

The Experience of Environmental Documentary Films

A qualitative study examining millennials values, mindsets and experiences.

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Culture and Creativity Management

“The truth is: the natural world is changing. And we are totally dependent on that world. It provides our food, water and air. It is the most precious thing we have and we need to defend it.”

Sir David Attenborough

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Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate millennials' experience of environmental documentary films and the experiences relation to the millennials values and mindsets connected to sustainability. The environmental documentary films are considered as cultural products, thus contributing and positioning itself within the field of culture and creative industries and service management. The theoretical framework used in the thesis consists of the experience realms, value-in-use and flow which further allows new knowledge to emerge as the understanding of experience of cultural products is expanded. By using 14 semi-structured interviews, the experience itself, mindsets and values unfold concerning environmental challenges. The findings indicate that for millennials the experience of environmental documentary films is a multicontextual, fluctuating, and nonlinear process dependent on emotions. Furthermore, the experience of viewing an environmental documentary film relates strongly to millennials values and mindsets connected to sustainability due its transformative nature and potential to change attitudes and behaviour.

***Keywords:** sustainability, global challenges, climate change, environment, CCI's, culture and creative industries, documentary films, values, reinforcing values, sustainability mindset, experiences, transformative experiences, the experience economy, cultural products, value-in-use, value creation, flow, the experience realms, millennials, learning, feelings, emotions, Seaspiracy, Cowspiracy, David Attenborough*

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1. Introduction

“Well, the reason you watch any movies it's like entertainment, you can kind of relax and enjoy yourself in this experience, but usually it's just to learn more, I think for me, it's easier to learn from a documentary than from reading a book, because I don't know, maybe it just caters to more of your senses like you're not just reading but you're seeing things and hearing things, and it's somehow a more wholesome experience so at least it like leaves more of an emotional connection to me. When I watch a documentary.” (Katniss)

Above quote illustrates several important aspects related to documentary films, from its entertainment value to embracing the experience and recognizing its ability to teach. Documentary films are argued to go beyond purposes of pure entertainment (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009), and they have the power to educate and inform in authentic and entertaining ways (Billinge, 2017). The elements of entertainment have been discussed in relation to experiences since the initial thoughts of experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 2011).

Documentary films contain symbolic value, and they are identified as cultural products located in the experience economy and in the culture and creative industries (CCI's) (UNCTAD Creative Economy Report, 2010; Kong, 2014). Moreover, documentary films are considered to impact pro-environmental behaviours and those who are more concerned about the environment are as well more prone to watch documentaries, since these films may contribute to further information about the topic of interest (Holbert, Kwak & Shah's 2003). Environmental themes in media and films have further been increasing along with growing awareness of the ecological crisis (Terry, 2020). In the 2000's, environmental documentaries in particular started to gain greater importance in society. For example, the release of the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* in 2007 led to worldwide attention toward environmental protection and encouraged the public and policy makers to address global warming urgently (Lin, 2013). Other documentaries as well, such as *Food Inc.*, *Supersize Me* and *Fahrenheit 9=11*, caused attention to the way documentaries shape the discourse of policy and social issues (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009). Today the environmental documentaries trend still remains. For example, the documentary film *My Octopus Teacher*

recently won an oscar for being the best documentary film, being described by The Guardian (2021a) as an “heartwarming story of human-octopus friendship”. Moreover, the recent Netflix release *Seaspiracy*, a documentary film regarding the impact of commercial fishing, has become popular in multiple countries and brought up discussion of sustainable fishing (The Guardian, 2021b).

Research has applied both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to explore and determine the link between documentary films and environmental attitudes. Documentary films have traditionally been studied within the educational field and reported positive effects on learning. Attitudes, connectedness to nature, environmental sensitivity, and environmental behaviour are common themes researched on environmental documentary films, and Braun, Cottrell and Dierkes (2018) highlights that environmental education is needed to raise awareness and to motivate the action of change. Addressing environmental challenges is a step in the right direction toward a more sustainable society.

Sustainability is a widely discussed topic and in this thesis the concept of sustainability is defined as per The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987), also known as the Brundtland definition, which defined sustainable development as:

“...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (WCED, 1987, p. 35)

Hence, sustainable development refers to the process of movement from an unsustainable society towards a sustainable society (Robèrt, K-H et al., 2019). Governance and new technology alone will not be able to solve the impacts of climate change, thus a cultural shift is needed (Wamsler & Brink, 2018). Hence, researchers have gained increased interest in the role of humans’ inner workings and associated transformation, such as individuals’ emotions, values, beliefs, worldviews, and mindsets (ibid.). These elements however have to date been widely disregarded in research (ibid.). Nevertheless, research on the sustainability mindset is growing. The sustainability mindset has been researched in the contexts of management and leaderships studies

as well as in pedagogical studies, regarding teaching sustainable mindsets (Paxton & Van Stralen, 2015; Griswold, 2017; Hermes & Rimanoczy, 2018; Moon, Walmsley & Apostolopoulos, 2018; Salovaara, Pietikäinen & Cantell, 2021). Sustainability in management education has originally been focused on technical perspectives of skills, however Hermes and Rimanoczy (2018) point out the aspects of “emotions” and “being” as vital features in developing a new mindset.

According to the UNCTAD Creative Economy Outlook (2018) report, CCI’s are able to make valuable contributions achieving the sustainable development goals of the UN, as the industries have the power to influence and motivate present and future generations to protect the planet, natural resources, cultures and people. This means that the millennials, or generation Y, who represents the generation of both today and tomorrow, is an appropriate target group to focus on in regard to their experiences of cultural products and values particularly related to environmental aspects. Generation Y are known to be technologically savvy and influenced by the rise of the internet (Luqman, 2021). It is a group aware and concerned about climate change (ibid.). Compared to older generations, millennials seldom watch TV, but when they do they rather use another device than the TV, like a tablet or a smartphone (Podara, Matsiola, Maniou, and Kalliris, 2019). In Dreier’s (2015) article “It Really Is All About Millennials”, Anna Robertson, vice president and head of video of Yahoo, appreciates that over 80 percent of millennials get TV content through streaming services and over the internet. Indeed, especially young millennials spend more time on Netflix and YouTube rather than traditional TV (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). New viewing habits have changed the social role of television and nowadays viewing is a way for the millennials to both have fun but also to be a part of a community (Podara et al., 2019). A study by Luqman (2021) of millennials' information seeking behaviour regarding climate change showed that seeking information on social media was the main news source, however film was used several times a year to observe climate change. At the same time, mass media's influence over consumer preferences is substantial and movies related to environmental issues have proved to affect attitude shifts in favour of the industries portrayed (Ma, Seenivasan & Yan, 2020)

Nevertheless, simply increased accessibility to information and evidence about sustainability does not appear to be manifested in a relative rise in sustainability measures that take up the global

challenges (Rimanoczy, 2021). Hence, increased research focus on internal features at the fundamentals of our actions and habits, comprising our values, worldviews and paradigms is requested (ibid.).

1.1. Problematization

Documentary films are no longer seen as only passive experiences of entertainment and informal learning (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009), and their representations of reality have been discussed from a variety of perspectives in film history, criticized for their associations with claims of truths and how aspects such as aesthetics, phenomenology, ethics, epistemology and ontologies can be represented through moving pictures and sounds (LaRocca, 2017). Still, LaRocca (2017) further argues:

“... the moving image remains a dominant form for artistic expression and thus a vital factor in cultural life; it also has contributed to, and radically transformed, our conceptions of story, narrative, and the possibilities for meaningful ideational content.”

LaRocca (2017, p. 3)

Hence, the artistic elements of documentary films allow us to further understand documentaries as cultural products which possess a variety of aspects. Creating emotional connection, encouraging reflection and promoting change are main missions for documentary film creators and by hearing stories rather than just learning facts, change in attitudes may occur to a greater extent (MacAndrew & Springbett, 2013). The creative industries have always identified film as a culture commodity (Kong, 2014), and cultural products, such as media and film, are argued to contain symbolic messages (UNCTAD Creative Economy Report, 2010) and symbolic value (Hessler & Zimmermann, 2008). On these grounds, the value of documentary films is not always of pure entertainment, and the comprehension of experiences may be versatile. Thus, due to their complex character, documentaries can broaden the knowledge and shed light to several aspects of how cultural products are experienced.

Arts organizations possess a mediating role as carriers of sustainability messengers in the context of the CCI's (Varbanova, 2013). Similarly, documentary films are a proper means to reach the millennials and to mediate these messengers of sustainability through audio-visual experiences. At the same time, the need to create value in the form of experience is recognized by managers, yet how it should be done demands understanding for people's emotional needs and expectations (Berry, Carbone & Haeckel, 2002). It is crucial for managers to understand the customer's value formation process in order to know how to manage and support it (Grönroos, 2015). Hence, by investigating millennials mindsets, values and experiences, greater understanding can be achieved. Accordingly, value co-creation and experience are fundamental topics in service management (Grönroos, 2015; Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner & Gremler, 2016), and by adding the dimension of sustainability, service studies can develop the concept of value co-creation, signifying the societal, social and environmental value to which consumers could contribute (Benkenstein, Bruhn, Büttgen, Hipp, Matzner, & Nerding, 2017). Sustainable development in the experience economy is predicted to impact profitability, business models and technologies of the future's service industries (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Hence, in order to manage future experiences to support a sustainable society it is vital to understand what customers value and how the value is created.

Originating from the value co-creation research within service management, value-in-use is identified as a vital element in the value creation process (Grönroos, 2011; Medberg & Grönroos, 2020). Instead of examining the whole process of value creation this thesis focuses on the particular moment where documentary films are experienced and by emphasising the customer perspective the millennials' understandings are targeted. Research about the consumers perspective on the experience of value-in-use has been mostly conceptual, hence it is currently restricted and opportunities for managerial and theory development are limited (Medberg & Grönroos, 2020). To get a greater understanding of the concept, Medberg and Grönroos (2020) request research on the consumers point of view in regard to value-in-use and service experience. To further consider the consumer perspective as well as accumulated experiences when looking into value-in-use have been highlighted by Heinonen, Strandvik, and Voima (2013). Furthermore, within the CCI's, including TV and film, research has been overlooked in regard to identifying value co-creation activities (Choi & Burnes, 2013).

Research is encouraged to examine the cultural and social aspects which frame value and value creation, focusing on heterogeneous viewpoints of a similar experience as well as evaluations of experiences (Akaka, Vargo & Schau, 2015). Accordingly, the CCI's is a field characterized by elements of experiences and values, hence it aligns well to further develop the understanding of what millennials value through the examination of cultural products. Creative industries are unique as they produce mainly symbolic goods whose value stems from the ability to create emotional responses, thus in the creative industries value creation arises from expanding symbolic, emotional, and intangible value instead of tangible benefits (Choi & Burnes, 2013). Accordingly, Benkenstein et al. (2017) suggests further research in regard to value creation in the fields of sustainability and service as it is an unexplored, yet promising, field. The value of delivering media for public awareness and action is frequently thought of in documentary productions, however it is seldom studied in detail by scholars or filmmakers (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009).

Departing from the research gaps identified within the field of service management and CCI's regards to the viewer's perspective of experience and perceived values, this thesis aims to understand how millennials experience environmental documentary films as cultural products. Hence, by examining value related to experiences and to get a greater understanding of the customer's value-in-use, the theory of flow by Csikszentmihalyi (2016) is explored. Flow is considered to be an important component of influence in regard to assessment of experiences and consumer behavior (deMatos, Sá & Duarte, 2021). Moreover, the realms of experience by Pine and Gilmore (2011) guide the investigation of how millennials experience the environmental documentary films and emerging values of the experience in the context of experience economy.

1.2. Aim and Research Questions

By applying a consumer perspective in the thesis, we hope to generate an expanded understanding of the viewer's apprehension and experience of viewing an environmental documentary film, which also enables managers in the CCI's to grasp the impact of cultural products in relation to experiences. Further we aim to identify how the experience relates to the millennials mindsets and values towards sustainability addressing societal relevance of global environmental challenges.

We will do this by examining the millennials worldviews of sustainability in relation to the experience of documentary films that touch upon environmental challenges. To fulfil the aim, the following research questions are asked:

RQ 1: How are millennials experiencing environmental documentary films?

RQ 2: How does the experience of environmental documentary films relate to the millennial's values and mindsets connected to sustainability?

1.3. Disposition

Apart from the introduction this thesis is divided into additionally six parts: literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, analysis and findings, discussion and lastly conclusions. The literature review outlines the previous studies, theories and discourse related to the experience economy, experiences, cultural products and environmental documentary films. The literature review is also going deeper into the experience's connection to values, emotions and sustainability as well as giving an overview of the research regarding environmental documentary films and their impacts. Following, the theoretical framework presents the theories of flow, the realms of experiences and value-in-use which were applied in this thesis. The next part of the thesis illustrates the methodological considerations, describing the method, data collection and analysis in detail, including the research approach and strategy, as well as reflections. The following section presents the findings and analysis, starting with the documentaries discussed, context and the insights from the expert interview, continuing to the analysis of the findings in the light of the theoretical framework. The results are reviewed together with previous research and theories in the discussion and lastly, concluding remarks are made including suggestions for future research in the last chapter.

2. Literature Review

This chapter aims to examine the previous literature and studies related to experiences and environmental documentary films, departing from the culture and creative industries (CCI's) located in the field of service management. The literature review highlights important theoretical contributions, notions and discussions. Starting from the experience economy, experiences are examined in relation to values, emotions and sustainability. Furthermore, the literature and research of sustainability mindset is explored. Lastly, documentary films are identified as cultural products and the research and literature regarding learning and sustainability in relation to environmental documentary films is reviewed.

2.1. The Experience Economy

“Whereas commodities are fungible, goods tangible, and services intangible, experiences are memorable” (Pine & Gilmore, 2011, p. 17)

The experience-based leisure economy has been at the forefront in the last decade (Ndalianis & Balanzategui, 2019). However, how to define and characterize the service industry and especially the experience industry is an ongoing discussion (Nilsen & Dale, 2013). Yet, Nilsen and Dale (2013) characterise experiences itself as the main product being strongly related to the CCI's. Nevertheless, the experience economy was initially termed by Pine and Gilmore (1998) who highlights the economic value of experiences, the intangible aspect of products. The experience economy has since been researched and described in various ways, from economic, management, and marketing to sociocultural perspectives (Boswijk, 2013). The term experience economy still lives strongly in the literature of culture and creativity management (e.g Lorentzen & van Heur, 2012) and the experience-based approach in the literature of services management and marketing (see Grönroos, 2015; Medberg & Grönroos, 2020).

2.2. Defining Experiences

A challenge for business professionals in service management lies in how to manage, stage and design experiences (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Experience comes in many different shapes and the very same experience may be interpreted differently by different people (ibid.). Much of the research about experiences in service management is in the field of tourism (e.g., Smit & Melissen 2018, Manniche & Larsen, 2013) in this thesis however experiences will be understood in relation to the CCI field and cultural products, however applying literature and research from related fields.

Pine and Gilmore (1998) initially differentiated experiences from commodities, goods and services distinguishing on their memorable nature of offering and personal attributes pointing to sensations as a demand rather than benefits (from service) or features (from goods). The authors suggest that compared to services being delivered on demand, experiences reveal during a certain period of time (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). This distinction however has endorsed critique, for example Nilsen and Dale (2013) oppose Pine and Gilmore's harsh division of services and experiences arguing that as commercial products, links and similarities exist between the two.

Motivators for experiences originate in identity related factors such as meaning-making, seeking social status, to have more fun and self-realization (Nilsen & Dale, 2013). But what are experiences exactly? Critiques have been put forward to the concept. For example, Nilsen and Dale (2003) discusses where to draw a line of what is an experience and what is not. Palmer (2010) addresses the issue whether to approach experience as a verb or a noun. However, experience as a verb highlights the process of learning (Palmer, 2010). Furthermore, Mossberg (2007) defines experiences in relation to the feelings and thoughts, which are in a constant flow in moments of consciousness. Hence, experience takes place in people's minds (Mossberg, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 2011), which thus demands consumer participation (Nilsen & Dale, 2013). From a management perspective, Berry et al. (2002) suggest that the customer experience is a sum by all the perceived and sensed clues related. Accordingly, Palmer (2010) highlights that customer experience includes a complexity of factors which are circumstantial, and that value creation is delimited by the experience of an individual at a specific location and point in time in the context of a particular

event (Palmer, 2010). Still, applying Pine and Gilmore’s (2011) four realms of experiences allow us to understand and highlight different aspects and dimensions of the experience. The realms by Pine and Gilmore (2011) are entertainment, educational, aesthetic and escapist, illustrated in Figure 1. Further, dimensions of engagement have been described as absorb, immerse, active and passive. The realms of experience will be further elaborated in the theoretical framework. The ideal experience has been described as flow by Csikszentmihalyi (2016). There has been a

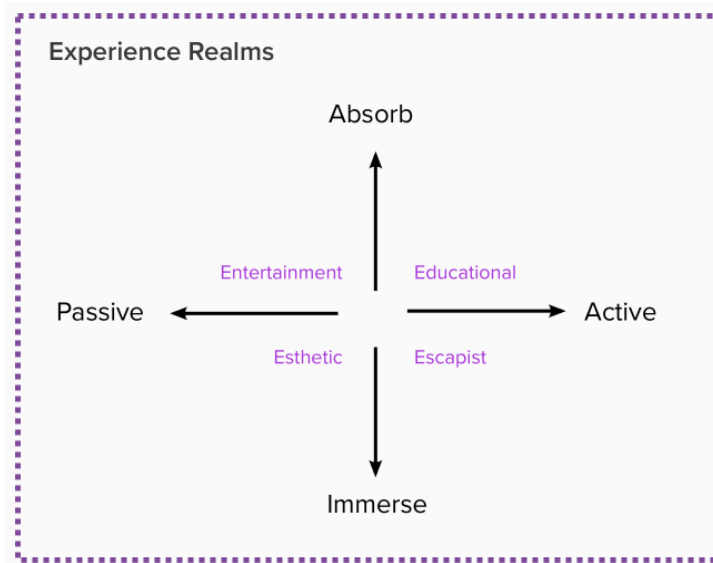


Figure 1. The four realms of experience, based on Pine and Gilmore (2011, p. 46).

growing interest in the concept of flow for the last decade, particular within the fields of happiness, leisure, human behavior, sport and exercise (deMatos et al., 2021). Flow, initially developed by Csikszentmihalyi (2016), represents an experience where the individual is challenged with just the right level of engagement. Flow is further considered to impact a person’s “interest, knowledge attainment, and understanding” in educational environments (Aykol, Aksatan & İpek, 2017, p. 5). Accordingly, flow refers to a state of mind where the consumer is focused on an awarding activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 2016).

deMatos et al. (2021) particularly emphasizes the tourism field and points out that little is known about the role of flow in regard to experiences. Flow has been studied before in relation to individual experiences in domains of social sciences and psychology (ibid.). However, flow

research within arts consumption has been limited (Aykol et al., 2017). Flow is said to be the mediator of constant interaction between an individual and the environment, particular in contexts such as learning (ibid.), providing emotional awakenings and contributing to positive experiences despite the context (deMatos et al., 2021; Aykol et al., 2017). Thus, flow often includes dimensions of learning, hence the skill level of the individual in relation to the activity will determine if the experience generates feelings of anxiety, worry, arousal, boredom, control or relaxation (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Originating from the psychological field, the state of flow relates closely to other definitions of experiences, such as Mossberg's (2007) definition of experiences in relation to thoughts and feelings in constant flow as described before. Pine and Gilmore (2011) relates to the concept of flow with the concept of transformative experience. Instead of staging an experience, as staging does not always include the dimension of learning, the experience is guiding transformation and referring to creating change in the individual (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Still, there is an absence of no common ground for identifying core elements and dimensions of flow (deMatos et al., 2021).

2.2.1. Experiences Value Creation

The general research in the field on services about value creation is typically studying the process of value creation and co-creation as a whole (Grönroos, 2011; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). However, the research is lacking empirical data from the consumer perspective (Medberg & Grönroos, 2020). This is further highlighted by the lack of research of value creation in the field of CCI's (Choi & Burnes, 2013). Moreover, the notion of value-in-use or use-value stems from the service dominant logic literature and is further developed to service logic by Grönroos (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; 2016; Grönroos, 2011; Medberg & Grönroos, 2020). Back in 1859, Karl Marx already termed use-value and exchange-value, recognising how value-in-use is realised in the consumption process (Medberg & Grönroos, 2020).

The concept of value-in-use particularly relates to experiences due to the paradigm shift which highlights the consumer perceived value of an experience, termed additionally as value-in-experience by Heinonen et al. (2013). In the service marketing research value co-creation has been

an important topic, especially in regard to the discourse of the service dominant logic by Vargo and Lusch (2004; 2016). Currently, the discourse has turned more to the process of value co-creation and recently to value-in-use. Hence, the research of value-in-use studies consumer experiences, which makes it possible to connect value-in-use with the existing research regarding the values of experiences to the fields of CCI's and tourism.

2.2.2. Facilitators of Experiences: Values and Emotions

One important aspect of experience is their ability to communicate attitudes, emotions and values (Nilsen & Dale, 2013). Pine and Gilmore (2011) address that experience originates from the customer prior state of being and minds in interaction with an event. Accordingly, the experience is modified by differences of individuals as well as differences in emotional states (Palmer, 2010). Thus, being unique, emotional, personal (Boswijk, 2013; Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007) and physical, are aspects that influence the assessment of a person's experience (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Hence, experiences are connected to identity construction and values, and may have a great impact on turning points in our lives (Boswijk, 2013). In marketing, consumers want the experience and the stories that come with a product, which is also the motif behind why consumers want to buy a product (Mossberg, 2007). Accordingly, Pine and Gilmore (2011) highlights that people desire experiences due to the value that lies within them, a value which consists in the memory long after the experience has occurred.

Experiences hold an intrinsic value for viewers (Manniche & Larsen, 2013), and according to Lorentzen (2009) experiences create emotions which in turn may contribute to identity formation. Furthermore, according to Palmer (2010) emotions are facilitating tools in the middle of an experience and an event, as emotions act as a source of information. In turn, emotions are employed to assess a stimulus, resulting in the formation of an attitude (ibid.).

2.3. Experiences and Sustainability

Critique of sustainability research in the service field has been addressed in regard to the focus on the present rather than the future which complicates the research as the very core of sustainability is connected to the future (Benkenstein et al., 2017). Current trends address that sustainable development, and the rise of the experience economy will have a considerable effect on technologies and business models that manage to be profitable in our future society (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Smit and Melissen (2018) research sustainability and experiences in the field of tourism, hospitality and events by examining sustainable customer experiences. In line with Pine and Gilmore's (2011) transformative experiences in relation to flow by Csikszentmihalyi (2016), Smit and Melissen (2018) describe multiple ambition levels of creating sustainable experiences and the highest of them is transformational experiences which have the ability to change the consumers and stakeholders connected to the delivered experiences (ibid.).

Sustainable development and experiences reinforce one another and are vital topics for nearly all professionals and businesses (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Smit and Melissen (2018) further argues that in order to pursue sustainable development, the experiences should be co-created with all stakeholders, particularly with consumers since consumers value symbolic meaning in their consumption. Consumer's identity-work is essential since co-creating experiences requires the consideration of consumers' wishes, needs and values, hence what the experience stands for and how it has been branded and communicated is of great importance (ibid.). At the same time, in the research of sustainable behavior, Gierszewska and Seretny (2019) points to the need for sustainable management and change in regard to business and consumer behaviour and attitudes. By focusing on responsible business management, new social trends and consumption, Gierszewska and Seretny (2019) investigate whether the millennial generation are ready to change their behaviours in regard to a more sustainable approach in consumption practices.

2.3.1. A Sustainable Mindset: Values and Worldviews

Similarly to experiences and their connections to sustainability, a sustainability mindset brings the focus to the inner workings of individuals. A sustainability mindset is defined as a way of being and thinking which stems from social sensitivity, a wide-ranging understanding of the manifestations of the ecosystems, and reflective attention on one's higher self and values (Kassel & Rimanoczy, 2018). Kassel and Rimanoczy (2018, p. 461) describe how the sustainability mindset "finds its expression in actions for the greater good of the whole."

The sustainability mindset is developed by Kassel and Rimanoczy (2018). It is shaped by personal purpose and values and integrates a systematic approach to comprehend interconnectedness of a prosperous society and strong ecosystems (ibid.). Kassel and Rimanoczy (2018) part the sustainability mindset to three dimensions; knowledge, values and competencies which represent thinking, being and doing. The sustainability mindset further demonstrates the intricacy of the challenges when viewing the ecosystem, social and individual perspective, additionally, the psychological, cognitive, spiritual, and emotional spheres (ibid.).

Most recently, Rimanoczy (2021) points to increased research concerning the necessity to focus on internal features at the fundamentals of our actions and habits, comprising our values, worldviews and paradigms. Accordingly, Wamsler and Brink (2018) state that these elements have been widely disregarded in research. However, research on mindsets connected to sustainability is growing. The sustainability mindset has been examined in the contexts of management and leaderships studies as well as in pedagogical studies, regarding teaching sustainable mindsets (Paxton & Van Stralen, 2015; Griswold, 2017; Hermes & Rimanoczy, 2018; Moon et al., 2018; Salovaara et al., 2021; Rimanoczy, 2021). By further exploring the sustainability mindset in regard to values and worldviews, millennials are an appropriate group of study. Luqman (2021) studied millennials' information seeking behaviour regarding climate change and concluded that millennials are not only aware and concerned about climate change, they also find it important to discuss.

Hence, examining the millennials sustainability mindset in regard to the experience economy, would add a new dimension which highlights individuals related values and mindsets contributing to the experience. After all, the current understanding of the experience economy is combined with the idea of co-creation, as experiences are personalised and co-created with the consumers (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Boswijk, 2013). Thus, to explore this idea further it is appropriate to explore millennials' connections to sustainability in regard to their experience of cultural products which highlights related topics.

2.4. Cultural Products: Documentary Films

The notion cultural industry was initially used by Adorno and Horkheimer (2002) in 1944 in the chapter "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" as the authors criticised the quality of culture, of what according to them have had a manipulative progress of power over society in brainwashing purposes. Influenced by the Frankfurt School, Adorno and Horkheimer (2002) thus criticised the view how the culture industries controlled consumers through entertainment. Discussing perspectives of Horkheimer and Adorno, Kong (2014, p. 594) concludes that "Thus, the culture industry, rather than freeing oppression, serves to reinforce current ideologies, and may even stifle genuine creativity from flourishing."

Today, the meaning of cultural economies and cultural industries are liberated from Frankfurt traditions and have no longer a critical underline and refers foremost to culture being produced as cultural products (Hessler & Zimmermann, 2008). Film has always been described as a cultural commodity (Kong, 2014) or as a cultural product (UNCTAD Creative Economy Report, 2010). Thus, film is a great example to study in order to explore the influence of cultural products. According to The Creative Economy Report (2010) film and other broadcasting is described as media that produce creative content and have the purpose to correspond with large audiences. Cultural products are argued to contain symbolic messages (UNCTAD Creative Economy Report, 2010) and symbolic value (Hessler & Zimmermann, 2008). In accordance, Bourdieu (1985, p. 13) argues that "Besides being a commodity that has a commercial value, any cultural object is also a symbolic good, having a specifically cultural value."

Entertainment was the first offering coined as experience (Pine & Gilmore, 2011), hence cultural products such as film can be traced back to the original thoughts of experiences. Even more, particularly documentary films are argued to go beyond the purpose of pure entertainment since documentary films are increasingly considered as moulding opinions and sparking debate, no longer regarded as a passive experience of entertainment nor informal learning (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009). After all, storytelling of documentaries is possibly the most powerful transformational art form available now (Billinge, 2017). Documentaries power rests in the unique ability to educate and inform audiences in an entertaining as well as authentic way (ibid.). Moreover, documentaries have a unique approach to storytelling and stories since they encompass the complete range of human experience and achievement from natural world, science to history and the arts (ibid.).

Still, in the media field cinematic experiences have been developed in alternative approaches of 3D and even 4D cinema in the last decade, stimulating a full range of senses beyond vision and hearing, such as smell and touch (Ndalianis & Balanzategui, 2019). On these grounds one could question the need of a traditional documentary film as today technology is pushing the cinematic experience to the extreme. Yet, research in many fields has studied the effects of viewing documentary films as they are informative and have the potential to affect people's behaviour and attitudes (see UNCTAD Creative Economy Outlook, 2018; Schwarze, Peeples, Schneider & Bsumek, 2014, Jones, Thomas-Walters, Rust & Veríssimo, 2019). Current research shows that film has a distinctive potential to encourage collective and individual action via a mixture of celebrity messengers, narrative storytelling and imagery in emotional and cognitive appeals (Bieniek-Tobasco, McCormick, Rimal, Harrington, Shafer & Shaikh, 2019).

Documentary films are cultural products, proposing cultural, symbolic and commercial value, but also experiences covering all realms of experiences which touch upon feelings of the viewer holding intrinsic value for each individual (Hessler & Zimmermann, 2008; Pine & Gilmore, 2011; Manniche & Larsen, 2013). Documentary films cover many topics but in order to give focus to the research and grasp the current social trends regarding sustainability values and challenges, as well

as acknowledging the rise of environmental themes in films (Terry, 2020), environmental documentaries were chosen to be the area of research in this thesis. Multiple studies have already been conducted to investigate different effects of environmental documentaries, particularly regarding sustainability. Hence, the next chapter will review relevant literature in regard to the topic, from different scholar perspectives.

2.4.1. Environmental Documentary Films

Documentaries have a symbolic meaning and when communicating environmental issues, Janpol and Dilts (2016, p. 90-91) states that “Documentary films about environmental issues is another potential vehicle for bringing environmental issues to people’s attention, and perhaps also to motivate viewers to action.”.

Nisbet and Aufderheide (2009) have divided documentaries into advocacy films and films created to raise awareness. Accordingly, Bieniek-Tobasco et al. (2019) state that climate change documentaries have become increasingly popular in regard to reaching audiences to stimulate action and raise concerns. Media's dramatic coverage of the environment has a positive impact developing a desire within individuals to be energy efficient in daily practices, buy environmentally friendly products and recycle, and viewing nature documentaries further raise discussion in regard to our responsibilities as guardians of the environment (Holbert et al., 2003). Hence, documentary films are a means to highlight climate challenges, to raise awareness and urge action. Pro-environmental behaviour is considered to be affected by documentary movies (Holbert et al., 2003), however it is important to acknowledge that the kind of audience documentaries normally reach most likely already have knowledge in the area as the sustainability subject is a matter of interests, or as Holbert et al. (2003, p. 181-182) states “Those who show a concern for the environment will most likely consume programs that share their outlook and provide some information relevant to their concerns.”

Still, different approaches, strategies and forms are used in films created for public engagement and information (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009), and Hofman and Hughes (2018) go further than the sphere of entertainment and describe documentaries as infotainment. Hence, documentary

films aim to make social change, impact public action by providing information. Above this are elements or learning highly present in regard to documentaries, which will be explored further in the next section.

2.4.2. Learning through Documentary films

Documentary film research has reported positive effects of documentaries and educational films on learning since the 1980's (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Arendt & Matthes, 2016). Already back in 1985 a study by Fortner revealed that viewing a film showed an additionally significant change in attitude, when comparing classroom education and documentaries (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Thus, documentary film research originates from the educational field and still today the effects of documentaries are often researched in the context of education and learning (see e.g. Ayvaci & Özbek, 2019). Accordingly, within a supply chain management framework, Shambu (2019) elaborates on how sustainability documentary movies were used to teach supply chain students whereas the results indicated that the films were appreciated as effective learning tools enabling reflection and visualization (Shambu, 2019). Additionally, radio is a related research field in media where similar studies have been carried out in terms of education and change in consumer behavior (see Veríssimo, Schmid, Kimario & Eves, 2018).

2.4.3. Environmental Documentary Films in Research

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches have been applied in order to explore and determine the link between documentaries and environmental behaviors. The topics researched in the context of nature documentaries often refer to conservation (Hofman & Hughes, 2018; Moon et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2019), connectedness to nature (Arendt & Matthes, 2016), environmental sensitivity (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Barbas, Paraskevopoulos, & Stamou, 2009), attitudes (Beattie, Sale & McGuire, 2011; Howell, 2011; Braun et al., 2018), and environmental behaviour (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Holbert et al., 2003; Steg & Vlek 2009; Howell, 2011; Zelenski, Dopko & Capaldi, 2015; Braun et al., 2018). For example, in Holbert et al. (2003) study of media consumption and effects, the mediating role of television and its direct effect is researched in relation to environmental behaviours and attitudes. Whereas Braun et al. (2018) suggests that

positive environmental attitudes and behaviour are supported by environmental knowledge. Thus, in order to promote environmental knowledge, education in the area is “considered as a significant influential factor” (Braun et al., 2018, p. 900).

The documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth* has been a popular subject of study overall. For example, through an experimental approach using questionnaires before and after being exposed to selected clips from *An Inconvenient Truth*, Beatti et al. (2011) examined film’s impact on mood and change in attitudes toward climate change and concludes that watching clips from “An Inconvenient Truth” made the participants feel more motivated and empowered to take climate change action. Furthermore, Hofman and Hughes (2018) measured several environmental-related behaviours through questionnaires and follow-up strategies through a longitudinal study. However, Hofman and Hughes (2018) points to the subjectiveness in systematic research when it comes to the relation between wildlife films and attitudinal changes as empirical evidence is minimal and other media needs to be taken into consideration, such as the influence of social media.

Behavioural scientists understand that the connections between provided information, through a documentary and behavioural changes are uncertain and complex. Nonetheless, nature documentaries may generate change in different ways, as there is evidence that documentaries increase environmental sensitivity (Barbas et al., 2009; Jones et al., 2019). Further, multiple studies have tried to investigate the effects of documentaries by using self-reported behavior change or intentions to change behavior and with targeted conservation messages for the viewers (Howell, 2011; Lin, 2013; Hofman & Hughes, 2018). The studies predominantly reveal positive effects, however the validity and reliability is questionable and monitoring actual behaviour change would make the evidence base stronger (Jones et al., 2019). Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) conclude that nature documentaries had a positive effect on students’ environmental sensitivity and efficiency in the change in beliefs and attitudes. They further conclude that the process of change in environmental sensitivity is longitudinal and complex and cannot be achieved by viewing one documentary only (ibid.). The positive impact and relation between documentaries, beliefs and attitudes is further strengthened by Holbert et al. (2003), who discovered correlational proof that

viewing nature documentaries is linked to environmentally friendly attitudes and environmental concerns. In the context of consumption trends Ma et al. (2020) concludes that within six months the effect of initial increase in behavioural change and action declined. Similar results are presented by Hofman and Hughes (2018) who conclude that the long-lasting behavioural effects in time declined slightly or stayed the same after watching a marine conservation documentary, and that viewing documentaries does not have long term impact on its own, although using supporting strategies with documentaries has the capability to influence and engage in action.

In conclusion, documentary film as a cultural product reinforcing existing ideologies (Kong, 2014), is consistent with the research made regarding documentary films effects and connection to behaviour. However, documentary film as an experience, particularly as a transformative experience, further relates to the findings that changes can happen if viewing is connected with supporting strategies (Hofman & Hughes, 2018).

3. Theoretical framework

Alvesson and Deetz (2021) state that theory should be approached as a lens in which the world can be seen, pointing to that “... theory is a way of seeing and thinking about the world rather than an abstract representation of it” (Alvesson & Deetz, 2021, p. 35). Accordingly, the following chapter allows us to observe and understand the experience of environmental documentary films through the lens of value-in-use, flow, and the experience realms.

3.1. The Flow-Experience of Environmental Documentary Films

When a consumer is in a focused state in which the sense of time and consciousness of the self is lost due to the immersed experience, the consumer is in a flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2016). If flow is accomplished the experience is optimal, if not, a different kind of experience will be the result (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Understanding experiences from the concept of flow is acknowledged by multiple researchers in the experience economy (Boswijk, Peelen & Thijssen, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 2011; Smit & Melissen, 2018; deMatos et al., 2021). Flow represents an experience where the individual is challenged with just the right level of engagement (Csikszentmihalyi, 2016). Smit and Melissen (2018, p. 18) explain it as “flow refers to situations that require such intense concentration on a particular (set of) task(s) that one loses track of time and place”. Personality and different personality traits are considered to impact the flow (deMatos et al., 2021). Smit and Melissen (2018) further explains flow as transformative experiences, especially emphasizing elements of learning and that they are “absorbing by nature rather than immersive” (Smith & Melissen, 2018, p. 18). Consequently, the skill level of the individual in relation to the activity will determine if the experience generates feelings of anxiety, worry, arousal, boredom, control or relaxation (Smit & Melissen, 2018). Even though flow normally occurs in work contexts, having an interest in the topic and the desire to learn more could be enough to experience the state (ibid.).

Sherry (2004) claims that enjoyment of media, such as film, is an outcome of a flow experience achieved once the message of the content is balanced with the individual's capability to understand the message. Moreover, individual differences and media experience are seen to either prevent or

to enable state of flow (ibid.). Hence, the key to enjoyment of media lies in the balance of challenges of the message given and in individual differences of cognitive capabilities (ibid.). From this perspective we argue that documentary films can be such products enabling states of flow. Applying the flow framework enables understanding of whether a documentary viewer is absorbed by the flow of an ultimate experience, is in a state of anxiety or just feeling bored as seen in figure 2. As such the experience can be understood from different directions and depending on the experience's outcome the documentary film might be memorable and life-changing impacting core values, or just another mainstream movie being consumed as one of many others.

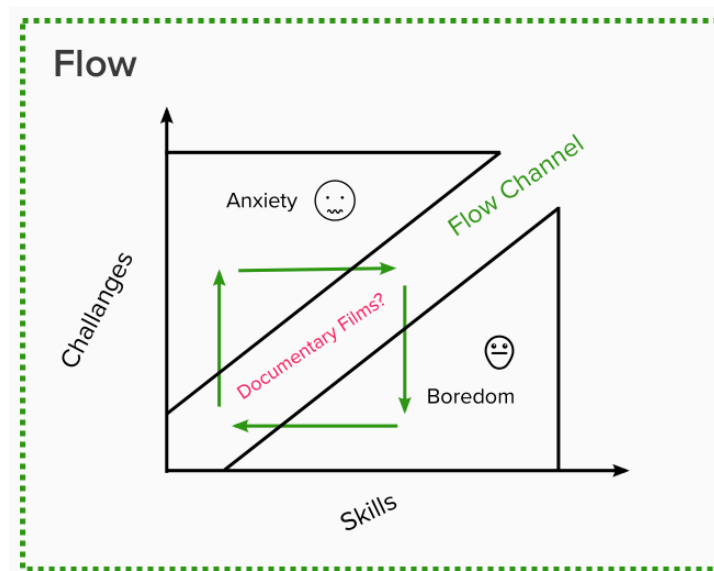


Figure 2. Our application of “Documentary Films” to the concept of “Flow”, the “Flow” figure is based on Csikszentmihalyi (2016, p. 103).

3.2. Flow in the Realms of Experiences

Evident from the literature review, experiences are defined and described in multiple ways in different research fields. By emphasizing flow in the understanding of experiences, Pine and

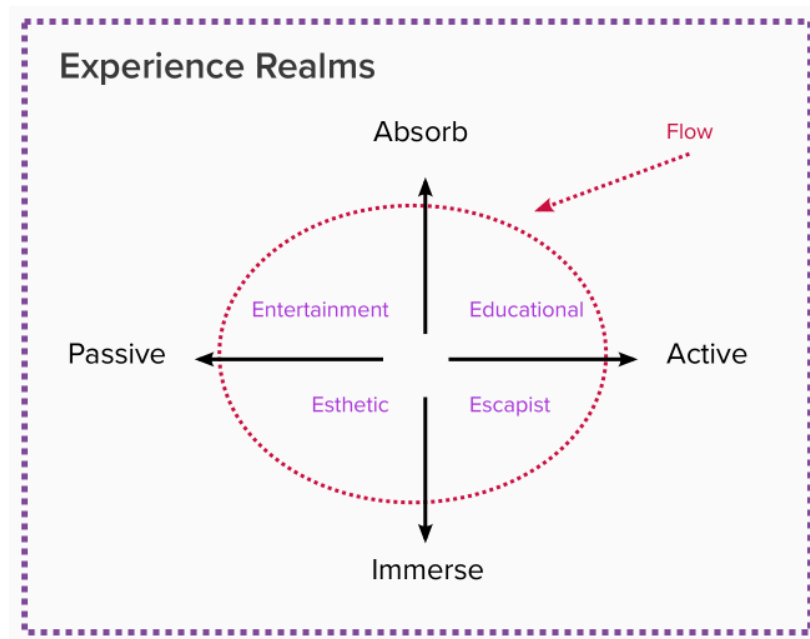


Figure 3. Our application of “Flow” to the concept of “The Experience Realms”, “The Experience Realms” figure is based on Pine & Gilmore (2011, p. 46).

Gilmore (2011) recognize the presence of flow in all four realms of experience (entertainment, educational, esthetic and escapist), notably the escapist realm.

Pine and Gilmore (2011) uses TV-watching as an example of an absorbing experience, characterised by “bringing the experience into the mind from a distance” (Pine & Gilmore, 2011, p. 46), as in contrast to an immersive experience where the consumer is a part of the experience physically or virtually. Lorentzen (2009) highlights that experiences can be consumed in a variety of ways, for example enjoying a movie demands passive participation. Moreover, the esthetic demand passive participation and the immerse element leaves the environment untouched (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Pine and Gilmore (2011, p. 53) exemplify an esthetic experience as for example “beholding a work of art at a gallery or museum”. Furthermore, the education-realm involves active participation, engaging the mind (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). From these perspectives, watching documentary films notably touch upon the entertainment-element, however depending on how it is experienced, different realms can be used to explain the individuals’ experience and flow may occur in all realms. Accordingly, through these lenses watching a documentary may be much more than pure entertainment since various aspects indicate multiple streams of value creation.

3.3. Value-in-use: Perceived Value from Experiences

To further understand dimensions beyond entertainment provided by the documentary films, value-in-use can expand the understanding of the perceived value experienced by the millennials. As cultural products, environmental documentaries are often lacking direct interaction with the service producer, it is differentiated from the conventional service encounter. Hence much of the value creation is located in the individual sphere of value creation and this aspect gives more insights to the experience of cultural products.

As per Vargo and Akaka (2009) value is not created if the customer does not incorporate the offering into their life. Helkkula, Kelleher, and Pihlström (2012) examine what value is in the experience, which the authors conclude to be a continuous, interactive circular process of the individual instead of a linear cognitive process, limited to an isolated interaction. In contrast, Heinonen, Strandvik, and Voima (2013) takes value-in-use to another level, stating that value is formed and embedded in the multi-contextual and dynamic life and reality of the consumer, not as a constant active process of creation which highlights the mental and invisible life of the consumer, not only the visible interactions with the company. Hence, research should consider additionally the accumulated experiences based on consumers ecosystems and life (Heinonen et al., 2013). Hence, when looking at the experience of environmental documentaries we expand our understanding to the millennials constantly changing multi-contextual life.

In order to understand the value-in-use creation from the viewers perspective we must also consider the value propositions. Corvellec and Hultman (2014) has broadened the views on value propositions beyond the service dominant logic, implementing the concepts of regimes of value and politics of value to be able to see the value propositions as pluralistic which cannot be framed in static ways. Instead, value propositions should be understood as political and continuous multivocal construction as many values are offered all the time and simultaneously, over various spatial and temporal scales, for various stakeholders (ibid.). In this thesis we will examine the experience as a phenomenon and consider the multiple value propositions offered by the cultural commodity, the environmental documentary film.

3.4. Connecting the Theories

By understanding experiences through the concept of flow and the realms of experiences, it comes clear that certain objectives, preferences, emotions and feelings determine the evaluation of the experience and whether a state of flow will be achieved. These can further be identified with the concept of value-in-use. Value-in-use describes the process of when value is actually created (Wilson et al., 2016). For example, when buying or renting a documentary film the value-in-use would lie in the very time when the consumer watches the movie, and the product's purpose is fulfilled. By acknowledging the customer perspective hence understanding consumers as a collective and social unit reducing importance from predictable and linear behaviour, new focus can be in how consumers live their lives rather than how consumers consume services and products (Heinonen et al., 2013). Hence the focus on the documentary viewer is essential in order to understand value formation. In accordance with Grönroos (2011) all interactions influence experience, and the experience influences and defines the emergence of value from the interaction. Moreover, Heinonen et al. (2013) term value-in-use also as value-in-experience to highlight the customer perceived experience. Thus, the flow and realms of experience are located within the value-in-use, within the experience of viewing an environmental documentary film.

The value derived from the product, rather than the product itself, is what service is all about (Wilson et al., 2016). Accordingly, documentary film in itself does not bring value to the viewer, rather what the consumer gains from watching the film is in the essence, such as providing information, touching upon emotions and allowing the viewer to experience a state of flow. Hence, value is not delivered by a product per se, rather value is co-created in a process which includes both the participation of both the customer and the producer (Wilson et al., 2016). Wilson et al. (2016) further clarifies that if no direct contact exists between the producer and the consumer, there is independent value co-creation with the product. It is also important to remember that value creation occurs in the context in which the product is consumed and hence where and how the value is obtained is dependent on situational factors (Wilson et al. 2016), thus factors to consider in the value-making-process for documentary films would concern is if the documentary film is consumed with someone else, where it is consumed and why the film is being watched at all.

Value can be thought to be experimentally determined as well as perceived, and value creation is reliant on its context (Grönroos, 2011). Value-in-use particularly illustrates the customer perspective and the individual value creation process of the customer (Grönroos, 2011). In this thesis the value in the experience emerges through interactions between the viewer and the documentary film in accordance with Grönroos's service logic (2011). The concept of value-in-use relates well to services directed at people's minds, which are experienced through the internet or broadcasting technology, as they are delivered without the interaction with the service provider (Wilson et al., 2016), like millennials' mindsets in regard to sustainability in relation to viewing documentary films.

4. Methodology

This study requires a qualitative approach in order to answer the research questions and to get a greater understanding of the phenomenon under study. As will be explained into more detail in this chapter, an appropriate research approach was used, and the research process and its elements will be further elaborated. Accordingly, the choice of conducting semi-structured interviews allowed us to explore the aim and the methodological decisions and reflections will be explained and discussed in more detail below. Contrary to quantitative research, qualitative research rather addresses trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability as important criteria's (Flick, 2018). Hence, we have tried to address these criteria in our constant pursuit for transparency which is demonstrated in the following chapter.

4.1. Research Approach and Strategy

Qualitative research strategies emphasize words and meaning rather than numbers (Bryman, 2016), and how individuals interpret their social world have been essential in this study in order to comprehend the experiences of the millennial's documentary film watching. The in depth-understanding this thesis wanted to generate required a qualitative research design and approach. Hence, methodological decisions have been considered in regard to the issue of study and the character of the research aim. Elements of cross-sectional design (see Bryman, 2016) has been applied in this thesis since the material has been produced within a specific timeframe and multiple semi-structured interviews have been conducted. A cross-sectional design allows examination of relationships in the data, and the conversational interview style can make a study more ecologically valid (Bryman, 2016). Hence, each interview would generate different unique discussions as the interviewees values and experiences would differ and what would be discussed would depend on what specific documentary films the interviewees would refer to.

Rather than generating new theories this thesis aims to explore and develop existing experience-theories. However, theory orientation in a qualitative approach is often inductive where theory emerges from the research (Bryman, 2016). Still, we have been open to reinterpretation and application of new concepts along the whole research process in order to develop a greater

understanding for the people of study and in regard to the topic. This aligns with an abductive approach, which enables exploration of the existing understanding of a phenomenon (Flick, 2018). For example, as we identified similar themes in the first phase of the interviews, the theory of flow to approach experience was considered in a later stage in the thesis. Hence, even though the research initially was leaning towards an inductive approach, to describe the thesis approach better aligns with an abductive approach. Furthermore, according to Bryman (2016) the theoretical understanding in an abductive approach is based on worldviews, meanings and perspectives of the people under study. This further complies with the purpose of this study; to understand the experience of environmental documentary films in the millennial's own terms.

4.2. Research Philosophy: Interpretivism and Constructionism

Departing from the qualitative and interpretive approach, the epistemological and ontological orientations in this thesis consequently originates respectively in interpretivism and constructionism. According to Bryman (2016, p. 30), interpretivism is needed “to grasp the subjective meaning of social action”. More precisely, taking an interpretive stance of philosophy allows us to understand the subject based on their meaning and self-understandings (Fay, 1996). Hence, interpretivism enables us to understand the subjective meanings of the millennials. As stated in the literature review, experiences are highly connected to identity formation (Lorentzen, 2009, Boswijk, 2013) and values (Helkkula et al., 2012, Boswijk, 2013, Manniche & Larsen, 2013). Hence, experiences are unique and subjective in nature and are assumed to be created in interaction between consumer and the product, which in this case is the documentary film viewer and the documentary film. Accordingly, constant interpretation has been required to uncover this interaction. Independent follow-up questions in the interviews have been asked to make sense of the material and to evaluate values and experiences as described by the interviewees. Moreover, Fay (1996, p. 113) explains it as “put colloquially, interpretivists think that to comprehend others is to understand the meaning of what they do, and that to understand this meaning is to understand them simply in their own terms”. Following the argument, an interpretative orientation made it possible to reveal meanings and understandings of the documentary film viewers, but most importantly to understand the documentary film viewers from their point of view.

Moreover, constructionism is an ontological position portraying social phenomena and their meanings as being socially constructed by the social actors in, and through, interaction (Bryman, 2016). Accordingly, we have assumed that the social actors (that is the millennials/the documentary film viewers) experiences and values are not pre-determined but rather being an outcome of interaction, determined by different factors and being in constant re-evaluation. As such the experience and values vary between the millennials as a result of living in different social worlds, being exposed to ongoing change. Hence, we got a glimpse of how the millennials portray their reality at this moment and multiple interviews enable different versions, yet of similar realities.

4.2.1. Research Method: Semi-Structured Interviews

Flick (2018, p. 211) concludes that “methods should be selected and evaluated according to their appropriateness to the subject under study”. Accordingly, based on the research approach and for the method to align with the research philosophy, semi-structured interviews were considered as an appropriate method to explore the aim and ultimately contribute to answering the research questions. Conducting semi-structured interviews went in line with the qualitative nature needed in order to study the social worlds of the documentary film viewers and their experience of the phenomenon. As these kinds of interviews consist of open-ended questions structured by a flexible interview guide, the interviewees perspectives are encouraged and their viewpoints are therefore more likely to be expressed (Flick, 2018). Accordingly, a semi-structured interview further empowers the interviewer to “seek both clarification and elaboration on the answers given” (May 2011, p. 134), allowing a dialogue to occur between the interviewee and the interviewer. Due to Covid-19, physical contact was avoided, and all interviews were conducted online. Additionally, one expert interview was conducted online following a semi-structure as well.

Even though giving limited insights, a strength of semi-structured interviews lies in their potential to enable comparison from the interviewees as questions are asked within a pre-decided frame (May, 2011). Furthermore, semi structured interviews “are used to reconstruct the interviewee’s

subjective theory about the issue under study” (Flick, 2018, p. 226). Thus, a semi structured interview’s main focus is to uncover the participants' meanings and values to understand and interpret the phenomena through stories told (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Accordingly, we have encouraged the interviewees to elaborate on interview questions, stressing the importance of their interpretations and understandings, and assured that there is no right or wrong answers as well as one question may be answered completely differently by different interviewees. This approach allowed us to discover and explore unforeseen themes and important contributions of the interviewees' understanding of a specific issue. Alvesson and Deetz (2021) stress how any claim of truth is actually a social construction and hence a reflection of the subject of where the truth came from. Accordingly, all decisions made by us and the respondents during the interviews have contributed to the construction of the empirical material, by both ourselves and the respondents. That goes for what kind of questions have been asked, how the interviewees have responded and discussed and follow up questions which have emerged independently in each interview. Hence it is important to remember that meaning is always incomplete and never final (Alvesson & Deetz, 2021), and our contribution is only one of many possible outcomes.

4.3. Research Process

The two authors of this thesis are both based in Helsingborg, Sweden, which is also the location the thesis writing process occurred. However, due to Covid-19 pandemic interviews were held online over Zoom or Teams which enabled interviews with people all across Europe. Hence other questions and issues in regard to internet based interviews needed to be taken into consideration, such as if to use one or two computers, do interviews with camera turned off or not and how to record the interviews. Moreover, this thesis has been conducted equally by the two authors. Both have invested similar amounts of time in the different parts of the study. Below the process will be outlined and further explained.

4.3.1. Writing the Literature Review

In the beginning of the writing process the literature review was conducted in order to identify key contributors in the field of culture and creativity and service management, in order to get an understanding of what already was known about the documentary films and the concepts and theories used in the culture and creative field. The literature review was revised and updated during the whole writing process as new ideas emerged.

The literature process started with identifying research gaps and mapping the literature. In order to do so we compiled all the literature into an Excel file, which at the end of the process included over 200 articles and literature, comprising various theories and research fields. Bryman (2016) stresses that to do a literature review is crucial in order to connect the existing literature with the own research and research questions, and later on with the discussion and findings. In accordance, we did find that the initial literature also guided us throughout the whole process and served to navigate us in our research.

We, Frida and Annemari, initially came together due to shared interest in both the culture and creative industries and sustainability. In the beginning of the process, we aimed to incorporate the concept sustainability mindset by Rimanoczy (2021) as we identified the societal relevance and need to guide research towards the societal problem of inaction in societies towards more sustainable futures, which Rimanoczy (2021) has illustrated. Firstly, departing from the sustainability mindset by Rimanoczy (2021) the thesis had more of a behavioural science approach, and the emphasis was rather on sustainability. However, considering further the field of service management and the field of culture and creativity, we reframed the emphasis more to seeing the documentaries as cultural commodities/products located in the experience economy as per Pine and Gilmore (2011) and rather approach the sustainability mindset as a concept to understand millennials values and worldviews. Service management literature further guided us to value-in-use, and customer perceived values by Medberg and Grönroos (2020). Hence the reading guided us constantly in regard to reconsidering the research questions and shaping the aim. However, it was not until we started the interviews as we first considered flow by Csikszentmihalyi

(2016) as a theory to describe the experience phenomena, as we stumbled on the concept of flow in our search for theories to explain experiences.

4.3.2. Sampling: Process, Criteria and Contact

The sampling process in this thesis has mainly been based on a criterion sampling. Criterion sampling is a purposive sampling approach where criteria are stated which the interview participants need to meet (Bryman, 2016). Being one Swede and one Finnish with limited knowledge in each native language, we used English to communicate with each other. Hence, we also found it necessary for the respondents to fulfil the criteria of speaking English, so both of us understood the material without the need to translate the material for each other. Moreover, the respondents were required to be in the age 24 to 39 to fulfil the demands of being a millennial, for the research to represent a specific group of people. Different sources (Dimock, 2019; Seemiller & Grace, 2019; Luqman, 2021) identify the age range differently for the millennials, which are also known as the generation Y or the 90's kids. In this thesis, initially the requirements for the interviewees to participate, was for them to represent the young adults of today hence be in the age of 20-35. However, since the two youngest participants were born in 1996 and the oldest ones were born in the late 1980's, this thesis has identified millennials as born between 1981 and 1996 as in accordance with Dimock's (2019) criteria.

Since the thesis aimed to examine participants' experience of environmental documentary films, another criterion the participants needed to fulfil was to at some point of their life be watching a documentary film related to the subject sustainability or the environment. Furthermore, due to the pandemic we requested for the participant to be able to conduct online interviews in order to minimize physical contact. Limitations with online interviewing lies in the lack of context as from personal contact, and technical issues may jeopardize the interview (Flick, 2018). Nevertheless, by conducting the interviews online we were able to meet people online yet at different locations in the world which would not have been possible with on-site interviews. On the other hand, the lack of physical contact has reduced our insight on contextual factors. For example, even if we suggested for the participants to find a comfortable and quiet location to conduct the interview, we could never guarantee that the location they choose was optimal. In one case the participant was

situated in a cafeteria, a place where anyone could overhear the conversation. Still, online interviews were appreciated by both participants and ourselves as they all ran smoothly and allowed flexibility.

In this study 14 persons were interviewed, and the interviews were conducted starting from the 26th of March until the 30th of April. The initial contact with the interviewees was on social media, either through Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn. We requested suitable participants for the study through a predetermined announcement on each social media (see appendix A for announcement). Hence, it was up to the interviewees to gain contact with us if they felt they fit the profile and if they wanted to participate. After the interviewees contacted us, a date was set for the interview. Before the interview an additional message was sent out (see appendix B for message) to the participants with further details about the interview and with either a Teams- or Zoom-link. Only two interviews were held over Teams, the rest was on Zoom.

4.3.3. The Interviewees and the Interview Guide

For the first announcement we gathered 8 participants who volunteered, from which two were set as pilot interviews. The idea was then to make a second announcement to attract more participants, as we aimed for 15 interviews to meet sampling criterions. For the second announcement another 6 interviewees reached out to participate. At the end, the timeframe limited how many interviews we were able to conduct, however we felt that theoretical saturation was reached after 14 interviews and hence decided to do no more. When theoretical saturation occurs the data collection has reached a point of saturation (May, 2011). Accordingly, we felt that the last interviews rather confirmed themes that had emerged already rather than giving new insights.

Although the interviewees have their residence in Sweden, Finland, England, and Spain, nationalities represented by the interviewees were Finnish, Swedish, Indonesian, Syrian and Dutch. Furthermore, we did conduct one expert interview as one of the interviewees who reached out had professional perspectives on films. The expert interview gives specific insight into a subject due to the knowledge and expertise of the interviewee (Flick, 2018). Accordingly, our

expert interviewee, Shawn Archer, had further insight in the topic and specific experience of working in the field of moviemaking, giving insights into technical aspects of how a film is structured.

No	Date	Pseudonym	Gender	Country of Residence	Age	Duration (min)
1	March 26th	Pilot-Elsa	Female	Sweden	27	47
2	March 26th	Pilot-Oscar	Male	Sweden	24	42
3	March 29th	Angelica	Female	Sweden	25	36
4	March 29th	Marcus	Male	Sweden	24	46
5	March 31st	Expert-Shawn Archer	Male	England	28	70
6	April 1st	Anthony	Male	Sweden	31	46
7	April 6th	Sally	Female	Sweden	30	58
8	April 7th	Maria	Female	Finland	32	38
9	April 21st	Logan	Male	Sweden	25	34
10	April 21st	Tracy	Female	Sweden	27	42
11	April 22nd	Edward	Male	Sweden	30	37
12	April 27th	Yasmin	Female	Finland	32	38
13	April 29th	Katniss	Female	Finland	27	51
14	April 30th	Hannah	Female	Spain	30	30

An interview guide was created before the first pilot interviews. The guide was evaluated after the first two interviews based on how smooth the interview went and by the relevance of the questions and in what order they were asked. Initially the themes in the guide were discussed in the following order: Ethical guidelines, context, the experience and lastly sustainability. Only minor changes

occurred from the first two interviews. However, we felt after the third interview that we needed to change the order of the themes as it made sense to identify values before we discussed them more thoroughly in relation to the documentary films. An interview guide consists of several topics (Flick, 2018), in our case the final guide (see appendix C for final guide) was divided into four parts for the second part of the interviews. The new structure followed: sustainability and values, documentary films in general, documentary film in regard to the latest one watched and documentary film in regard to a special memorable one. The final interview guide was set including questions more related to the concept of flow and the realms of the experience, which was a theory considered in a later stage of the thesis process. The interview guide served as a base for the interview however additional questions were sometimes asked. In order for the conversation to go smoothly the questions were sometimes asked in different order and, in some interviews, not all questions were answered as other aspects were highlighted.

4.3.4. Transcription and Coding Process

The interviews were transcribed with the help of the app “Otter” which recorded and transcribed the interview simultaneously. The interviews were also recorded on Zoom or Teams in order to have a back-up. Once recorded, the interviews were listened through once again and while listening to the audio we corrected the otter-transcriptions and also censored the names of the participants if they were mentioned. Participants were promised anonymity and their names have been replaced with pseudonyms in the thesis. When the transcriptions were reviewed and corrected the coding process could start.

In terms of using semi structured interviews, Flick (2018, p 231-232) stresses that “due to the complex structure of the single case, attempts at generalization face the problem of how to summarize different subjective theories to groups”. However, in this thesis a more reflexive approach has been considered in terms of interpretation of the material, allowing unexpected discoveries in the research. We went through each transcription in detail in the coding-process and created categories to capture important contributions as new discoveries were made. The transcriptions did cover 286 pages in total. Categories varied between the transcriptions however

the majority was organised into settings, values, experiences, feelings, learning, sustainability actions, context, social aspects, documentaries, motivation, reinforcing worldviews and flow. Nevertheless, there is a risk by fragmenting the data into categories in losing the narrative flow and context (Bryman, 2016). Still, by using a thematic analysis technique (see Bryman, 2016, p. 584), we were able to comprehend and manage the data by sorting it into categories and themes which made it possible for us to detect important patterns and findings. More specifically, important citations from each interview were divided into charts to make it easier to overview the interviews. Accordingly, Flick (2018, p. 477) stresses that thematic coding is appropriate in identifying patterns in the material as it addresses “specific ways of seeing and experiencing”. Furthermore, the nature of experiences being highly personal influenced the choice of coding technique, and by using thematic analysis we were able to treat each interview as a single case and still compare them and evaluate them to each other. Following a thematic structure, a first analysis of a single case is carried out to clarify meanings and when a couple of interviews is analysed, categories can be cross-checked (Flick, 2018). When searching for themes there are different aspects to look for (Bryman, 2016). Accordingly, we were looking for similarities, differences, repetition of topics and other aspects that stood out in the coding process which could help answering the research questions. The research questions as well as theory of flow and the realms of experience were also guiding in what to look for. Moreover, aspects such as language and opinions that could be context or generation specific could be identified in the coding process.

4.3.5. The Process of Analysing Empirical Material

Bryman (2016, p. 28) states that while interpreting the subjects “there is a double interpretation going on: the researcher is providing an interpretation of others’ interpretations”. Accordingly, in the analysis part of the thesis the interviews were interpreted and analysed, guided by the research questions and the aim.

The major themes of the interviews were aligned with the themes set in the interview guide, which were general views about sustainability, context of documentary film watching and lastly the experience of viewing a documentary film. However, the coding process allowed us to identify

specific detailed sub themes within these original themes. Sub themes in relation to the views about sustainability were values of the individual and in relations to sustainability, and sustainable actions of the individual. Within the context themes, settings and social context of viewing documentary films were identified as well as motivations to watch environmental documentary films. In regard to the experience sub themes of learning, feelings and emotions were identified as well as insights of the experience itself. Hence, the categories identified in the coding process guided the analyses process. Initially three interview charts were analysed in order to detect similarities and differences. The analysis from the three interviews was then used as a template for what to look for in the rest of the interviews in order to comprehend the data, however still staying open for new interpretations and findings. The categories identified in the coding combined with theories of experience realms, flow and value-in-use made up the analysis structure. Moments of flow and feelings were identified and experiences from each interview were organized in a figure of the realms of experience (see figure 4 in the findings- and analysis chapter). Value-in-use was identified in both flow and the realms of experience hence it was present throughout the whole analysis. The final themes that emerged in the analysis were discussed in the discussion section, whereas connections were made as well between theory and the research questions.

4.4. Methodological Reflections

Qualitative research has endured criticism due to its subjectivity, relying too much on the researcher's interpretations of the data (Bryman, 2016, p. 398). Still, the qualitative research philosophy of this specific study recognizes the subjectivity and the interpretative nature of the research and admits the material being constructed as empirical material rather than collected data, where interpretation is an essential element. For example, an interview is constantly interpreted in its progress where both the interview and the respondent are trying to make sense of the situation (Alvesson & Deetz, 2021) and as researchers we are aware that our own assumptions and interpretations affected the end result of this thesis. We have constantly tried to avoid words and ideas which would steer the interview into a biased direction, for example by keeping our own opinions outside in the interviews. Yet this was hard to accomplish, for example if some participants had difficulties in understanding a question and wanted us to give an explanation, our explanation would always be biased by our pre-understanding and perspectives. Still, according to

Bryman (2016) is the researcher herself the main instrument of data collection, hence what is being observed and heard are most often a reflection of the researchers' preferences which cause difficulties to replicate the research as it is highly impacted by the researcher (Bryman, 2016).

The interviews need to be evaluated taking into account the respondents' interests, since from the interviewees perspectives some truths are rather preferable than others (Alvesson & Deetz, 2021). In our thesis this would mean that different truths are to be told and by asking questions of sustainability the respondents may (or may not) for example convey their improvements in recycling rather than address their increase in car-commuting. They would further talk about documentaries of a memorable character, and they would consequently not mention those they do not remember anymore. In order to see through and not frighten the respondents the interview questions were developed to be considered as harmless as possible. One example is that we asked the respondent "what is important to you in life?" to detect values and worldviews which later could be compared with experiences of environmental documentary films. Furthermore, rather than asking about listing sustainability actions for the respondents to confirm, they were asked to describe their sustainability habits, either big or small and their relationship with environmental issues. Qualitative research is concerned with the meaning of action (Bryman, 2016). Accordingly, we constantly tried to assure the respondents that there existed no wrong or right answers, trying to grasp their point of view.

To follow methodological rules does not mean that other researchers who wish to replicate would gain similar results (Alvesson & Deetz, 2021). Since experiences and values have been the core of this research, replication is not the main goal of this thesis due to the subjective character of the study. Furthermore, the difficulty remains with qualitative studies to be confirmed by other studies, they are hard (or impossible) to replicate and are biased by the researcher (Alvesson & Deetz, 2021). Values, personal beliefs and settings such as being born in the Nordic countries and studying Service Management have brought us different perspectives, however characterised by western bias, and in turn other views not known by us might have been neglected. However, we have discussed different steps in the thesis writing process with our supervisor and with people in the same situation, not least with ourselves, in order to minimize this risk of bias. Furthermore, we

want to emphasize that this thesis is not an objective mirror of reality. Rather, the qualitative character of this study offers us a depth to the material and to understand the issue in question from qualitative premises, which may serve as a bridge for further discussion and research.

4.4.1. Ethical Considerations

The Swedish research council (2021) have developed a report “Good Research Practice” (2017). Guidelines from the “Good Research Practice” (2017) report have been followed in this thesis in terms of ethical considerations in regard to the interviews in our pursuit to maintain professionalism and integrity and to assure criteria of the research. The interviewees have been treated honestly and with respect. Moreover, the “Good Research Practice” (2017) report summarizes 8 general rules (see appendix D) which have been followed in this thesis.

In the interview’s anonymity has been ensured for the participants since their identity is not relevant for the study, however the Swedish research council (2017) raises the issue of the difficulty to verify the information given by the researchers due to the anonymity of the participants. Furthermore, discrimination and stigmatisation of an entire group can still occur even though no individuals can be identified (Swedish Research Council, 2017). We have not been able to identify such conflicts in this research, however the participants have been informed that some variables such as gender, age and nationality might be shared hence the risk of discrimination is minimized. Furthermore, the interviewees have been informed that the transcriptions will be saved if they are requested in further research or for the sake of verifying results.

The participants are assured that they are in no situation where they can be exposed to physical or psychological harm by participating in this study. By clearly stating the aim of the thesis and what has been expected by the participants we have aimed for transparency. The participants have been informed that the thesis will be an official document and their names have been changed in this thesis. Moreover, the participants were informed that they will be recorded on Zoom or Teams but only the audio will be used and when the thesis is approved, the audio-material will be deleted. Our third participant requested to do the interview with the camera off which was approved since

only the audio was needed. Conducting interviews without the camera on was not considered from before however this realisation led to other participants from thereon being informed that they had a choice to turn off their camera if they wanted to. Consent was guaranteed verbally, and the possibility was highlighted whether the participant wanted to, she/he could stop the interview or withdraw her/his participation. The material was stored in such a manner that no unauthorised persons could have access to it.

We have eluded situations that can be questioned on ethical grounds by trying to inform the participants and conduct a transparent research. However, for the first four interviews some information sharing about the ethical considerations was missing which was added on for the last ones. This information was in regard to the fact how the material was stored, whether there will be any copies of the audios, whether the recording was going to be used to other purposes than research, whether other analysis than the stated would have been carried out, and in regards of the possibility for the participant to have a copy of the record. However, since ethical guidelines were followed, no harm was done and hence it was not found necessary to inform the interviewees afterwards as the majority did receive the information.

5. Findings & Analysis

However, since an open coding process was applied different themes were detected which will be presented here. Some themes were more obvious as questions were asked in regard to the topic, such as values and experiences while other themes were more surprising. The analysis is divided into several parts, presenting the findings and analysis of documentary films, flow, value-in-use, and the realms of experience. Firstly, frequently viewed documentary films will be presented followed by the value of learning in relation to the experience realms. The chapter continues by analysing the experience of documentary films in a state of flow and the value millennials receive from viewing documentary films. Lastly, the role of emotions is highlighted in relation to the findings.

5.1. Frequently Viewed Documentary Films

The documentary most frequently mentioned by the interviewees was *Cowspiracy*, which was mentioned in 10 out of 14 interviews. *Seaspiracy* was mentioned in 8 out of 14 interviews, and multiple David Attenborough documentaries, such as *Life on our Planet*, *Blue Planet*, *Planet Earth* and *Our Planet*, were mentioned in 7 out 14 interviews.

Seaspiracy was released on Netflix on 24th of March 2021 (Imdb 2021a). The release of *Seaspiracy*, dated at the time of the interviews, made it for many interviewees their most recent or most memorable documentary film, further few of the interviewees stated that they watched *Cowspiracy* after *Seaspiracy* because Netflix recommended the film, even though *Cowspiracy* was released back in 2014 (Imdb 2021b). From David Attenborough films, the most frequent were *A Life on our Planet* and *The Blue Planet*, however additionally *Planet Earth* and *Our Planet* were also mentioned. Most recent of David Attenborough films being *A Life on our Planet* released in 2020 (Imdb 2021c).

Documentaries which were mentioned once or twice were *Chasing Ice*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Before the Flood*, *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*, *The Ivory Game*, *Earthlings*, *The Cove*, *I Am*

Greta, *My Octopus Teacher*, *Blackfish*, *Behind the Curve* and *What the Health*. Moreover, documentaries whose names were not stated were discussed. The themes of those documentaries were environmental sustainability, in regard to plastic pollution, milk production, different energy options, space documentaries, as well as documentaries about sustainable lifestyles.

5.1.1. Streaming Platforms and Social Influence

To get a comprehensive understanding of the experience we found it important to consider the context and settings which are possible factors influencing the viewing experience. Moreover, as stated per Palmer (2010) and Grönroos (2011) value creation of an experience is restricted and dependent by the context of the certain event, location and time.

As stated, millennials spend more time on streaming services in comparison with traditional TV (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). Accordingly, the interviews revealed that the majority of the interviewees watch documentaries through streaming services, particularly from Netflix. Other streaming platforms mentioned were HBO, YouTube, and streaming platforms by TV channels such as the Swedish SVT play and National Geographic. A great number of the interviewees referred to watching documentaries on their laptop or tablet, additionally interviewees watched from TV, however still referring to streaming services like Netflix, indicating that TV had the application or that laptop was connected to the TV. In regard to the social setting some of the participants referred to watching with friends or their partners however, documentaries were often experienced alone, in the evenings, weekends or when there was spare time. None mentioned watching documentary films in the cinema. As the majority of the participants watch documentaries from Netflix, the algorithm of Netflix recommendations came up in the interviews. Indicating that the reason for watching some particular documentaries was due to the recommendation by Netflix, which is demonstrated by the quote below.

“I watched the *Seaspiracy* first, and then a couple days after that, there is another notification in my Netflix feed, based on their algorithm. They also suggested me to watch another documentaries and that's when I found *Cowspiracy*.” (Edward)

Even though the Netflix algorithm impacted the choices of documentary film watching, the reasons why millennials would watch documentaries is highly connected to the social context and expectations of the documentary. The majority of the participants said to watch documentaries in order to gain knowledge, learn, to stay updated or they just found them interesting. This was further related to the strong influence of social media which was referred to by multiple participants. The social context, the influence of other people and the documentary being a hot topic in the media at the time were reasons to watch the documentary in order to keep up to date on what is happening in the world. The citations below exemplify these findings.

“Usually it's because I hear, I've heard something about it, like people ask me “have you seen this one” or it's like a hype in the media, or a lot of people are debating about it, on like social media like Facebook or something and I see a lot of posts about this specific documentary. So usually if I'm just bored and want to watch something by myself, it's usually like a TV series, or movie, but then when I want to watch documentaries, it's usually because I want to see what's, what it's all about” (Tracy)

“But then when people start talking about the Seaspiracy. I feel like, I need to watch it as well ... ” (Edward)

“So I guess I kind of just watch it to see what the kind of attitude is in the world. I like to stay updated. Where are we going as a race. Not only so I can make good investment decisions but also so I can just be like, aware, I guess” (Shawn Archer)

These viewing habits further strengthen Podara et al. (2019) argument of the social role television plays for the millennial generation. Being part of a community and being updated are important reasons why the participant would watch the films. Furtheron, the context and settings of watching environmental documentary films detected in the interviews are typical for millennials which further highlighted the way media is consumed. These findings go together with Dreier's (2015) article which claims that millennials are mainly using streaming services. Thus, the rise of streaming services was evident, and Netflix was the most common service used when watching

documentaries. However, the new release of *Seaspiracy* on Netflix might have affected the findings, but still highlights the time and context in which the interviews were conducted.

5.1.2. Insights to Filmmaking: Expert Interview

The interview of Shawn Archer was considered as an expert interview as the participant is an aspiring filmmaker and writer who had experience in making two long amateur motion pictures, short movies and had studied acting and film in Hollywood. As mentioned in the methodology chapter the interview was conducted like the others however a few additional questions were added to gain further insights into the topic.

Particularly, Shawn Archer pointed out the technicalities of film making and highlighted that documentary films are similar to fictional films in the sense that they are produced in the same way, however the approach differs greatly. Below Shawn Archer elaborates the similarities.

“And I do believe that every documentary is just any other movie, because like, even if it's a documentary, there is still an editor, it is still a directors still script and they still put together almost like a normal movie, and even if a movie is called a documentary, we don't even know if it's real or not real what they're talking about.” (Shawn Archer)

Furthermore, Shawn Archer reviewed and reflected on the structure of environmental documentaries as well as the editing techniques which are used to direct the viewer's emotions and attitudes. Shawn Archer's reflections indicated that he viewed environmental documentaries differently due to his expertise and knowledge on filming techniques.

“I think I experienced them a bit differently because I'm highly aware of the, of the tricks in the editing. So, and how the editing will make me feel as a person.” (Shawn Archer)

“I think I'm a bit distant from it too. I'm just like okay now you're just trying to scare the shit out of me so now they're just gonna drop horrifying facts and I'm just gonna sit here and take it, and I sit there and take it. And then I get become highly aware of, oh, now they're changing the kind of like attitude, now you're trying to make me hopeful to trying to turn me into a good human being with soulful inspiring editing and it works.” (Shawn Archer)

The environmental documentary film was referred to as a romantic comedy by Shawn Archer, in the same sense of experiencing the varying emotions during the film. Moreover, the structure of the documentary films, especially the storytelling and the ride of emotions was described as too similar.

“Honestly, I think a lot of them come across a little bit too, too much samey, so I feel like a lot of people will see it, kind of just go through the motions like when they're watching a romantic comedy.”
(Shawn Archer)

“I feel like after the inconvenient truth, they were all kind of the same in terms of dramatic structure. They freak us out super much with facts and statistics and then they try in the last five minutes to bring some kind of patriotic hope for that there still is time. And I do think there is still time.” (Shawn Archer)

Lastly, from the perspective of a filmmaker, we wanted to know what are the values he wanted the viewers to gain from experiencing a cultural product, such as film. Shawn Archer highlighted the entertainment value and referred the intellectual values to come second.

“ ... my main goal is I would just love to entertain and make people forget about their lives ... ” (Shawn Archer)

Although Shawn Archer states that he experiences environmental documentaries differently, he creates a paradox as it comes evident from analysing his answers that the experience itself is still

very similarly experienced as other interviewees. What is different from other interviewees is the additional value that emerges for Shawn Archer due to his expertise, as he is aware of technicalities, he pays attention to different details which bring value to him.

5.2. Realms of Experience: The Value of Learning

The realms of experience were identified in the interviews and all dimensions of engagement were noted. However, the educational realm was evident in all interviews, whereas entertainment and esthetic realms were visible in most of the interviews and finally the escapist realm was barely detected from the participants' descriptions of the experience of watching environmental documentary films. This is further visualised in the figure 4, where each colour represents each interviewee and which realms came across from their interviews.

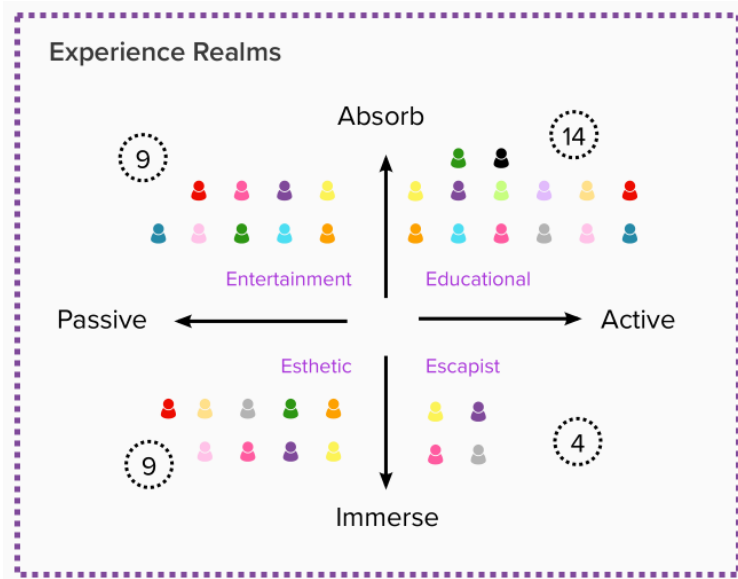


Figure 4. Documentary viewing applied to realms of experiences.

On top of gaining knowledge and social influence, participants also referred to the entertainment value and the fun of watching documentaries as well as enjoying the visuals of documentaries. One of the participants further highlights the varying expectations depending on the documentary, whether the focus will be in education or enjoying beautiful visuals.

“ ... sometimes I watch them because I really enjoy the visuals, like when it's more not really about like education that much but just about like showing our beautiful world, planet. So it depends, which kind of documentary I'm watching.” (Elsa)

Some dimensions were also reflected negatively. For example, one of the participants (Logan), referred to some of the dramatic scenes of *Seaspiracy* as “a bit made up” which in turn diminished the educational dimension for him, he elaborated pointing to that “it's a bit too much for me, because like, the whole point of watching is to gain more insights. But then, by doing that, it kind of diminishes it, at least for me.”. However, the majority did refer to the dimensions with a positive connotation. Below examples illustrate the educational, entertainment and esthetic realms and show how multiple can be present simultaneously.

“I enjoy but I think it's also nice to, learn something. So, if it's not just fun but also informative.” (Angelica)

“I like seeing kind of visual masterpieces, but then of course the biggest value is in the content, and in what you can learn or feel from what you're watching.” (Katniss)

“I think it will be to two reasons, pretty much, because firstly I think it's fun to see them, and they're usually at least the ones that I watch are usually like visually really beautiful. And then do you feel well and I love seeing the, the environment, portrayed in that way, and the journalists are just for entertainment, just like anything else on TV, but then I would also watch them if I like when I learned something ... ” (Oscar)

Hence, one experience may consist of multiple streams of value creation and consequently several realms such as being both informative (educational realm) and fun (entertainment realm) or visual masterpiece (esthetic realm) and learning (educational) may be experienced simultaneously or during the same film.

Even though comments such as “I love seeing the, the environment, portrayed in that way” (Oscar) or “ ... it's beautiful to watch, and fun and interesting to see how animals act.” (Anthony) would

hint that the interviewees experienced the films in states of escapism, it was difficult to identify this realm. However, our expert interviewee further reflects on how he believes films are an escape from reality, hence highlighting the escapist dimension.

"Usually most people hate their lives. That's what I believe A really really good and interesting film, could really just make you forget how shitty your life is and I think that's pretty beautiful."

(Shawn Archer)

The way the expert interviewee uses rich descriptions to describe reflections could be the reason why the escapist realm was able to be identified. Still, even though all realms were identified in the interviews it came clear that an emotional connection related to the experience as a whole gave depth to the experience, as illustrated by one of the interviewees below.

"Well, the reason you watch any movies it's like entertainment, you can kind of relax and enjoy yourself in this experience, but usually it's just to learn more, I think for me, it's easier to learn from a documentary than from reading a book, because I don't know, maybe it just caters to more of your senses like you're not just reading but you're seeing things and hearing things, and it's somehow a more wholesome experience so at least it like leaves more of an emotional connection to me. When I watch a documentary."

(Katniss)

The above encapsulates the multiple realms of experience catering various senses at same time making the experience feel complete. This further leads us to analyse the emotions and feelings related to the environmental documentary films.

5.2.1. Environmental Documentary Films: The feeling of Shock

The realms of experiences feel inadequate to represent the full picture of an experience as one of the most vital elements of an experience is missing which is the connection to emotions. The realms of experiences can often be identified in connection to how the participant felt at the time.

As an example, one of the interviewees (Maria) connected the visualisation to a feeling of shock in regard to how much milk powder it is in the world.

“I like how they showed how they showed and how much milk powder there is in the world, and how much does shipping, and now it's like loads of storage with milk powder it was really new information and quite shocking to see how much, how much there is.”

(Maria)

Thus, the visualisation is present in the esthetic realm, at the same time are the feelings experienced present when identifying the realms. When it comes to environmental documentaries, shock, surprise and sadness where strong emotions felt while viewing the environmental documentaries. Additionally, below illustrates how anxiety was detected in relation to the sustainable challenges we are facing today, and confusion felt towards people and industries as to their unsustainable ways.

“The senseless violence towards like innocent animals that, and it didn't really make any sense.” (Yasmin)

“confused. I was like, they're right, but they're wrong, but they're right, but they're also wrong.” (Marcus)

The two interviewees' comments below further demonstrate how the feelings guide to attitude forming and motivation to action, illustrating how the environmental documentary can be a transformative experience.

“I could go vegan or should, let's say should. And, of course, it was in the end. Also eye opening. More shocking someway in as well.” (Hannah)

“ ... rather impressed by how they, how it all came together but also a bit sad because it was, of course, it's not nice to watch, you know, those kind of things, but it's also

reality. And in the end I feel like it's some sort of just some activate some sort of motivation to do better myself I would say.” (Angelica)

Hence, emotions are a crucial part of the experience which are interconnected with individual values and worldviews which determine the dimensions and values emerged from the viewing of an environmental documentary film.

5.3. Experiencing Documentary Films in a State of Flow

After a few interviews were conducted it was evident that learning and feelings were important themes during the experience of viewing a documentary film. Since the realms of experience proved to be insufficient to understand the whole experience, flow is the concept to further explore the phenomenon. As mentioned, flow represents the focused state and loss of time (Csikszentmihalyi, 2016), and the skill level, interests of the individual (Smit & Melissen, 2018) as well as personality (deMatos et al., 2021) will determine if flow will be accomplished or not.

5.3.1. Sustainability: Millennials' Awareness

Some sort of skill level was assumed for the participants to occupy as one of the criteria's demanded to have watched at least one documentary film related to the environment. Many of the interviewees possessed high awareness of environmental issues and high levels of knowledge about sustainable lifestyles, conscious consumption and how to minimize environmental footprint. This further goes in line with Luqman (2021) who states that millennials are highly aware and seek information about climate issues. Many of the participants mentioned actions of what they do and do not do in daily life, which are actions they know may impact the environment to a smaller - or greater - degree. One of the participants expresses that " ... like the plastic in the oceans, like, it's not that I would go and buy a lot of plastic and go crazy.” (Hannah). Describing her relationship with environmental issues, another interviewee highlights her conscious consumption practices.

"... it's definitely something that is an integral part of my life, I think it might be also something that's maybe almost automatic. So, indeed with my daily life when I go food shopping or when maybe with clothing or with shoes.. I would rather see if I can maybe repair or maybe like a clothing swap with my sister, instead of shopping..." (Angelica)

Another participant as well mentions how he tries to consume food consciously and shows his concern about his carbon footprint, which further indicates knowledge and awareness about the topic.

"I always actually want to try to make sure that the food that I can consume is environmental friendly and doesn't have like so much carbon footprint." (Logan)

Moreover, many of the participants showed comprehensive awareness of sustainability. As many of the participants referred to their consuming patterns, one of them additionally explained how she in her pursuit of living a sustainable lifestyle has improved her house to be energy efficient.

"I tried to not like take the car in unnecessary trips and try to buy a second hand clothing and I try to eat more vegetarian and I try to... Yeah, just unnecessary consumption. We have also renovated our house, so it's, it got isolation. So it's more climate friendly now, since we don't.. and we also changed our heating system from.. Hmm.. heating with the mm.. what do you call it.. fire? And now we have this thing that runs on air. It's another heating system that is more climate friendly, so our whole house is more climate friendly now. It takes less energy to heat and keeps the heat inside since we get better in isolation now." (Sally)

Hence, the interviewee (Sally) further develops the concept of sustainability from applying it to a few actions to be living a sustainable lifestyle. Accordingly, the idea of a sustainability mindset (Kassel & Rimanoczy, 2018) is revealed in the millennials understanding of sustainability and their values and actions indicate that they possess a mindset emphasizing the greater good of all. Another interviewee further explains how he reflects on his daily habits in relation to strategies for a sustainable lifestyle.

" ... when you do things every day, like in a certain way, then you maybe don't really see how you don't see it in the big picture, but then if you look at the past month maybe, and try to think of what you've been eating, where you've been, have you been using, like, when flights, used to be a thing back in the day but now nobody's using them. But still, like when you look at the past month, and what you have done well and you haven't done well. And then you try to plan for the future like, "maybe I should push the things that I've done well", more, and concentrate on them." (Oscar)

Interestingly, all of the participants devoted themselves to some sort of environmentally friendly actions. Still, many participants implied that they still could do more. Discussing her sustainability habits, one participant concludes "[The sustainability habits] could be better, but at least it is something." (Maria), and as many others, another millennial expresses that "I try my best" (Angelica). Accordingly, the following citation highlights how even the smallest things may make a big difference in the end.

"We do some recycling, it hasn't been too good for the last, maybe a year or so. But we do recycle some... So that's one thing and I mean it's maybe. How do you say, drip in the ocean. When one person does it but when a lot of persons, people do it's... it's becomes the ocean" (Anthony)

All these actions, habits and lifestyles related to sustainability indicate awareness and knowledge about topics related to the environment. Without these previous skills it would be hard for the participants to relate to environmental documentary films hence diminish the possibility to experience flow. Nevertheless, the skill combined with an interest would then increase the possibility of flow. For example, one participant claims that "Since I've learned more about climate change, the more you learn about it the more you want to do something about it" (Sally). This could further be interpreted as a sign of how documentary films may evoke an interest and consequently knowledge about a topic. The skills acquired would thus be reinforced by the documentary films which are a means of learning, hence the source of skills. When skills are secured, an interest is also needed to experience the transformative flow.

5.3.2. Environmental Issues: Millennials' Motivation to Learn

Multiple participants highlight their interests in sustainability and the environment, which also in many cases would impact if they watched an environmental documentary film at all. For example, one participant says "I'm always been super interested of animals, and the planet." (Hannah). Meanwhile, another interviewee highlights how his interest further would be connected to his skill levels "It's, it's really interesting, that's why I can easily understand the whole thing." (Logan). To actually have an interest in the documentaries for them to be educational was a recurrent pattern amongst the interviewees. One participant for example points to how her interests and skill levels are intertwined and how the documentary films contribute to her self-actualisation.

"I think they are interesting and educational. It feels good to watch them because it confirms me that I'm on the right path. Kind of." (Sally)

Furthermore, another interviewee points out that a person's values are also connected to a person's interests. In accordance, the interviewee implies that if you would not value a specific thing, you would neither have interest to learn more about it.

"I think it all ties in with interest so if you have certain interests, then I think there might be some overlap with your values and then also in a way, also when she would like to watch [documentary films]so maybe if you are very much against sustainability where you don't really believe in global warming, then you might also not believe, be very keen on watching those kind of documentaries." (Angelica)

It comes clear that for many of the interviewees the interest origins in a will to learn more about what is happening in the world, to learn more about a specific thing or to just replenish the knowledge bank. For example, two interviewees exemplify below.

"I think it's interesting to see what's really happening in the world. You learn from different industries as well, by watching documentaries, again you'll learn about things that you otherwise wouldn't learn about." (Yasmin)

"I think I just in general when I watch documentaries that I'm always a bit, both surprised and interested in general that like, "Oh, I didn't know this", or I need to go read more about that." (Tracy)

Accordingly, Smit and Melissen (2018) highlights how a desire to learn could be enough to experience flow. This desire is evident for many of the participants. On the other hand, one of the interviewees implies that a particular interest is not always the reason behind watching a specific documentary film, however a general interest in documentary films per se would be enough to watch.

"I watch like everything in general, no specific reason like I don't necessarily have to have interest in documentaries." (Marcus)

Furthermore, one of the millennials identifies herself as a movie fan and highlights how the experience itself is her interest, and how a specific topic of interests would make her choose a specific documentary film. Yet, the learning element is still present however the full experience is important to her.

"I'm a movie fan, and I like to focus on what I'm watching properly. To get the full experience, and to feel the things I'm supposed to, like that. I can feel and to learn everything there is to learn. I want to see all the details and all the, hear all the sentences that are said, but then also when it comes to these documentaries, it's usually topics that I am interested in, and that I want to learn more about. So maybe there's even more of a focus then, when watching some random comedy movie, because you care about what you're watching." (Katniss)

As already explained, the enjoyment of film is an outcome of flow, an experience achieved once the message is balanced with an individual's cognitive capabilities (Sherry, 2004). Accordingly, as above indicates both the skill level and interests are present for the participants hence, they are obtaining good conditions to experience flow. Before we dig deeper into flow in the experience realms, the next section will illustrate the participants value-in-use in relation to the environmental documentary films.

5.4. Perceived Value of Environmental Documentary Films

In order to determine the viewer perceived value, various questions were formed to enable the perceived value to emerge from the empirical data. Questions were generic such as “why do you watch documentary films?” as well as specific in regard to certain environmental documentary films, such as “What is the value for you in the environmental documentaries?” elaborated as “what have they gained from the experience?” and “Do you find them useful?”. Moreover, in accordance with Heinonen et al. (2013) value is created and embedded in the active life and reality of the viewer, hence, to recognise the value in the multiple contexts as well as the connection to sustainability, the actions and reflections of the participants was analysed.

The perceived value of the environmental documentary films can be connected as well to the expectations of the viewers and the themes identified within the settings and context as to why to watch environmental documentary films which was demonstrated in the previous chapter 5.3.1. As well as to the interest and knowledge of millennials in regard to sustainability as per chapter 5.3.2. Moreover, learning and gaining knowledge were found to be the primary reason to watch the documentaries as well as having fun and enjoying the visuals. In addition, more themes related to value-in-use emerged from the interviews. From the perspective of value-in-use the themes emerged from the context and settings of millennials watching documentary films are additionally perceived values of the viewers. The value of learning, gaining knowledge and insights to something new, as well as the value of sustainability, not only to learn about sustainability itself but how to live more sustainably or how to know which industries to support or not to support due to environmental reasons, how to consume in a way that align with individual's sustainability

values. Furthermore, social value was emerging as the environmental documentaries would be discussed and recommended forward and even shared in social media, which emphasises the value of community. As the stated values are seen to be illustrated through the data in the previous sections, the additional perceived values of value-in-use are further elaborated on in the next chapters.

5.4.1. The Power of Reinforcing Values

One of the most predominant themes coming up from the interviews was that the message of the documentaries often reinforced the existing worldviews and values of the viewers. Further, the interviews identified that people often watch documentaries which align with their values and worldviews, and in the case the documentary did not align with the viewers worldview or values, it was not seen as informative, rather more entertaining. Reinforcing values and worldviews, was in the context of the study highly connected to sustainability and environmentalism as the discussion was about environmental documentaries. An example, which was referred to in many interviews, about reinforcing values and worldviews was the connection to vegetarianism and veganism as demonstrated by the citations below.

“well I was already vegetarian so I was not really very it was just more of a confirmation that, yes, It's a good choice that I made” (Angelica)

“ ... it makes me feel great because I feel like, Oh, this is a good justification why I became a vegetarian and I do not consume meat.” (Edward)

However, reinforcement was seen also in a more general level of lifestyles as indicated by the citation below.

“It feels good to watch them because it confirms me that I’m on the right path.” (Sally)

Hence, it became evident that identity formation was present as the documentary films strengthen identity through the reinforcement and confirmations. It was commonly stated that viewing documentaries just made values stronger or enhanced worldviews. The effect of reinforcement is in line with the studies conducted regards to the effects of environmental documentaries. Nevertheless, documentary as a cultural product as well serves to reinforce ideologies (Kong, 2014). Looking at the effect of reinforcement and the positive connotation of it in the interviews, reinforcement can be seen as one of the emerging values that environmental documentaries provide to its viewers.

5.4.2. The Value of Storytelling

Value can further emerge from the storytelling and the emotional rollercoaster ride that comes with it. For example, positive emotions were identified since the storyteller made one participant feel warmth, love and hope watching *My Octopus Teacher*.

“I don't know what the guy's called now I forgot. But since he is... So, such a warm loving person. And has this love for this animal... Octopus... (laughter) I don't know I just fell in love with him, he's such a cosy guy, and it leaves a warm feeling that there are people out there that has such strong love for nature and animals. It's, it's nice.”
(Sally)

Moreover, storytelling was referred to in connection to memorability by other participants hence the story was an element of the environmental documentary film where value emerged. This was identified in below quotes.

“And then they make it like they are really good in making it as like a story. So it's interesting to follow So I guess it's the storytelling and the visuals that makes it super memorable for me.” (Elsa)

“Hmm sad and happy, because there's obviously like.. funny moments as well. They make like the story and there's these two birds that try to find each other and then you're like super exciting and then you're super happy where they finally find each other. But

then again, it makes me really sad to see how much like human... Humans, destroy the planet and the environment where they animals just try to live their lives.” (Elsa)

“But I think it is memorable because, like he was. You kind of get the connection to the person. And it's, yeah, there's like the storyline and that kind of stuff.” (Oscar)

As such, above indicates how the storytelling contributes to a memorable experience, where different emotions were felt. Below citation further shows that the storytelling can help to organise information and conceptualise topics which might be intangible and abstract otherwise. This is well illustrated by one of the participants.

“They made it so tangible so I thought it was rather impressive, the whole story.”
(Angelica)

Hence, above shows that amongst reinforcing values and identity strengthening, the storytelling's contribution to value-in-use was evident as they all were additionally perceived values by the viewers. Corvellec and Hultman (2014) understanding of value propositions as pluralistic, offered simultaneously and continuously aligned with the findings in this analysis. Dividing products, services and experiences as traditionally done by Pine and Gilmore (2011) however is misleading in the case of documentary films since the findings reveal that watching a documentary film may stimulate several realms of the experience and at the same time provoking feelings. Documentary films are rather multifaceted; appreciated as a tool of learning, as a visual esthetic cultural product, as identity strengthening due to reinforcing values as well as a means to stay updated, highlighting its social role. Another connection that can be drawn is in regard to the experience of flow which is related to a person's interests, and that an experience may consist of multiple streams of value creation. These findings will be further presented in the next section.

5.5. The Role of Emotions

Firstly, the two theories value-in-use and realms of experience both represent the exact moment when the documentary film is consumed, and both indicate emerging factors from the experience. The realms of experience with the dimensions indicate the type of experience have occurred, however the dimensions can also be seen as emerging values perceived by the viewer; educational value, entertainment value, esthetic value and escapist value, similarly to value-in-use. However, the findings demonstrated that there are multiple value propositions simultaneously offered by the environmental documentary films and some even perceived all the realms as values emerged from the experience. Guiding us to think that the realms are not as straightforward as assumed by Pine and Gilmore (2011). Furtheron, the value of the goods in the creative industries is said to lie in its ability to create emotional response (Choi & Burnes, 2013). Hence, to further investigate emotions in the realms of the experience the concept of flow is applied below.

5.5.1. If not Flow, then what?

When a certain skill level is met and the documentary film captures the interests of the viewers, flow may be reached. Flow may further be experienced in all the experience realms (Pine & Gilmore, 2011), and this part will get into detail of what could be identified in the interviews. As illustrated in Figure 2 (initially presented in the theoretical framework), flow is reached when a balance is met between the challenges and skills. The interviews illustrate that while watching a documentary film, the experience could alter between states of anxiety, flow as well as boredom.

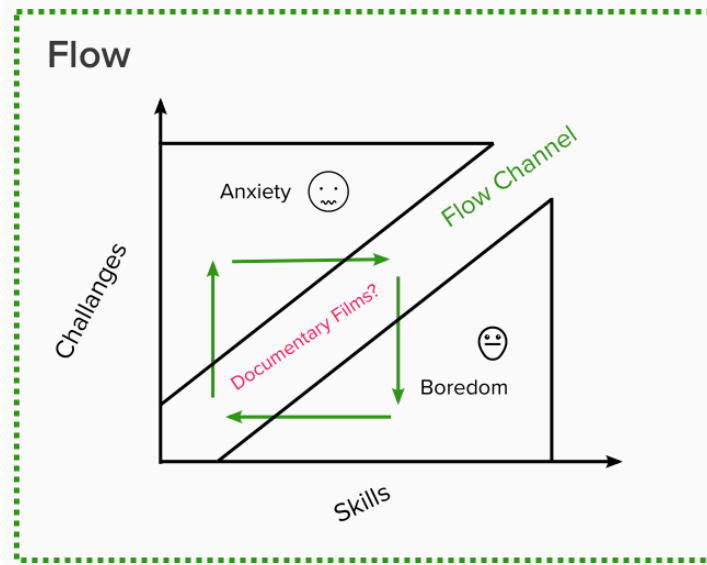


Figure 5. (Figure 2). Our application of “Documentary Films” to the concept of “Flow”, “Flow” figure is based on Csikszentmihalyi (2016, p. 103).

Interesting to see is how different states could be reached during the same experience, hence a linear and final phase to describe flow throughout the whole experience would be insufficient.

For example, one of the participants illustrates how feelings of optimism and anxiousness both would be experienced during the same documentary film.

"It can be a bit, can be a bit like... I mean not depressing, that's a big word, but like makes you a bit anxious and like aware of the world, because it's not a perfect situation we're in, with how the world is. But then, I think that specific film [A life on our planet] was also built in a way that creates some optimism about the future as well so I wasn't all... I was a bit anxious and bit conscious about the choices I make and everybody makes nowadays, but then it also had a lot of hope for the future so I was also happy."

(Oscar)

Moreover, to get the fullest out of the experience, some participants would prepare themselves for the documentary film watching, in order to not get distracted. One interviewee described how she preferred an environment that allowed her focus on the viewing.

“And usually I like to completely immerse myself into whatever I'm watching, especially when it's movies. So I think it's quite a calm setting where I'm very focused on what I'm watching.” (Katniss)

It came clear that when the interviewees felt too bored, the interest was lost and hence chances of experience flow would be reduced. One participant explained that “Sometimes it tends to be boring. Like the “Greta” was a little bit boring.”(Logan), and he further clarifies why he would find it boring as “I just like, I don't really gain much more like new information, or it's too general. So yeah, I cannot really get into it.”(Logan). Two other interviewees further recognize that it is a bad sign that the documentary film gets boring, whether it is because of bad quality or without action.

“It's not really exciting to see it's not about the content but it's like more like cinematography, I guess. So it's the thing that [it] don't really catch my attention. It feels like boring in the way, the way the documentaries Yeah, the movie itself is not It's not really good but the content is good.” (Edward)

“ ... and if they're just ... really general, or if it's not like, it's not done well, it's poor quality or if they keep showing the same stuff that I'm not interested in for a long time, like filming some, something where nothing is happening. If I get bored while watching it, then that's a really bad sign.” (Oscar)

Losing interest would sometimes further result in that the participants would discontinue their viewing or even fall asleep.

“ ... like two weeks ago, I started watching seaspiracy, but I just made it maybe like 15 minutes before I had to do something else and I haven't finished watching it.” (Tracy)

“I think I started to watch it with a friend. But then I fell asleep in the middle of it and then I just finished it alone” (Elsa)

Another participant further highlighted if there were parts in the movie she did not appreciate, and she would get annoyed.

"I was only concerned about the glacier and the global warming, so I didn't need to hear about people who didn't believe in global warming, I didn't need that argument. So I found that a bit annoying." (Maria)

As boredom could lead to losing interest and feelings of annoyance, too much on the other spectra would lead to anxiety. One interviewee reflects on his positioning to power plants and how these new perspectives led to confusion.

"I was really confused. I was like it's, it's really hard to make up your mind about whether if it's worth it or not, because it is giving us, like it's providing us with an enormous amount of energy, with like, you know, just having one power plant or so."
(Marcus)

Another participant (Yasmine) on the other hand explains that even if the topic itself is easy to understand in the *Cove* documentary, she found it difficult to understand the violence, why humans would hunt and slaughter dolphins. Accordingly, one of the interviewees points out that when no consensus is reached, it is even harder to grasp the topic even though the themes could be more easily understood.

"Understanding the content was, was very easy I think the topic itself was extremely simple, but understanding the bigger picture of why we do something like that, I think that's a bit, a lot more difficult topic to grasp." (Yasmine)

"Hm. Partly Yes. The themes were easy to understand, but just in general, the term, the Anthropocene is a term that even professionals of the field have not come to an understanding of what that means. So, it's quite a complicated issue like what does it mean the age of mankind and are we still in the Anthropocene. So, I think the whole theme of the documentary in itself is a bit too hard to understand." (Katniss)

In accordance, the violence from *Seaspiracy* was highlighted by one of the interviewees who indicated how the new perspective she gained on the reality would have a strong impact on her.

“I just felt nauseous, because it was worse than I could imagine, the, the bycatch from industrial fishing, the slaughtering of dolphins and...it just... Even my husband said I'm never eating fish again. (laughter) It's a big thing coming from him.” (Sally)

What the previous section shows is that when the documentary films get too boring or too much, unwanted feelings may arise. Even though the skill and the task need to be balanced, it is hard to tell where this balance would be. One of the participants for example gave the impression of really enjoying sustainability films overall, hence she would more easily obtain flow in her experiences.

"It was like a week ago because I've watched these four documentaries in like four nights. [laughter] So the first one was a week and a half ago, the second last one was six, seven days ago, and it was, I think the last one was My Octopus teacher but I kind of get hooked, so I watched four” (Sally)

Whether or not a documentary film would be perceived as interesting would help the interviewees to focus and stay absorbed in the experience. Another interviewee further mentioned how the experience would be memorable due to the interest which arises and the feelings evoked by the content.

"I thought they were really interesting to see I remember the feeling afterwards there was like “wow I haven't thought about this” So I thought it was, I thought it was fun and interesting to see Yeah, and interesting and useful" (Tracy)

Two of the interviewees indicated that they experienced flow as they devoted all their time to the viewing. One of them explains that sometimes he would play with his phone but not while watching *Seaspiracy* and the other one points out that he stayed focused during the entire film and how other aspects such as cinematography did not have as big importance depending on the content.

"For the seaspiracy I was really into it like I didn't do anything. But for some other like yeah, we, sometimes I eat. Or sometimes I still play with my phone too." (Logan)

"I really enjoy from the very beginning, I really focus on the content [Seaspiracy] I really focused on the content so I did not really focus on the cinema, cinematography, or whatever. But the other one the Cowspiracy because I kind of know about the content so I kind of focus on how the movies are." (Edward)

This analysis further demonstrates the importance of feelings guiding the experience and how the flow state within the experience is multifaceted as well as nonlinear varying possibly during the same experience, moving from the state of boredom to flow to anxiety. Moreover, the state of flow can be seen to be related to all realms of experience. Furthermore, the state of flow and the satisfaction the viewer gets, can be interpreted as a perceived value of the viewer within the context of value-in-use. Hence, the experience of viewing an environmental documentary film is seen to be highly individual, fluctuating and offering multiple value propositions simultaneously.

6. Discussion

The aim of the thesis was to through a consumer perspective investigating millennials experiences of environmental documentary films, specifically in relation to values and worldviews. In order to explore the aim of study, theories of the experience realms, value-in-use and flow have been used. The analysis has indicated that the findings generated both a greater understanding for experiences of cultural commodities but also new findings of what millennials value in documentary films have been identified. In this chapter the findings and analysis will be discussed in relation to the research questions and reflections of the results in relation to previous research will be brought forward. The contribution of the thesis to current research will be further discussed and practical implications considered.

Before the research questions will be answered, contextual factors and considerations need to be taken into consideration and clarified. Firstly, the documentary films discussed affect the results of the study as the type of documentary film frames the experience. However, the findings indicated surprisingly similar results even when various environmental documentary films were discussed. Although, documentaries such as *Seaspiracy*, *Cowspiracy* and David Attenborough's documentaries gave a strong influence on the findings. The common factor of these documentaries was their relation to climate change and environmental issues. Both *Seaspiracy* and *Cowspiracy* were industry specific documentaries mainly criticising the mass production of meat and commercial fishing and highlighted the industries impact on the environment. David Attenborough's *Life on our Planet* similarly took up environmental issues of biodiversity loss and global warming. In general, these themes were evident in almost all the documentaries discussed in this study. Furthermore, the expert interview gave us insights of the filmmaker's perspective to environmental documentary films highlighting the techniques used to guide the viewer's feelings across the experience.

6.1. Millennials Experience of Environmental Documentary Films

The first research question of millennials' environmental documentary film experiences has been examined by using theories of experience and especially the realms of experience, value-in-use and the concept of flow. To comprehend the experience fully, the context was examined and factors influencing the experience had to be taken into consideration. The context and settings, where, why and how environmental documentaries were viewed, revealed the impact social media had on choice of documentary films and that documentaries were watched in order to keep up with what was trending at the moment. This was further connected to a social context where the viewers wanted to discuss the topic and issues shown in the documentaries with their friends and family as well as share in their social media community. However, the majority watched the environmental documentaries alone and the main reason identified from the findings was to learn, gain knowledge or insights to a topic.

Not surprisingly, the way the participants consumed the environmental documentaries was identified as typical for millennials as they used mainly streaming services as previously identified by Seemiller and Grace (2019) and Dreier (2015). Moreover, the fact that the participants were able to name multiple, particularly environmental, documentaries is in line with Luqman (2021) stating how millennials seek knowledge about climate change and observe it through film several times a year. On top of that the analysis shows the social role of viewing environmental documentaries, which is connected to being part of a community and keeping up with the current topics which further relates to Podara et al. (2019) stating that millennials consume TV for having a sense of community. Podara et al. (2019) also states that millennials consume TV for fun which brings us to discuss the experience itself of a cultural commodity.

As presented in the literature, experiences are unique and personal (Boswijk, 2013; Gentile et al., 2007). However, the analysis and findings of this research indicated similarities in how the experience of viewing environmental documentary films is experienced by millennials.

The findings indicated that the most relevant dimensions of experiences are absorb and passive, in relation to all interviewees educational and entertainment realms were most mentioned as well as esthetic and entertainment realms. Furthermore, interestingly when it came to environmental documentary films, if the expected realm and value was educational, the expectations were lower for esthetic and entertainment realms. On the other hand, if the esthetic or entertainment realms were not fulfilled by the viewers expectations, the educational value was seen to diminish, and it could further be seen that the viewers trust in the provided information decreased. However, since all the realms were identified it became clear that the experience of watching a documentary film was not going to be determined by the dimensions of experience singularly as absorb, active, passive nor immersive. We suggest that the realms of experience will not be understood as linearly and strictly as Pine and Gilmore (2011) have presented. Rather, the realms and dimensions of experiences would be understood similarly to value-in-use, as in the end both are representations of the experience itself. Hence, the realms of experiences would be comprehended as interactive and changing processes guided by emotions.

Thus, when watching an environmental documentary, the realms and dimensions vary during the experience and are steered by emotions. This is additionally in line with Palmer's (2010) views about emotions as facilitating tools which are used to assess stimulus to develop attitudes. Moreover, emotions were identified as the lacking realm in the experience. When inspecting the realms of experience and value-in-use many similarities were found in regard to the realms of experiences. All realms, educational, escapist, esthetic and entertainment were visible from the findings, these were also all identified as perceived values from the viewer's perspective. When applying the thought of interpreting the realms as values, emotions were vital as well when considering the value-in-use. Emotions were connected to several realms like visualisations and learning, emotions of shock and surprise were seen to guide the perceived values emerging from the experience and determined whether the aspect was valued or not. Emotions were additionally guiding the motivations for action, which further connects to transformative experiences, where the viewers worldviews, attitudes and even behaviour might change. This goes further in line with previous research, indicating that experiences are connected to identity construction and values, and may have a great impact on turning points in our lives (Boswijk, 2013). Moreover, the analysis

indicates multiple value propositions occurring simultaneously as per Corvellec and Hultman's (2014) have illustrated in their article.

The findings indicated how all participants possessed consumption habits or engaged in other activities in their lives to mitigate environmental issues, which highlights the millennials value of sustainability as well as awareness of it. Accordingly, typical for millennials is their knowledge and understanding of the sustainability challenges of today (Luqman 2021), which was also confirmed by our participants. This was vital in the connection to flow as the knowledge base and skills of sustainability enabled the possibility to gain states of flow. However, if the skill level went too low or too high, it would restrict the flow state during the experience. The analysis indicated that millennials on top of having a high skill level in regard to topics about sustainability also obtained high interest to learn more which was found to be a direct indicator that flow state can be found in the environmental documentary film experience. Thus, as per Sherry (2004) stated that the balance of challenges of the message given, in this case by the documentary, and the individual's cognitive capabilities are essential for media enjoyment. The analysis further illustrated how even the state of flow would change and fluctuate within the experience as different emotions would guide the process. The aspect of learning and the state of flow within the experience of viewing environmental documentary films can be traced back to Kollmuss & Agyeman (2002) and Arendt & Matthes (2016) who underlined previous research which highlighted the impact of documentary films and its educational abilities.

Further, values of sustainability emerged from the experience in relation to learning and how to be more sustainable. Additionally, the environmental documentary film was seen to reinforce existing values which were connected to positive feelings, thus giving value to the viewer. Lastly, value was seen to emerge from storytelling, having fun and visuals which all can be connected to entertainment and esthetic realms of experience as well as values. However, again emotions were an important factor as storytelling further guided the emotions of the viewer determining the memorability of the experience. The analysis further demonstrated that storytelling and visuals further made the topics easier to understand and conceptualised abstract or unknown concepts, by visualising large numbers or statistics the issues became more tangible for the viewers .

To summarise in the context of viewing environmental documentary films the realms of experience rather form various values offered by the cultural product. Just like value-in-use, the realms of experiences are not as linear as demonstrated by Pine and Gilmore (2011), as the presenting's in the analysis would indicate. From the finding's emotions are the common factor which brings the theories together as certain emotions indicate the state of flow, but also emotions are guiding the experience and enables the individual to determine the value and realms of the experience.

6.2. Millennial's Values and Mindsets

The second research question refers to millennials' experiences of environmental documentary films related to values and mindsets connected to sustainability was further examined by using theories of value-in-use, but also through the understanding of sustainability mindsets.

Wamsler and Brink (2018) highlight how research of humans' inner workings is needed in regard to solving the impact of climate change. Accordingly, this study has focused on millennials emotions, values, mindsets and worldviews in regard to sustainability connected to the experience of environmental documentary films. As we have now examined how millennials experience environmental documentary films, we are able to address the second research question, how does the experience relate to the viewers mindsets and values connected to sustainability.

Documentary films' ability to entertain and educate (Billinge, 2017) can further be confirmed by the results of this study. Above all, Nisbet and Aufderheide (2009) have argued that documentary films have the ability to go beyond purposes of pure entertainment. This has been especially evident when identifying elements of value for the millennials. Similar to Heinonen et al. (2013) the value is seen to be created and embedded in the reality and life of the viewers. As stated previously, the values perceived by the viewer were detected when investigating and analysing the results by using the theories of flow and realms of experiences as well as embedded in the context of viewing environmental documentary films. The analysis illustrated that the perceived value of the viewer was primarily in gaining knowledge and learning when it came to viewing environmental documentary films, however multiple values were detected from the interviews.

From the context it became clear that one of the values offered by the documentary was to keep up with the trending topics and social value in the sense that the issues or topics brought up by the documentaries were further discussed within the individual's community. This relates to Ma et al. (2020) as they highlighted the mass media's influence over consumer preferences and how films can influence attitudes towards the industries portrayed.

The analysis showed that the value in regard to sustainability was evident in environmental documentaries as it highly connects to the habits, values and worldviews of the millennials. This is underlined with the most dominant value of learning from the experience which was in association with sustainability and how to be sustainable. Further, learning and individuals' skills are connected to the state of flow which were identified within the experience. Moreover, the state of flow is connected by Csikszentmihalyi (2016) to ideal experiences and by Pine and Gilmore (2011) to transformative experiences which can create change in the individual. The change identified in the analysis was in regard to sustainable actions and choices or at least the consideration of changing behaviour to be more sustainable.

As per the analysis the experience was guided by emotions which on the other hand are connected to individual's mindset and values. As per Lorentzen (2009) experiences create emotions which contribute to the formation of identity. The formation of identity can be connected to the experience of viewing environmental documentary film to their ability to reinforce the viewers values, thus strengthening their identity. Accordingly, Braun et al. (2018) connect environmental knowledge with positive environmental attitudes and behaviours. At the same time people who are more concerned about the topic are more prone to watch environmental documentaries (Holbert et al., 2003). Yet, our findings indicate not only the effect but also the value of learning from environmental documentary films. Braun et al. (2018) do as well highlight the need of education in order to promote environmental knowledge, and this study has shown that one way of doing this is through watching environmental documentary films.

As a transformative experience, viewing environmental documentary films can be related to developing and educating sustainability mindsets, as the experience was identified to conceptualise

and understand abstract concepts. This aligns with Kassel and Rimanoczy (2018) as they defined sustainability mindset as a wide-ranging understanding of manifestations of the ecosystems, social sensitivity and attention to one's values. Hence, the experience of viewing environmental documentary films can be seen to educate sustainable mindsets. Moreover, emotions are vital in developing a new mindset (Hermes & Rimanoczy, 2018). Similarly, emotions were identified to guide the viewer's experience and formation of attitudes. Thus, the connection to a sustainable mindset in the experience could be identified by focusing on values and mindsets of the millennials.

To summarise this research found that the experience of viewing environmental documentary films are highly related to the millennials values and mindsets connected to sustainability. The interests of millennials meet the environmental documentary films educational value, thus enabling the state of flow and potential for transformation. The transformative experience of environmental documentary film affects the viewers values and mindsets through visuals, storytelling and emotions, potentially changing attitudes and promoting change in behaviour.

6.3. Practical Implications

This study has expanded the knowledge of experiencing cultural products, more precisely environmental documentaries, thus the study contributes to the knowledge about value creation activities within the CCI's (see Choi & Burnes, 2013). The thesis especially gives insights into experiences in the field of culture and creativity and service management. Further, the thesis has societal relevance integrating the element of sustainability mindset and its connection to environmental documentaries, which address the challenges all societies face in regard to global warming and other environmental issues of unsustainability. Most importantly this thesis broadens the knowledge about experiences and in particular experiences of cultural products.

Practical implications demonstrate how this knowledge can be applied and used. As per Grönroos (2015) it is vital for managers to understand the value creation from the customer perspective in order to support and manage it. Further, by adding the knowledge of sustainability from the results

of this thesis, managers may comprehend and integrate sustainability to their services or cultural products in order to create sustainable networks of consumers and stakeholders which further signifies societal value. Moreover, adding the sustainability aspect to experiences also creates novel value propositions for the customers who care about sustainability. Particularly, the emerging values, realms of experience and factors to achieve a state of flow within the experience can be used in the pursuit of offering transformative experiences.

6.4. Limitations

As experiences are assumed to be individual and complex, one limitation of this study is to capture the wholesome experience thus there is the possibility of excluding factors or aspects relevant for the understanding of the experience. By delimiting the thesis to using the chosen theories of value-in-use, the experience realms and flow, certain important contributors may have gone missing. Even though contextual factors have been considered to an extent, for example the social constructions impact on values could give valuable insights and generate a deeper understanding of experiences. Moreover, the sampling method can be limiting as it can be assumed that the sample consisted of participants who are interested in documentary films and environmental issues due to their voluntary participation. Although the sample was diverse, the experiences of those not so interested could have affected the results differently. Further, sustainability as a topic can also be problematic as there can be many understandings of the term and can be interpreted differently depending on the individual. Even though we identified sustainability departing from the Brundtland definition by WCED (1987), we could not be sure how the notion was understood by the participants as clarifying questions were not asked in the interviews since it was not within the scope of the thesis.

7. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been examined by investigating millennials' experiences of watching environmental documentary films as well as their mindsets and values towards sustainability by using semi-structured interviews and the theories of realms of experience, flow and value-in-use. This thesis concludes that environmental documentary films illustrated possibilities as cultural products, educational tools as well as their societal relevance made them ideal to be examined. Three theories which all illustrate or are located within the experience were used to guide the research. Environmental documentary films have proven to have the potential to change attitudes and behaviour due to their transformative nature. Hence, viewing an environmental documentary is connected to values and mindsets of the millennials and by incorporating the aspect of sustainability it brings new insights in how to understand millennials' experiences. The results further indicate that the experience of environmental documentary films has to be understood as a dynamic process dependent on emotions, fluctuating in character and form as well as different contextual factors would need to be taken into account. Since the experience of viewing an environmental documentary film was recognised to have the potential to be a transformative experience, the transformation can particularly happen in regard to the viewers values and mindset towards sustainability. People who are concerned with the global challenges are more likely to watch environmental documentaries, and the result of this thesis concludes that people with stronger values to the environment also tend to be more affected by the documentaries.

7.1. Future Research

Alvesson and Deetz (2021) stress the importance of openness and that transparency is required in qualitative research, and due to the complex nature of qualitative research we want to further open up for discussion and reconsideration for other researchers to further develop ideas. Based on the results, we would suggest future research to focus on the dimension of sustainability in value creation and especially consider the sustainability mindset in order to cover otherwise neglected aspects such as values and beliefs and their contribution to value. Moreover, to truly understand

how cultural products are experienced, other cultural products than documentary films with possibly different values and realms of experience should be researched.

Even though this study has filled the research gap of understanding value creation within the CCI's we still urge for more research as the results of this study shows it is important to unveil the possibilities and opportunities cultural products possess when it comes to experiencing them. Moreover, this thesis emphasised the environmental aspects but other aspects of sustainability, such as social sustainability, can be further explored in future research.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Social Media Announcement for Initial Contact

Dear friends and acquaintances!

Me and my partner Annemari/Frida are writing our master thesis in Service Management specializing in Culture and Creativity and would need your help to contribute to scientific research!

Are you 20-35 y/o? Have you ever watched a documentary film raising environmental issues? For example “A Life on our planet”, “Our Planet”, “Cowspiracy”, “Seaspiracy”, “My Octopus Teacher” or “An inconvenient truth”. (The listing of documentary films are just examples of what kind of film we want you to have experienced from before - that is an environmental one. At least one and it does not have to be one of those listed).

If so, would you be interested in participating in an online interview over Zoom or Teams to discuss your experiences of watching environmental documentary films?

The interview will be held in english thus a basic understanding for the language is needed. If you manage to read (and understand) this announcement however, your english is good enough. Please DM either of us if you are able to participate! The interview will last for approximately 45 min and we will adapt after your schedule. We would very much appreciate your time and input for our master thesis.

Appendix B: Message with Interview Information

Dear XXX, welcome to the interview today at XXX !

Here is some basic information for you to know before the interview.

This interview aims to contribute to our master thesis in service management. The purpose of this interview is for us to get a greater understanding of your experience, values and mindset in regards to environmental documentary films.

For the interview please find a peaceful and quiet place where you will not be interrupted, to assure that the interview will go smoothly. The interview will be recorded for the purpose of transcription (that is we will write down word by word what has been said). We will record the session in zoom/teams but only the voice recording will be used. The interview will take approximately 45 min and you are able to stop the interview at any point. You are able to contact us at any time after the interview if you want to change your answers or to withdraw yourself from the study or if you have any other questions about your participation. The interview will be anonymous, thus the basic information we require can not be traced back to you. The interview will not be used for other purposes than research and no other analysis not relevant will be carried out.

We will send you the link approximately one hour before the interview starts.

Thank you for your participation, we look forward to seeing you in Zoom!

Kind regards

Frida Bäckman & Annemari Nieminen

Appendix C: Interview Guide for Semi- Structured Interviews

Introduction in interview:

Hi! Our names are Frida and Annemari and this interview aims to contribute to our master thesis in service management. The purpose of this interview is for us to get a greater understanding of your experience, values and mindset in regards to environmental related documentary films.

Ethical guidelines:

- Are you fine with us to do a voice record? We will record “everything” then save the audio from the record. If you want to, you can turn off your camera.
- This interview will take approx 45 min and you can whenever you want to stop the interview
- As researchers we will not share any personal information about you which makes it possible to identify you. What might be shared however in the thesis is age, nationality, gender, occupation.
- What is said will be transcribed however this study is anonymous. Your name will be changed, any preferences of what to be called?
- We will share transcriptions with our supervisor if asked for.
- When our thesis is approved we will delete the voice recordings but save the transcriptions if they are requested in further research or for the sake of verifying results.
- The thesis will be a public document available for all
- The material is stored in a place where no unauthorized people may access it
- No copies will be made of the audio however if you want a copy yourself you may have one.
- Can we contact you for follow-up questions if needed?
- This thesis is about your experiences of watching documentary films, hence you are in no position of being exposed to danger
- When we talk about documentary films/documentaries we will mean environmental documentary films.

Interviewee Introduction:

We would start with some questions about yourself.

- What is your occupation?
- Gender: what gender do you identify as?
- Age?
- Nationality?
- Where do you live right now?

Sustainability: worldview and values

- Sustainability is about to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. That is from a social, economy, and ecological perspective.
- In general what is important to you in life?
- What do you consider as your core values?
- Is sustainability important for you? Why if yes or no?
- Could you describe your relationship with environmental issues?
 - Are your values affected by environmental issues?
 - Do you take action? How?
- What do you think are the most important values we as humans share in regards to sustainability?
- Are you proud of your sustainability habits?
- Do you think you have inspired others to be sustainable?

General Documentary questions

- Since when did you start watching environmental documentary films?
- Do you often view documentaries related to environmental issues?
- Which were the environmental documentary films you have seen? You can give some examples, no need to mention all.
- Do you find them useful? How and why?
- Could you describe the settings? weekend , afternoon or evening

- With who? By yourself?
- What platform: on the cinema/ TV-stream/ netflix
- How do you normally watch a documentary, which device? (example computer, cinema, tv)
- When do you normally watch them? (commuting, at home when to relax, in the background while cooking)

Connection of values and Documentaries and Deeper to general experience

- Why do you watch documentary films?
- How do you think other people experience environmental documentary films?
- Do you experience them the same way or differently? Elaborate.
- What is the value for you in the environmental documentaries?

The last time a film was watched and a memorable one

- When was the last time you watched a documentary film?
 - Could you describe the documentary film for us?
 - Why did you watch the documentary film at that particular time?
 - Where and how did you watch the documentary?
 - Did someone recommend the documentary? How did you end up watching it?
 - Did you further recommend it?
 - How did it make you feel?
 - What emotions did you experience during the documentary and after?
 - What did you learn?
 - Was the subject new or did you know from before?
 - Did that experience change your world view and values?
 - What did you least like in the documentary?

- Which one was the most memorable one?
 - Could you describe the documentary film for us?
 - Why was it memorable?

- Why did you watch the documentary film at that particular time?
- Where and how did you watch the documentary?
- Did someone recommend the documentary? How did you end up watching it?
- Did you further recommend it?
- How did it make you feel?
- What emotions did you experience during the documentary and after?
- What did you learn?
- Was the subject new or did you know from before?
- Did you experience feelings of boredom, anxiety, worry, arousal, control or relaxation?
- Did you find it hard to understand the content?
- Did that experience change your world view and values?
- What did you least like in the documentary?

Conclusion

- Is there anything you would like to change in the world after watching a documentary of this kind?
- Final thoughts? Something you thought of but we did not ask about?

Appendix D: Good Research Practice

General rules for good research in *Good research Practice* by the Swedish Research Council (2017, p. 10).

- 1) You shall tell the truth about your research.
- 2) You shall consciously review and report the basic premises of your studies.
- 3) You shall openly account for your methods and results.
- 4) You shall openly account for your commercial interests and other associations.
- 5) You shall not make unauthorised use of the research results of others.
- 6) You shall keep your research organised, for example through documentation and filing.
- 7) You shall strive to conduct your research without doing harm to people, animals or the environment.
- 8) You shall be fair in your judgement of others' research.