post)
- Annan
- Inget

10. Vilka kanaler föredrar du för den här typen av information?

- Varuhusreklam
- IKEA inside
- Yammer
- Manager
- Reklam i personalrum
- IKEA.com
- Email
- Kundreklam
- Nyhetsbrev (digitalt eller via post)
- Annan

11. Jag har pratat om IKEA:S hållbarhetsagenda med följande människor:

- Chefer
- Vänner och familj
- Kunder
- Kollegor
- Andra
- Ingen



12. Var god och ranka följande påstående från "Tar helt avstånd" till "Instämmer helt"

	Tar helt avstånd	Tar avstånd till stor del	Tar avstånd till viss del	Instämmer till viss del	Instämmer till stor del	Instämmer helt
Jag anser att jag är välinformerad om IKEA:s hållbarhetsagenda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jag har nyttjat möjligheten att delta i någon av IKEA:s lokala hållbarhetsaktiviteter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jag har nämnt hållbarhet när jag har pratat med kunder inom de senaste 30 dagarna	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jag är intresserad av vårt företags hållbarhetsagenda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jag tycker att vårt företags hållbarhetsagenda är relevant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jag värderar hållbarhet högt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jag upplever en stark känsla av samhörighet till IKEA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jag är nöjd med mitt nuvarande jobb	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



13. Jag anser att IKEA...

	Tar helt avstånd	Tar avstånd till stor del	Tar avstånd till viss del	Instämm- er till viss del	Instämm- er till stor del	Instämm- er helt
Behandlar sina kunder ärligt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anstränger sig för att ta reda på kundernas behov	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Försöker försäkra långsiktig framgång genom att maximera sin vinst	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behandlar sina anställda rättvist (finansiellt och socialt)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Erbjuder utbildning och karriärmöjligheter för sina medarbetare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Erbjuder en trevlig arbetsmiljö	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spelar en roll i samhället utöver att skapa ekonomiska fördelar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bryr sig om att ha en positiv påverkan på samhället	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bryr sig om att respectera och skydda natur (spara energi och vatten, minska avfall, anskaffa material [t.ex. trä och bomull] på ett hållbart sätt)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bedriver hållbarhetsaktiviteter för att maximera sin vinst	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bedriver hållbarhetsaktiviteter för att stödja samhället och miljön	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bedriver en hållbarhetsagenda som stämmer väl överens med företagskulturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Har hållbarhet djupt inbäddat i sitt företagande	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix C – Variable Creation

Factor Analysis for Support Statements

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.400	49.089	49.089	5.400	49.089	49.089	4.891	44.461	44.461
2	1.102	10.014	59.103	1.102	10.014	59.103	1.611	14.642	59.103
3	.874	7.944	67.047						
4	.741	6.738	73.785						
5	.668	6.077	79.862						
6	.612	5.567	85.429						
7	.400	3.637	89.066						
8	.367	3.334	92.400						
9	.346	3.149	95.549						
10	.275	2.502	98.051						
11	.214	1.949	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotated Component Matrix^a		
	Component	
	1	2
I believe that IKEA cares about having a positive impact on society	.836	.176
I believe that IKEA plays a role in society beyond generating economic benefits	.802	.162
I believe that IKEA offers a pleasant work environment	.784	.123
I believe that IKEA offers training and career opportunities for co-workers	.764	.107
I believe that IKEA cares about respecting and protecting the natural environment (saving energy and water, reducing waste, sourcing materials [like wood and cotton] sustainably)	.763	.146
I believe that IKEA treats its employees fairly (financially and socially)	.762	.173
I believe that IKEA treats its customers honestly	.752	.220
I believe that IKEA makes an effort to understand customers' needs	.623	.255
I believe that IKEA tries to ensure long-term success by maximizing its profits	.435	.363
I have mentioned sustainability when talking to customers within the past 30 days	.074	.835
I have taken the opportunity to participate in IKEA's local sustainability activities	.201	.731

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
 a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Reliability Statistics

Perceived Fit:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,803	2

Personal Relevance:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,821	3

Appendix D – Cluster Analysis

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Active Support	Between Groups	471,084	2	235,542	876,838	,000
	Within Groups	78,976	294	,269		
	Total	550,061	296			
Passive Support	Between Groups	22,991	2	11,496	25,685	,000
	Within Groups	131,586	294	,448		
	Total	154,577	296			
Personal Relevance	Between Groups	35,407	2	17,704	39,223	,000
	Within Groups	132,701	294	,451		
	Total	168,108	296			
Perceived Fit	Between Groups	28,618	2	14,309	19,367	,000
	Within Groups	217,217	294	,739		
	Total	245,835	296			
Organizational Identification	Between Groups	52,436	2	26,218	30,523	,000
	Within Groups	252,534	294	,859		
	Total	304,970	296			
Job Satisfaction	Between Groups	38,209	2	19,104	14,311	,000
	Within Groups	392,465	294	1,335		
	Total	430,673	296			
Awareness	Between Groups	107,461	2	53,730	53,172	,000
	Within Groups	297,085	294	1,010		
	Total	404,545	296			

Iteration History			
Iterations	Change in Cluster Centers		
	1	2	3
1	1,677	1,889	1,502
2	,148	,186	,408
3	,027	,079	,362
4	,015	,055	,239
5	,061	,120	,189
6	,071	,116	,165
7	,079	,124	,248
8	,000	,091	,260
9	,000	,032	,075
10	,014	,042	,076
11	,000	,026	,062
12	,000	,037	,078
13	,000	,000	,000

a. Convergence achieved due to no or small change in cluster centers. The maximum absolute coordinate change for any center is .000. The current iteration is 13. The minimum distance between initial centers is 5.000.

Cross tabulation of Clusters and Age Groups						
Clusters	Age Groups					
	Below 30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Total
1	32.2%	32.9%	18.5%	13.0%	3.4%	100%
2	43.3%	30.8%	13.5%	11.5%	1%	100%
3	53.2%	29.8%	10.6%	6.4%	0.0%	100%
Total	39.4%	31.6%	15.5%	11.4%	2.0%	100%

Cross tabulation of Clusters and Years in IKEA						
Clusters	Year Groups					
	≤1 year	2-3	4-7	8-13	≥14	Total
1	13.7%	22.6%	19.9%	21.9%	21.9%	100%
2	28.8%	17.3%	19.2%	17.3%	17.3%	100%
3	31.9%	23.4%	12.8%	21.3%	10.6%	100%
Total	21.9%	20.9%	18.5%	20.2%	18.5%	100%

Cross tabulation of Clusters and Sustainability Training				
Clusters	Times of Training			
	Never	Once or Twice	Three or more times	Total
1	11.6%	49.3%	39.0%	100%
2	28.8%	57.7%	13.5%	100%
3	44.7%	44.7%	10.6%	100%
Total	22.9%	51.5%	25.6%	100%

Cross tabulation of Clusters and Gender				
Clusters	Gender			
	Women	Men	Prefer not to say	Total
1	63.0%	34.9%	2.1%	100%
2	64.4%	32.7%	2.9%	100%
3	68.1%	31.9%	0%	100%
Total	64.3%	33.7%	2.0%	100%

Appendix E – Correlations

Correlations (Spearman's rho)							
	Active Support	Passive Support	Awareness	Perceived Fit	Organizational Identity	Personal Relevance	Job Satisfaction
Active Support	1.000	.331**	.575**	.383**	.336**	.458**	.258**
Sig. (2-tailed)	,	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Passive Support	.331**	1.000	.346**	.721**	.573**	.428**	.528**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	,	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Awareness	.575**	.346**	1.000	.395**	.390**	.467**	.259**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	,	.000	.000	.000	.000
Perceived Fit	.383**	.721**	.395**	1.000	.454**	.465**	.333**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	,	.000	.000	.000
Organizational Identity	.336**	.573**	.390**	.454**	1.000	.542**	.615**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	,	.000	.000
Personal Relevance	.458**	.428**	.467**	.465**	.542**	1.000	.325**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	,	.000
Job Satisfaction	.258**	.528**	.259**	.333**	.615**	.325**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	,

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations Age & Years in Company		Age	Years in Company
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.392**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	297	297
Years in Company	Pearson Correlation	.392**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	297	297