

Exploring the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development

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ABSTRACT,

Implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is becoming more important for various reasons, such as its crucial influence on competitiveness. However, it is also because of the presence of social issues. An industry that is known for having social issues is the clothing industry, with social issues including child labour or dangerous workplaces (Rana Plaza factory collapse). Thus, clothing suppliers have much to improve, which could be achieved with socially responsible supplier development. Socially responsible supplier development could be described as the buying company's efforts to identify and address areas for improvement in CSR practices. However, from the perspective of buying companies, reasons for implementing socially responsible supplier development could differ, which incites interest in researching this. This research thus explores the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development. Through interviews with representatives from five different companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry, this research aims to identify and understand their motivations for engaging in socially responsible supplier development practices. The main findings highlight that companies are motivated by meeting client requirements, complying with the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) regulation, seeing the difference between the beauty of fashion and poor working conditions, having specific values as a family company, and staying competitive. Besides motivations, other factors, such as the perceived benefits of implementing socially responsible supplier development or the methods used, are also researched.

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Keywords

Corporate social responsibility, Supplier development, Socially responsible supplier development, Clothing industry, Motivations, The Netherlands

1. INTRODUCTION: THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices are becoming more critical for an increasing number of companies because of their significant impact on competitiveness (Turyakira *et al.*, 2014). Reasons for this include growing concerns over the deterioration of the environment, violations of labour and human rights, and transparency of supply chains. A result of this is the aspiration of companies to operate more sustainably. One way of operating more sustainably could be through supplier development.

According to Wagner (2006), supplier development could be described as “supporting the supplier in enhancing the performance of their products and services or improving the supplier’s capabilities.” According to a study by Lee and Kim (2009), suppliers may face challenges when implementing CSR initiatives due to their lack of awareness regarding social responsibility issues and resources such as time and money. This highlights the underperformance of certain suppliers, showing the need for supplier development practices. By implementing supplier development practices, buying companies hope to eliminate the challenges their suppliers are facing and, by doing so, boost sustainability and social responsibility across the supply chain, with social responsibility being the main focus of this research. However, the motivations for engaging in supplier development from the perspective of buying companies could differ. When observing the dairy supply chain in India, motivations for adopting socially responsible supplier development practices of private firms and cooperatives are exhibited. “Outperforming competitors”, “Increasing market share”, and “Increasing profits” are economic motivations of private firms, whereas “Profits through legitimacy” is an economic motivation for cooperatives (Yawar & Kauppi, 2018). This leads to buying companies treating their suppliers differently based on their motivations, with the implementation of socially responsible supplier development practices.

Methods of addressing social issues in supply chains through supplier development include closely monitoring suppliers and actively working together regarding social issues. According to the observations of buying companies, the compliance of their suppliers’ facilities with human rights and child labour has improved, along with safety and labour conditions in these facilities (Sancha *et al.*, 2015). Wu (2017) mentions “assessment and certification of a supplier’s ethical behaviour”, “sharing CSR information”, and “providing manpower, education, and training to improve a supplier’s ability to implement CSR” as methods for addressing social issues. Looking back at the dairy supply chain in India, the methods of addressing social issues of private firms and cooperatives are distinguished. Private firms could address social issues by paying their suppliers premium prices for their supplies. In contrast, cooperatives could address social issues by tackling broad societal issues such as building communities, improving livelihood strategies, including women and mitigating poverty (Yawar & Seuring, 2018). The studies on the topic show that implementing socially responsible supplier development practices improves overall supplier performance as their social issues are addressed. They also highlight the importance of improving the collaborations between buying companies and their suppliers (e.g., Sancha *et al.*, 2015; Saunders *et al.*, 2015; Yawar & Seuring, 2018).

This research will focus on companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry. The Netherlands is home to many companies operating in the clothing industry and is a country where CSR practices are highly valued and, thus, prioritised. This leads to higher expectations regarding the implementation of CSR practices and triggers curiosity about why they implemented CSR practices in the first place, especially for clothing companies. The clothing industry is characterised by its complicated supply chains, rapidly changing consumer demand and sustainability initiatives. These sustainability initiatives are deemed necessary because of the frequent incidents in the clothing industry. An example of an incident could be the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory building in Bangladesh on 24 April 2013, which led to 1,134 deaths and thousands more injured and is considered to be the worst incident to ever occur in the clothing industry. Of all the companies involved in this incident, only Primark and Mango operate in the Netherlands (Clean Clothes Campaign, n.d.). This incident could be proof of justified concerns regarding unsafe working conditions, the absence of building safety regulations, and ethical matters in the clothing industry. However, the occurrence of incidents is not the only type of social issue in the clothing industry. Hiller Connell and Kozar (2017) mention human rights issues, which include forced and child labour, low wages, outrageous work hours without compensating for working overtime, dangers to health and safety (where the Rana Plaza factory collapse could be seen as an example), and a lack of worker representation for negotiations about working conditions. Looking back at the two companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry involved with the Rana Plaza factory collapse, Primark could be used again as an example. In 2014, one year after the Rana Plaza factory collapse, a claim was made against Primark by a customer who allegedly found a note in a pair of trousers seeking help. The note was in Chinese and wrapped in a prison card containing the message that prisoners were forced to work fifteen hours per day manufacturing clothes (BBC, 2014). The discovery of this note could make people wonder if these prisoners were even paid at all for their work, which could trigger accusations of slave work. Given the differentiation in the treatment of suppliers by buying companies and the controversial operations of companies in the clothing industry, this research will focus on the motivations of companies to choose socially responsible supplier development in the clothing industry.

As mentioned at the beginning of the introduction, the importance of CSR practices is increasing nowadays, leading to more companies implementing them. However, the reasons for implementing these practices could differ from company to company, depending on characteristics such as composition or size. Companies’ operations could also be mentioned as a factor of dependability. It is also essential to examine whether their efforts to operate in a socially responsible manner reflect their actual way of operating. This could be proven by identifying the changes after implementing CSR practices. Another interesting matter regarding the implementation of CSR practices is to wonder whether companies really care about the social issues in their industries or do it for monetary, reputational, or both benefits. Thus, the sincerity behind the efforts and the implementation could be questionable in some instances. The following research question is formulated to identify this gap of knowledge:

What are the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development?

This research question will be answered through interviews with representatives of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry.

This research aims to understand the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development by applying prior concepts, such as the stakeholder theory of the firm, in a new context. It aims to serve as a guide in identifying the motivations and why they are in place based on the circumstances of the companies. An interesting point of this research could thus be the exploration of whether the motivations are based on monetary, reputational, or both benefits. Finally, this research aims to identify the perceived importance of ethical matters by companies, considering past events.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The available literature provides descriptions of terms, theories and frameworks essential to understanding this research better. This literature review will briefly describe these terms, theories and frameworks and apply them to this research.

2.1 Supplier Development

The first important term is supplier development. As mentioned in the introduction, Wagner (2006) describes supplier development as “supporting the supplier in enhancing the performance of their products and services or improving the supplier’s capabilities.” Another description could be that supplier development entails the efforts of a buying company with a supplier to enhance their performance and/or capabilities, thereby fulfilling the buying company’s short and/or long-term supply requirements (Krause & Ellram, 1997). The second description of the term supplier development also includes a significant motivation for a buying company, which was not mentioned in the first description.

Supplier development practices could be used in multiple instances. These instances include developing new products, processes, services, etc., for cost reduction, quality improvement, and the provision of innovative technologies to gain market share (Handfield *et al.*, 1999) and the desire to eliminate the challenges that the buying companies’ suppliers face and increase sustainability and social responsibility across the supply chain by doing so, which is mentioned at the beginning of the introduction. The first instance is more directed towards the success of buying companies, whereas the second is more directed towards the success of suppliers.

Much research has been done on supplier development practices to enhance the performance of suppliers, which is the desire in the second instance mentioned above. Krause *et al.* (2000) distinguished between internalised and externalised supplier development strategies. Internalised supplier development strategies include direct involvement of buying companies in their suppliers’ operations, whereas externalised supplier development strategies include competitive pressure, supplier assessment and supplier incentives. Modi and Mabert (2007) found that supplier evaluation and certification are the most critical supplier development requirements before engaging in operational knowledge transfer practices such as site visits and supplier training. Regarding the collaboration between buying companies and suppliers, Krause *et al.* (2007) exhibited that it is influenced by supplier development practices such as information sharing, supplier evaluation, direct involvement and shared values, which aligns with the social capital theory. The social capital theory is described as the norms and connections that enable people to work together (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). The supplier development

practices mentioned by Krause *et al.* (2007) could thus be seen as enablers for working together.

2.2 Socially Responsible Supplier Development, Sustainability and Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Framework

This section will discuss socially responsible supplier development, sustainability, and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework. First, these concepts will be distinguished: Socially responsible supplier development focuses on the social dimension and, thus, on improving suppliers’ social and ethical practices. Sustainability focuses on the social, environmental, and economic dimensions, thus tackling the issues in these dimensions. The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework provides an organised method for companies to closely monitor their performance in the abovementioned three dimensions of sustainability (Laurell *et al.*, 2019).

2.2.1 Socially Responsible Supplier Development

Supplier development practices have been around for a very long time. An example of this could be from the automotive industry, from Toyota. As early as the 1950s, core supplier employees gained access to lectures, seminars, and training courses for Toyota employees (Kyohokai, 1967). There has been plenty of research on supplier development ever since. In 2012, however, Lu *et al.* introduced their novel approach of socially responsible supplier development to deal with the ethical issues of suppliers. This is because they identified an emptiness in how buying companies can improve the CSR capabilities of their suppliers, according to the understanding of CSR and supplier development at that time.

Socially responsible supplier development is thus described as the efforts of the buying company to identify areas for improvement in the implementation of CSR practices and undertaking necessary actions to address identified issues (Lu *et al.*, 2012). This description highlights CSR practices in its definition, which was not the case for the previous two descriptions of supplier development. After describing socially responsible supplier development, Lu *et al.* (2012) identified three dimensions of socially responsible supplier development practices: socially responsible information sharing, socially responsible supplier evaluation and socially responsible supplier development. The socially responsible supplier development practices will be the most effective when the three dimensions are performed optimally. Yawar and Seuring (2017) mentioned three strategies for managing social issues in supply chains. These are communication strategies, compliance strategies, and supplier development strategies. Communication strategies consist of corporate reporting and labelling. Compliance strategies include codes of conduct/standards, auditing, and monitoring. Supplier development strategies include direct and indirect supplier development strategies, trust, and collaborative relationships.

2.2.2 Sustainability

Another important term is sustainability. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) provides the most common description of sustainability: “to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future”. Another description of sustainability is provided by Huetting and Reijnders (1998), which describes sustainability as “the use of the vital functions (possible uses) of our biophysical surroundings in such a way that they remain indefinitely available”. What becomes clear from both of these descriptions is that the future of humanity is prioritised. This highlights the point of attention of companies that implement sustainability initiatives.

2.2.3 Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Framework

A critical framework that could be used is the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework. This framework was developed by Elkington (1997) and consists, from the top down, of three bottom lines: Social, Economic and Environmental. Society depends on the economy, which depends on the global ecosystem. The state of the worldwide ecosystem represents the ultimate bottom line. This indicates that the three dimensions are connected. The TBL framework is also known as the three P's: People, Planet and Profit. People would be equal to the Social bottom line, Planet to the Environmental bottom line and Profit to the Economic bottom line. In light of this research about socially responsible supplier development, the focus will be on the Social bottom line and, thus, the first P: People.

2.3 Stakeholder Theory of the Firm

Another way of getting a better understanding of this research is through the application of theories and frameworks. A critical theory is the stakeholder theory of the firm. This theory begins with examining diverse groups to whom the company bears responsibilities. It implies that the interests of the large group – the stakeholders – should be prioritised over the interests of the small group – the shareholders (Crane & Matten, 2016). Stakeholders include competitors, customers, employees, civil society, suppliers, shareholders and the government (Crane & Matten, 2016). The stakeholder model, according to Crane and Matten, is displayed in Figure 1.

However, different stakeholders are described in the literature as the most important to specific companies in specific industries. According to Greenley and Foxall (1996), companies focus on multiple stakeholders; however, the focus is mostly on consumer orientation. Consumer orientation entails understanding and prioritising consumer interests. When applying this to the stakeholder model of Crane and Matten, consumers could be categorised under the group of customers. The findings of Şener *et al.* (2016) show that shareholders and the government are the most important stakeholders for companies, irrespective of differences between industries in their research. Research by Lechler *et al.* (2019) in the automotive first-tier industry found that first-tier suppliers are essential for guaranteeing sustainability in upstream supply chains. The government, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), and employees influence the integration of sustainability of these first-tier suppliers. When applying this to the stakeholder model of Crane and Matten, NGOs could be categorised under the group of civil society. In contrast, OEMs could be categorised under the group of suppliers, together with the first-tier suppliers. Thus, it could be said that generally speaking, all of the stakeholders are important for companies; however, for the stakeholder theory of the firm, the stakeholders' interests are prioritised over those of the shareholders (Crane & Matten, 2016).

When applying the stakeholder theory of the firm to this research about the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development, research could be done on whether companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry prioritise the interests of suppliers and other stakeholders over those of the shareholders. The focus would thus not be on making as much money as possible for the shareholders but rather on other demands based on the stakeholders' interests.

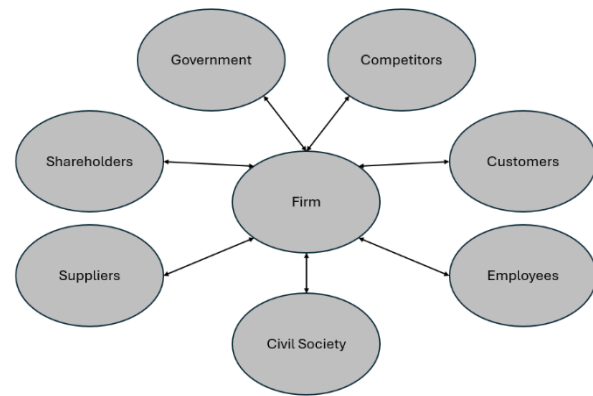


Figure 1: The stakeholder model according to Crane and Matten (2016)

2.4 Motivations for Engaging in Supplier Development

Supplier development and socially responsible supplier development have been described, and instances of using them and methods for implementing them have been provided (Wagner, 2006; Krause & Elram, 1997; Kyohokai, 1967; Lu *et al.*, 2012; Handfield *et al.*, 1999; Krause *et al.*, 2000; Modi & Mabert, 2007; Krause *et al.*, 2007; Yawar & Seuring, 2017). Sustainability and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework have been described to enhance the understanding of the scope of this research. However, the motivations for these supplier development practices have not been discussed yet.

Krause (1999) mentioned several critical motivations for engaging in supplier development. These include supplier performance shortcomings, the market competition of buying companies, the dynamism of the markets and technologies prevailing in these markets, the perspective of buying companies towards suppliers, supplier commitment and thus their perspective towards buying companies, expectations of the continuance of the relationships and effective communication between buying companies and suppliers. Chen and Bai (2016) mentioned procedural and result justice shortcomings, strictly supervising the suppliers rather than applying relationship management, relying on internal inspections, and not responding to external exposure incidents. The research findings by Yawar and Seuring (2017) suggest that the fundamental motivation is achieving social and economic performance. Social performance is expressed through improved management of labour issues in supply chains, whereas economic performance is expressed through increased net shareholder value resulting from improved market performance. Finally, Rogers *et al.* (2007) mentioned institutional pressures and capability shortcomings as motivations.

Carrying on with the motivations of engaging in supplier development, Nagati and Rebolledo (2013) provide an interesting perspective: the suppliers' perspective. Their research found that trust and preferred customer status are the key motivations of suppliers actively collaborating in supplier development practices. Based on these findings, it could be said that the critical motivations from the buying companies' and the suppliers' perspectives are interconnected.

2.5 Regulations

Over the years, various regulations and standards have been developed and implemented or will be implemented soon to enhance compliance with social standards, particularly in human and labour rights. For example, these have been developed by the European Union (EU) or the United Nations

(UN). The most important ones for this research will be listed below.

2.5.1 UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)

First, the UNGPs, which stands for UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, will be discussed. The UN developed these principles, which went into effect in June 2011, immediately after being approved by the UN Human Rights Council. “The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are a set of guidelines for States and companies to prevent, address and remedy human rights abuses committed in business operations” (Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, n.d.).

2.5.2 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Second, the SDGs, which stands for UN Sustainable Development Goals, will be discussed. These 17 goals were developed by the UN and adopted by its member states in 2015, and “they recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests” (United Nations, n.d.).

2.5.3 International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions

Third, the ILO, which stands for International Labour Organization Conventions, will be discussed. The first Conventions were approved in 1919, after the establishment of the ILO. “The ILO Conventions cover a wide area of social and labour issues including basic human rights, minimum wages, industrial relations, employment policy, social dialogue, social security and other issues” (International Labour Organization, 2011).

2.5.4 Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD)

Fourth, the CSDDD, which stands for Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, will be discussed. This regulation was proposed on 23 February 2022 by the European Commission and accepted on 24 May 2024 by the Council of the EU. This regulation guarantees that harmful human rights and environmental impacts of their operations in and out of Europe are detected and tackled. The CSDDD applies to approximately 6,000 large EU companies with over 1000 employees and over €450 million (net) turnover worldwide. It also applies to approximately 900 large non-EU companies with over €450 million (net) turnover in the EU. The upcoming CSDDD does not apply to micro companies and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (European Commission, n.d.-a).

2.5.5 Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)

Fifth, the CSRD, which stands for Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, will be discussed. The EU developed this regulation, which went into effect in the 2024 financial year. “EU law requires all large companies and all listed companies (except listed micro-enterprises) to disclose information on what they see as the risks and opportunities arising from social and environmental issues, and on the impact of their activities on people and the environment.” (European Commission, n.d.-b).

2.5.6 Social Accountability 8000 (SA8000)

Sixth, the SA8000, which stands for Social Accountability 8000, will be discussed. This certification standard was developed by Social Accountability International (SAI) in 1997.

“The SA8000 Standard and Certification System provide a framework for organizations of all types, in any industry, and in any country to conduct business in a way that is fair and decent for workers and to demonstrate their adherence to the highest social standards” (Social Accountability International, n.d.).

3. METHODOLOGY: CASE STUDY

3.1 Research Design

Two types of research can be distinguished: qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research commonly entails gathering extensive data from several sources to understand individual participants better. This involves their attitudes, perspectives, and opinions (Nassaji, 2015). Quantitative research, however, is conducted in a systematic, controlled manner. It is built on measurement and uses numerical measures to carry out statistical tests (Hagan, 2014). Both types of research have limitations. Qualitative research has smaller sample sizes and is time-consuming. In contrast, quantitative research does not go in-depth and thus does not consider individual participants’ experiences and messages (Rahman, 2016). To answer the research question and accomplish the research goals, in-depth research and individual participants’ experiences are crucial.

The type of research that was thus conducted is qualitative. In the literature, many qualitative research designs have been categorised. However, Creswell et al. (2007) focused on five qualitative research designs: narrative research, case studies, grounded theory, phenomenology, and participatory action research (PAR). This research made use of a case study. Schramm (1971) provides an early definition of a case study, suggesting that the most important aspects are time and description. This makes sense when you look further at the definition, where he also suggests that a case study aims to answer why a particular decision was taken, how it was executed, and what its result was. Another definition of a case study has been provided by Creswell et al. (2007). They suggest that numerous case studies focus on a specific matter with the case in question, which involves individuals, multiple individuals, programs and activities chosen to give insight into the matter. This indicates that the focus of a case study is not just primarily on the individuals involved. Crowe et al. (2011) provided the final definition of a case study: “A case study is a research approach that is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context.”

When applying the definitions of a case study to this research, it could be seen as a suitable method for conducting research. First, the research question will be repeated to understand better why: *What are the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development?* To find out about this, I had to ask why these companies made these decisions, how they did it and what the result was. This shows that the central questions of a case study suggested by Creswell et al. (2007) also needed to be asked during this research. With this research, the focus was also on specific companies in a particular industry in a certain country, which shows who and what was involved in giving insight into the matter. The following subchapter elaborates on the companies, industry, and country.

3.2 Data Collection

Interviews were conducted to collect the data necessary for answering the research question. A questionnaire was built based on the literature, which was used to conduct interviews with representatives of the companies in question and could thus be seen as the primary tool for the research. The

questionnaire contains thirteen questions: two introductory questions, ten core questions about implementing socially responsible supplier development, and one concluding question. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. The companies that were selected for the interviews had to meet pre-defined criteria, which were as follows: First, the companies needed to operate in the clothing industry. Second, they needed to operate in the Netherlands. Third, they needed to implement socially responsible supplier development. After having selected the relevant companies, interview participants had to be selected who also had to meet pre-defined criteria, which were as follows: First, they had to work for companies that operate in the Dutch clothing industry. Second, they had to be part of the companies internally and not be an external force. Third, their roles in their companies had to be significant enough to enable them to answer the questions in the built questionnaire.

Five interviews with different companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry were conducted, each taking approximately 45 minutes. These companies were approached by e-mail. E-mails were sent to customer services, which were then forwarded to the relevant departments by them. If there were any interest, representatives from these departments would seek contact, which happened five times. Table 1 below summarises the interview participants, their roles within their companies, and their companies.

Interview Participant (IP)#	Role Within the Company	Company (C)#
IP1	CSR Manager	C1
IP2	ESG Specialist	C2
IP3	Founder	C3
IP4	CSR Director	C4
IP5	CSR Manager	C5

Table 1: Interview participants, their roles within their companies, and their companies

3.3 Data Analysis

The interviews were recorded and transcribed to analyse the data. The interviews with C2, C4, and C5 were conducted and recorded on Microsoft Teams. In contrast, the interviews with C1 and C3 were conducted and recorded on a mobile phone. The interview recordings were then transcribed using a programme called Amberscript. Amberscript automatically converts audio to text with an accuracy of 85%. However, the transcriptions were manually checked for possible mistakes afterwards. The interview participants were asked for their consent to record, transcribe, and use the interviews for this research.

The data analysis method used for this research is called thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) described thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing, and writing about themes, which are equal to patterns inside the data. It thus offers a convenient and theoretically flexible approach. Thematic analysis has six phases: (1) familiarisation, (2) coding, (3) forming initial themes, (4) developing and assessing themes, (5) improving, defining, and naming themes, and (6) writing the results (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The transcriptions were coded using a programme called ATLAS.ti and thus coded to identify patterns inside the interview transcripts. These patterns are elaborated on in the next chapter.

4. RESULTS

The following section contains the results collected through interviews with five different companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry. The main aim of these interviews was to

serve as a means to answer the research question and discover interesting points for this research, such as the perceived benefits of implementing socially responsible supplier development or the perceived importance of sourcing ethically and managing the supply chain responsibly by the companies in question. In order to refer to the statements made by the interview participants, the abbreviation ‘IP’ is used, followed by the number of the interview participant in question. In order to refer to the respective companies of the interview participants, the abbreviation ‘C’ is used, followed by the number of the company in question. The interview participants and their respective companies are numbered according to the dates the interviews were conducted.

4.1 Overview of the Companies

Five different companies were interviewed for this research. All of these companies also operate in the Dutch clothing industry. Company 1 (C1) is a group that operates in both the branded and non-branded markets. They sell clothing and shoes, and their headquarters are in the Netherlands, but they also have an office in China and various stores for their brands in Europe. Company 2 (C2) is a group as well that operates in a variety of different markets. They are a buying association and deliver many services to thousands of retail partners across Europe. Their headquarters are in Germany, but they also have offices in other European countries. Company 3 (C3) is a small company that sells responsibly produced clothing. Their headquarters are in the Netherlands. Company 4 (C4) is another group where lifestyle and fashion are central. The company is family-owned and possesses multiple brands. Their headquarters are in the Netherlands, with tens of stores scattered around the Benelux. Company 5 (C5) is the final participating company. Their primary focus is selling lifestyle clothing, with their headquarters in the Netherlands and several stores in Europe.

4.2 Ethical Sourcing and Social Responsibility in Supply Chain Management

4.2.1 The Importance of Sourcing Ethically and Managing the Supply Chain Responsibly

The companies were asked about the perceived importance of sourcing ethically and managing the supply chain responsibly. All companies – C1, C2, C3, C4, and C5 – expressed the importance of sourcing ethically and managing the supply chain responsibly. C1, C4, and C5 explicitly stated that sourcing ethically and managing the supply chain responsibly are necessary to stay competitive nowadays. C1 stated that about 90% of their business is Business-to-Business (B2B). Many of these businesses consist of large companies with specific requirements that must be met. This leads to C1 having to meet these specific requirements, making it necessary to source ethically and manage the supply chain responsibly. C4 highlighted the awareness of customers nowadays. They stated that they get a lot of comments and questions from customers. Customers tell them that they liked a piece of clothing, for example, but want to know whether it was produced with child labour or whether it was produced with sustainable materials. According to C4, companies can not look the other way anymore, as this is not how it works nowadays.

4.2.2 The Perception of the Social Responsibility of the Companies

The companies were also asked whether they consider themselves socially responsible. C2, C3, and C4 consider themselves socially responsible; C1 indicated that they are doing okay regarding social responsibility, and IP5 could not answer this question for C5. However, even though the answers

of C1, C2, C3, and C4 were positive, C1, C2, and C4 acknowledged that there are still many points for improvement. C4 stated that situations can always be managed even better. From their personal and managerial points of view, IP4 does not find that whatever they do is enough for social responsibility. C1 and C2 stated that they are working on going beyond their direct suppliers, also known as tier-one suppliers. These suppliers supply them with their products, such as clothes, among other things. The suppliers of tier-one suppliers are tier-two suppliers who supply them with fabric or trimmings.

4.3 Implementing Socially Responsible Supplier Development

4.3.1 Motivations to Engage in Socially Responsible Supplier Development

The companies were asked about their motivations to engage in socially responsible supplier development to improve the suppliers' social responsibility. Interestingly, every single company gave a different answer to this question. Their respective answers are listed below.

4.3.1.1 Client Requirements

According to C1, client requirements motivated them to engage in socially responsible supplier development to improve the suppliers' social responsibility. As they mentioned, their client base mainly consists of businesses, as about 90% of their business is B2B. Many of these businesses are large retailers with specific requirements that must be met. This led to C1 becoming a member of amfori BSCI. Amfori BSCI, which stands for amfori Business Social Compliance Initiative, offers a recognised approach to identifying and addressing risks in global supply chains. By implementing the approach of amfori BSCI, human rights due diligence could be exercised more efficiently, and business partners could be supported in guaranteeing the protection of workers' rights (Amfori, n.d.).

4.3.1.2 CSRD Regulation

According to C2, implementing the CSRD, which stands for the Corporate Social Responsibility Directive, motivated them to engage in socially responsible supplier development to improve the suppliers' social responsibility. The CSRD is an EU law, and "EU law requires all large companies and all listed companies (except listed micro-enterprises) to disclose information on what they see as the risks and opportunities arising from social and environmental issues, and on the impact of their activities on people and the environment." (European Commission, n.d.-b).

4.3.1.3 Beauty vs. Reality

According to C3, seeing the difference between the beauty of fashion and poor working conditions motivated them to engage in socially responsible supplier development to improve the suppliers' social responsibility. They compared a series of events which led to the engagement mentioned above. On the one hand, they mentioned that they had coffee with famous individuals and visited fashion shows in Milan, but on the other hand, they mentioned that they walked in factories with piles of rubbish up to their knees. They could see the dampness, the inability to breathe properly, and the darkness in such factories in Delhi, Calcutta, Taiwan, or the south of Korea. Their main point was that even though it costs much effort and will not be profitable in the short term, the most respectful, environmentally friendly option could always be chosen.

4.3.1.4 Values Embedded in the DNA of a Family Company

According to C4, being a family company motivated them to engage in socially responsible supplier development to improve the suppliers' social responsibility. They mentioned that they are a very old family company and that, as a family company, they have these values of doing good by their people and working together with their suppliers. While growing from a very small to a larger company, they always kept the core value of doing business as a family and caring for their clients, suppliers, etc. For example, they do not implement extreme measures towards their suppliers; they see them as partners. This is how they see and do business; it is embedded in their DNA.

4.3.1.5 Staying Competitive

According to C5, staying competitive motivated them to engage in socially responsible supplier development to improve the suppliers' social responsibility. They mentioned that the rise of new regulations, such as the Digital Product Passport (mentioned as *the Sustainability Passport* by them) and the CSDDD, which stands for Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, caused the need for companies to increase their transparency. When companies operate unethically, and it is shown to the world due to an increased awareness generally (especially of customers), their reputations could be at risk. They mentioned that they can thus not ignore sustainable supplier development anymore and that it is better to start now while you have time, and it is not mandatory yet, to set an example.

4.3.2 Internal and Regulatory Pressure

The companies were also asked about internal and regulatory pressures to choose socially responsible supplier development. C1, C3, and C4 stated there was no internal pressure to choose socially responsible supplier development. IP2 mentioned that they did not know about this for C2, and IP5 did not have experience with it with C5. C1, C2, C4, and C5 stated that there was regulatory pressure in some sense, whereas C3 stated there was no regulatory pressure. The mentioned regulations were the CSRD and the CSDDD. *We are all prepared. We asked all these things. We have been doing this for 20 years* (Founder – IP3 – C3). All of their responses are summarised in Table 2 below.

Company (C)#	Internal Pressure	Regulatory Pressure
C1	No	Yes
C2	Unknown	Yes
C3	No	No
C4	No	Yes
C5	Unknown	Yes

Table 2: Internal and regulatory pressure to choose socially responsible supplier development

4.3.3 Relevant Stakeholder Influences

The companies were also asked whether their stakeholders influenced their decision to choose socially responsible supplier development. C1, C3, and C5 expressed the stakeholder influences. IP2 did not know about possible stakeholder influences earlier on for C2. As C4 mentioned, they are a family company and thus have their values regarding how they do business. Thus, stakeholders did not influence their company's decision. However, they also mentioned that they are aware of

stakeholders' expectations and try to fulfil them and work together with them. C1 mentioned clients and the government as the stakeholders influencing their decision to choose socially responsible supplier development. Clients were mentioned because of their requirements. An example of the requirements is the signature of the client's code of conduct by C1. The government was mentioned because of the implementation of legislation. As IP3 founded C3 with her husband, they can also be seen as stakeholders, which is why C3 expressed the stakeholder influences. C5 stated that stakeholders did not significantly influence their decision to choose socially responsible supplier development; however, they expect their influence to increase in the future with specific regulations coming into force. With transparency and traceability increasing, stakeholders will be given a greater voice, leading to increased responsibility. They also stated that with increased transparency and traceability, NGOs would have more to bite on, indicating they would have more opportunities to raise issues.

4.3.4 Methods for Socially Responsible Supplier Development

The companies were also asked about the methods for socially responsible supplier development. C1 mentioned the use of their membership in amfori BSCI. They use BSCI audits, which need a minimum rating of C. They also use a supplier code of conduct, which contains the BSCI code of conduct, as well as their additions, such as the need for transparency. C2 mentioned their engagements with projects. An example of these projects is one they did with an NGO and a few other clothing companies in a specific region in India, where a few of their suppliers are located. The NGO found a counter-organisation run by locals who knew much about the textile industry. This counter-organisation visited the factories of C2's suppliers, trained the management about responsible supplier development and human rights, and installed committees for workers to express their worries, grievances, problems, or issues. C2 helped set up mechanisms for a more responsible supply chain. C3 mentioned using a supplier code of conduct and a factory checklist. Their supplier code of conduct contains nine points of the ILO, including animal welfare and basic rules, such as no child labour or freedom of speech. The factory checklist contains requirements for the factories of their suppliers, such as the presence of fire extinguishers and first aid boxes or the safety of the workplace. C4 also mentioned the use of their membership in amfori BSCI. They contact and audit their suppliers based on the BSCI code of conduct. They also implemented continuous improvement plans. Their tier-one suppliers are working on these plans to better themselves where possible. They are also doing risk analyses in preparation for the CSRD. They do this with several trade unions with whom they are in close contact. C5 mentioned the importance of bringing awareness. The suppliers should thus be aware of social issues. They mentioned hanging posters in the factories or setting up channels for seeking contact. They also mentioned the importance of closely monitoring their suppliers, as they should be actively engaged with these efforts for socially responsible supplier development for optimal improvement.

4.3.5 Perceived Benefits of Implementing Socially Responsible Supplier Development

The companies were also asked about the benefits of implementing socially responsible supplier development. C1, C2, C4, and C5 mentioned potential operational benefits, whereas C3 mentioned non-operational benefits. These were peace of mind and for their children.

Yes, so then it is very clear and very obvious because when you were ten years old, nobody asked you to start selling t-shirts 12 hours a day in a dark factory (Founder – IP3 – C3).

C1 mentioned customer relationships and a more secure supplier basis. They elaborated more on the second perceived benefit, stating that good factory conditions result in good production cycles and quality. C2 mentioned that after doing a project with an NGO and other suppliers in India for the kids' department of one of their brands, the manager of this brand was always saying that the brand has an excellent reputation and is perceived as a very sustainable brand. The clothing is often handed from kid to kid; thus, the brand has an excellent reputation and image. C4 mentioned potential benefits in the form of better terms for having loans when doing business with banks, for example. Their main point was that the better social work of their brands would be recognised at the end of the day. Aside from these perceived benefits, they explicitly mentioned that it is your moral obligation to do business in a manner that allows others to strive as well, reflecting their inner drive to do business regularly and respectably with other people. Finally, C5 mentioned trust as a potential benefit. By implementing socially responsible supplier development, trust between companies and suppliers increases. This also increases the likelihood of becoming the preferred customer, which would be highly beneficial in case of any disruption.

4.4 Dilemmas

During the interview with C4, IP4 presented two different dilemmas they faced throughout their career as CSR director. The respective dilemmas are listed below. These dilemmas were in place because of cultural differences between the West and Asia.

4.4.1 Overtime

The first mentioned dilemma they faced was with a supplier in China. Workers at this supplier worked vast amounts of overtime, working day and night. Even though their previous company gave the supplier enough time to plan, the workers still worked overtime due to the supplier taking on many clients. Essentially, their previous company and the supplier managed to set up an agreement about a decrease in overtime, and the supplier stuck to it. However, they had a strike from the workers after the decrease in overtime. It turned out that many of these workers came from the western and middle parts of China and went to the East Coast for work. They lived in compounds near the factory and made up to 80 hours of workweeks. They sent the money they earned back to their families in the rural areas to raise their children or support their parents. A decrease in overtime means a decrease in salary, which means these workers would not be able to send as much money as before. Thus, this caused the strike. When their previous company made the supplier decrease the overtime to a respectable 48 hours, like in the West, this led to a huge commotion from the workers, who were angry that they could not work as much as before, meaning they could not send back as much money as before to their families. This is proof of the presence of cultural differences.

4.4.2 Child Labour

The second mentioned dilemma they faced was with a factory in India. During a visit, they saw children working in the factory, which is child labour. They went to talk to the company afterwards and told them that they had seen the children clean, and as this is child labour, they were against it. The company representative agreed and told them they were also against it. However, the reality is that if the company did not employ the children, they would not be able to go to school because their

families do not earn enough money. They either work in the factory, at a less safe place or even go to the garbage area. The company representative told them that they made sure they did light work and went to school next to work. *But then, you know, what do you do then, right? It is not very black and white. There are always many, many shades of grey* (CSR Director – IP4 – C4). Essentially, a decision has to be made on whether the box of ‘no child labour’ will be checked or the lives of the children will be changed by assuring that they get a specific amount of teaching every week, earn enough money, and possibly that the next generation will not have to work.

5. DISCUSSION

Five interviews with different companies were conducted to answer the research question. These interviews provided much relevant data, which was covered in detail in the previous chapter. The key findings of these interviews are summarised in the following subchapter.

5.1 Key Findings

Overall, all companies highlighted the importance of sourcing ethically and managing the supply chain responsibly, with reasons such as staying competitive, meeting client requirements, and customer awareness. The majority also viewed themselves as socially responsible, either on a satisfactory or good level; however, they also acknowledged the necessity for improvement because of shortcomings.

All companies mentioned different motivations for engaging in socially responsible supplier development to improve the supplier’s social responsibility. These motivations were dealing with client requirements, complying with the CSRD regulation, seeing the difference between the beauty of fashion and poor working conditions, having specific values as a family company, and staying competitive. No company mentioned internal pressures to choose socially responsible supplier development; however, most companies mentioned regulatory pressure to choose socially responsible supplier development. The majority also mentioned the influences of stakeholders on their decisions to choose socially responsible supplier development, with clients, the government, and NGOs being explicitly mentioned. Methods for socially responsible supplier development include doing BSCI audits, implementing supplier codes of conduct, engagements with projects, implementing factory checklists, implementing continuous improvement plans, awareness-bringing methods such as hanging posters in the factories or setting up channels for seeking contact, and closely monitoring. Perceived benefits of implementing socially responsible supplier development include operational and non-operational benefits. Operational benefits include customer relationships, a more secure supplier basis, reputation, better loan terms, and improved trust. Non-operational benefits include having peace of mind and for the sake of children.

5.2 Interpretation of the Key Findings

5.2.1 Companies Value Social Responsibility

Companies recognise the importance of operating socially responsible: they realise it is crucial for survival. The mentioned reasons include staying competitive, meeting client requirements, and customer awareness. Staying competitive could be seen as the main reason, with meeting client requirements and customer awareness influencing the ability to stay competitive. If a company cannot meet client requirements, the client will be dissatisfied and thus find a new supplier that can meet their requirements. If customers are more aware of companies’ operations and thus the social issues at the beginning of the supply chain, they will draw more attention to the production process and question the working conditions at

the factories of the companies’ suppliers. If the customers are dissatisfied with these working conditions, they will speak out about it, which will influence the companies negatively and thus damage their business. The available literature supports this finding. Research by Prendergast and Tsang (2019) on socially responsible consumption found that consumers are becoming more and more socially aware of their consumption, influencing the decisions of companies to produce and thus operate more socially responsible. Dai *et al.* (2021) further support this, as they found that socially responsible corporate customers can inject comparable socially responsible business behaviour in suppliers in general. Not being able to meet client requirements and customers being dissatisfied with the working conditions at the factories of the companies’ suppliers would make it hard to stay competitive, which could be seen as the trigger for implementing socially responsible supplier development. The data favours the perceived importance, as most companies consider themselves socially responsible, either sufficiently or good. The available literature also favours the perceived importance. According to Alonso-Nuez *et al.* (2022), companies think that social responsibility standards are crucial and have mutually valuable impacts. These social responsibility standards include workplace health promotion, which aims to improve the overall health of all individuals involved in the workplace. It is one of the main topics of their research and is also highly relevant to this research. Only one company (C5) could not consider themselves socially responsible because IP5 could not answer the question for C5, thus not showing the complete picture.

5.2.2 Companies Have Different Motivations for Choosing Socially Responsible Supplier Development

Companies have different motivations for choosing socially responsible supplier development. The mentioned motivations include client requirements, complying with the CSRD regulation, seeing the difference between the beauty of fashion and poor working conditions, having specific values as a family company, and staying competitive. The difference in motivations could be explained by the fact that these companies are different types of companies. C1, C2, and C4 are groups, whereas C3, for example, is a small company. C3 has also been selling clothing produced responsibly since the beginning, whereas other companies have had to go through transformations to operate more responsibly. C4 is also the only family-owned company. Even though these motivations differ, they can be categorised under the same groups. Client requirements, complying with the CSRD regulation, and staying competitive can be categorised under monetary motivations. However, seeing the difference between the beauty of fashion and poor working conditions and having specific values as a family company can be categorised under non-monetary motivations. These motivations are partly similar to the ones mentioned in the available literature. Krause (1999) mentioned the market competition of buying companies and the perspective of buying companies towards suppliers. The first motivation is similar to staying competitive, and the second is similar to having specific values as a family company. This is because family companies treat their partners, and thus suppliers, as one of their own. Rogers *et al.* (2007) mentioned institutional pressures, which is similar to complying with the CSRD regulation. This is because the CSRD is a regulation created by the EU to increase compliance with social standards.

5.2.3 No Internal but Regulatory Pressures and Stakeholder Influences

Most companies are not pressured internally to choose socially responsible supplier development. This could be explained by the fact that clients have already pressured them with their requirements or that the companies' values did not necessitate any internal pressure in the first place. Only two companies (C2 and C5) could not mention internal pressure because IP2 did not know about it for C2, and IP5 did not have any experience with it with C5, thus (again) not showing the complete picture. However, most companies are pressured by regulations to choose socially responsible supplier development. This could mainly be explained by implementing the CSRD and the upcoming CSDDD regulations, as these regulations directly or indirectly impact these companies. Only one company (C3) could not mention regulatory pressure because they have been doing whatever is deemed now for years: selling responsibly produced clothing. Both the CSRD and the CSDDD were mentioned in the available literature. The UNGPs, the SDGs, the ILO Conventions, and the SA8000 were not mentioned as pressuring regulations/standards. This could be explained by the fact that they have already been widely adopted worldwide (UNGP, SDGs, and ILO Conventions) or are not mandatory (SA8000). One company (C3) adopted nine points of the ILO into their supplier code of conduct, favouring the statement about the wide adoption worldwide.

The decisions of most companies to choose socially responsible supplier development were influenced by stakeholders. However, they did not really specify which stakeholders influenced their decisions. The ones explicitly mentioned were clients because of their requirements, the government because of the implementation of legislation, and NGOs more in the future because of increased opportunities to raise issues due to the increasing transparency and traceability. Only one company (C2) could not mention stakeholder influences because IP2 did not know about possible ones earlier for C2, thus (again) not showing the complete picture. Crane and Matten (2016) considered competitors, customers, employees, civil society, suppliers, shareholders, and the government. Based on this, it could be said that customers, the government, and civil society were explicitly mentioned. Customers (consumers) were mentioned by Greenley and Foxall (1996), the government was mentioned by both Şener *et al.* (2016) and Lechler *et al.* (2019), and civil society was mentioned by Lechler *et al.* (2019) as well. The participating companies thus did not explicitly mention competitors, employees, suppliers, and shareholders.

5.2.4 Similar Methods but Different Perceived Benefits

Companies make use of similar methods for socially responsible supplier development. They do audits based on the BSCI code of conduct or implemented supplier codes of conduct. These supplier codes of conduct are based on the BSCI code of conduct in one case (C1) and the ILO in another (C3). This indicates that the supplier codes of conduct of the respective companies do not only contain ethical standards determined by themselves but also pre-determined ones by external organisations. However, they also engage with projects, implement factory checklists, improvement plans and awareness-bringing methods, and closely monitor their suppliers. The available literature generally supports these findings. Krause *et al.* (2000) mentioned direct involvement as an internalised supplier development strategy. Engaging with projects could be seen as direct involvement, as the company involved (C2) helped set up mechanisms at their suppliers. Krause *et al.* (2000) also mentioned supplier assessment as an

externalised supplier development strategy. Implementing factory checklists could be seen as supplier assessment, as the factories of the suppliers, and thus the suppliers are being assessed. Modi and Mabert (2007) and Krause *et al.* (2007) mentioned supplier evaluation. Doing audits based on the BSCI code of conduct could be seen as supplier evaluation, as the suppliers are audited and given a rating, which needs to be at least a C according to C1. The compliance strategies, which consist of codes of conduct/standards, auditing, and monitoring, are mentioned by Yawar and Seuring (2017). Implementing supplier codes of conduct could be seen as codes of conduct, doing audits based on the BSCI code of conduct could be seen as auditing, and closely monitoring suppliers could be seen as monitoring.

Companies have different perceived benefits of implementing socially responsible supplier development. Most companies mentioned operational benefits, including customer relationships, a more secure supplier basis, reputation, better loan terms, and improved trust. The operational benefits include monetary benefits and a reputational benefit. The monetary benefits would thus be a more secure supplier basis and better loan terms, and the reputational benefit would be reputation. Only one company (C3) mentioned non-operational benefits, including having peace of mind and for the sake of children. This could be explained by the fact that C3 is a company focused on selling clothing produced responsibly.

5.2.5 Dealing with Dilemmas

Being a CSR director is not easy, and the mentioned dilemmas by IP4 support this statement. The dilemmas were created in the first place due to cultural differences between the West and Asia. What is perceived as normal and agreeable in the West is not necessarily perceived the same in Asia. Working up to 80 hours a week in factories instead of the respectable 48 hours and having children work in factories is against Western moral standards but normal in Asia. However, even though it is normal and accepted in Asia, it does not mean that entities stand behind these events. The company representative of the factory where child labour occurred explicitly mentioned that they were also against it. Decreasing the number of working hours or stopping children's employment is theoretically easier; however, it is much more complex in practice. The strike of the workers and children not being able to go to school results from applying Western moral standards in Asia. Finding an answer to such dilemmas is thus of exceptional value.

5.3 Contributions, Limitations, and Recommendations for Future Research

This research contributes to the existing literature with empirical evidence through qualitative research methods about the motivations of companies operating in the clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development through supporting and expanding the researched motivations. This research also contributes to the existing literature with empirical evidence through qualitative research methods about stakeholder priorities, socially responsible supplier development methods, and the perceived benefits of implementing these methods through supporting and expanding the research done.

This research also has limitations. The desired number of interviews to conduct was ten; however, due to difficulties with finding enough interview participants, the number of interview participants was limited to five, which toughened the process of finding consistent patterns, similarities, and differences. Another limitation is companies' inability to answer specific interview questions. The data was incomplete in some cases, thus not showing the complete picture. The companies having

different compositions and sizes is another limitation. The participating companies consisted of three groups and two traditional companies, which were medium and small-sized.

A Recommendation for future research would be to conduct more interviews to make the attained data more consistent and complete. Another recommendation is to select companies with similar characteristics, such as size. This way, the attained data could be compared more fairly. What would also be interesting to research is the creation of dilemmas due to cultural differences between the West and other parts of the world and possibly a guide on the best way to tackle such dilemmas.

6. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to understand the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development by tackling the formulated research question:

What are the motivations of companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry to choose socially responsible supplier development?

Based on the valuable insights obtained from the interviews, the following could be concluded: Companies operating in the Dutch clothing industry were motivated by client requirements, complying with the CSRD regulation, seeing the difference between the beauty of fashion and poor working conditions, having specific values as a family company, and staying competitive. The specific motivations differed for each company, which could potentially be explained by the companies having different compositions, sizes, and operations. Customers, the government, and civil society were mentioned explicitly as the stakeholders influencing their decisions to choose socially responsible supplier development, favouring the stakeholder theory of the firm. Most companies were not pressured internally but through regulations, mainly the CSRD and the CSDDD. Perceived benefits of implementing socially responsible supplier development included operational (customer relationships, a more secure supplier basis, reputation, better loan terms, and improved trust) and non-operational benefits (having peace of mind and for the sake of children). The perceived operational benefits included monetary benefits (a more secure supplier basis and better loan terms) and a reputational benefit (reputation). Finally, companies are aware of the importance of operating socially responsible, and the majority also consider themselves socially responsible.

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9. APPENDIX A

Interview Questionnaire

Introductory Questions

1. What is the importance of sourcing ethically and managing the supply chain responsibly for the company to achieve its organisational goals and remain competitive?
2. How does the company define and understand the concept of socially responsible supplier development in the clothing industry in general? Do you consider the company socially responsible?

Socially Responsible Supplier Development Core Questions

3. What motivated the company to engage in socially responsible supplier development to improve the suppliers' social responsibility?
4. What challenges have your suppliers faced that led to implementing socially responsible supplier development practices?
5. Has the company been pressured internally to choose socially responsible supplier development? If so, how has this happened?
6. Have regulations pressured the company to choose socially responsible supplier development? If so, how has this happened?
7. Have stakeholders influenced the decision to choose socially responsible supplier development for the company? Think of customers, the government, NGOs, and more. If so, how have they done this, and how important are they for the company?
8. What methods has the company been using for socially responsible supplier development?
9. As already known, there are social issues at the beginning of the clothing industry's supply chain, such as child labour, low wages, and more. How has the company been dealing with these social issues?
10. What are the perceived benefits of implementing socially responsible supplier development for the company? Think of monetary and/or reputational benefits, customer trust, and more.
11. How do you measure the effectiveness of implementing socially responsible supplier development?
12. Has the company faced challenges when implementing socially responsible supplier development practices? If so, can you provide examples of these challenges?

Concluding Question

13. What are the company's plans for supplier development and implementing CSR practices in the future