



School of Economics and Management
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The Significance of Labels to the Concerned Generation

A Qualitative Study about Generation Y towards the Fair Trade Label and Ecological Labels

BUSM08, Master Thesis in International Marketing and Brand Management, 15 ECTS

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Sammanfattning

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Syfte: Syftet med denna magisteruppsats är att undersöka vad som påverkar Generation Y:s värderingar, attityder och åsikter gentemot fair trade stämpeln och ekologiska kvalitetsstämplar. Syftet är också att undersöka hur dessa två kvalitetsstämplar uppfattas av Generation Y i hopp om att gräva djupare i relationen mellan stämplarna. Studien kommer att bidra med nya insikter om vilka faktorer som motiverar Generation Y i deras utvärderingsprocess av de två kvalitetsstämplarna. Likaså är avsikten är att bidra med en djupare förståelse av Generation Y:s etiska konsumentbeteende.

Metod: En kvalitativ studie med en abduktiv forskningsansats.

Teoretiska perspektiv: Fokus kommer att ligga på teorier inom konsumentbeteende. Teorier om etisk konsumtion, kunskap, information, engagemang och känslor, könsaspekter samt förvirring kommer att presenteras.

Empiriskt material: Fair trade stämpeln tillsammans med de sex ekologiska kvalitetsstämplar som presenteras av Konsumentverket, kommer att studeras med hjälp av tio intervjuer med Generation Y konsumenter.

Slutsatser: Kunskap, information, köpbeteende, engagemang och känslor, samt könsaspekter påverkar Generation Y:s värderingar, attityder och åsikter gentemot fair trade stämpeln och ekologiska kvalitetsstämplar. Genom den empiriska studien tillsammans med relevanta teorier och tidigare forskning har ett kausalt samband mellan dessa fem faktorer hittats.

Abstract

Title: The Significance of Labels to the Concerned Generation – a Qualitative Study about Generation Y towards the Fair Trade Label and Ecological Labels

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Key words: Fair trade, Ecological quality labels, Generation Y, Consumer behaviour

Thesis purpose: The purpose of the master thesis is to examine what affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels. The purpose is also to investigate how these two quality labels are received by Generation Y, in order to delve deeper into the relationship between the labels. This research will contribute with new insights about Generation Y's important motivational factors in the evaluation process of the two types of quality labels. The intention is as well to contribute with a better understanding of Generation Y's ethical consumer behaviour.

Methodology: A qualitative study with an abductive reasoning.

Theoretical perspective: Focus on consumer behaviour theories. Theories about ethical consumer, knowledge, information, involvement and emotions, gender aspects and confusion will be presented.

Empirical data: The fair trade label along with the six ecological quality labels the Swedish Consumer Agency presents will be studied through ten interviews with Generation Y consumers.

Conclusion: Knowledge, information, purchasing behaviour, involvement and emotions, and gender aspects affect Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels. Through the empirical investigation and existing theories and research, a causal relationship has been found between the five factors.

Preface

Ten weeks have passed since we started writing our master thesis; ten instructive, stressful but foremost fun weeks. Now we stand here satisfied, empowered and relieved that the thesis is due! This was the final step after several years of university studies. School is over and a whole new world awaits us.

The time spent working on this master thesis has in many ways been rewarding and developing both regarding the chosen research area and our self-knowledge. We show gratitude to the people who made it possible for us to complete this master thesis:

Peter Svensson, our advisor who has helped us from the very beginning to the very end. He has given us valuable insights and advice, which helped us improve our thesis. Thank you for your commitment.

The respondents, who took time to give us invaluable information about their ethical consumption.

Finally, we want to express thanks to each other. We showed support and respect towards one another, tried to keep up the motivation, and always did what was best for the team.

Lund, Sweden, 2nd of June 2009

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1 Introduction

In this chapter background information about the research area will be presented. Thereafter a problem discussion will be held, where thoughts and previous studies about the chosen areas will be enlightened. This will ultimately lead to the existing knowledge gap or more exactly the study's research question and thesis purpose.

1.1 Background

“The twenty-first century has been dubbed the century of environmental awareness. Consumers, business people and public administrators must now demonstrate a sense of green responsibility by integrating environmental habits into individual behaviour” (Ghauri & Cateora, 2006, p. 475). The ethical consumer is no longer a utopia. It seems obvious that today's modern consumer holds more negative attitude towards companies that behave unethically (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard and Hogg (2006) declare that we now live in a period when many consumers realize that their consumption pattern is part of a global political and economic system. The growing interest of environmentally friendly products is also noted from marketers within different companies. Tadajewski and Brownile (2008) argue that companies produce what consumers want. Companies must become more environmentally friendly as society becomes greener (Pettie, 1992 from Tadajewski & Brownile, 2008). As a result many assortments within different product categories now become more ecological. Several different quality labels concerning environmental and social aspects are currently available on the market. One common quality label connected with social and human aspects is the fair trade symbol.

The concept of fair trade is getting increased attention all over the world. The most commonly sold fair trade products are coffee, bananas, chocolate, dried fruit, fruit juice, honey, sugar products, tea, textiles and clothes (Jones, Comfort & Hillier, 2003). Fair trade products no longer belong to the niche market; they are now presented within different assortments in mainstream retail outlets (Krier, 2005 from Doran, 2009). The British retailer Sainsbury's currently only sell fair trade bananas and their own-brand paper products all have guarantees from Forest Stewardship Council (The Economist, 2008). The growing interest is also noted in Sweden. The Swedish retailer Coop increased their sales of fair trade products with over 300 percentages during the year of 2007. The total sales of fair trade products in Sweden increased by 75 percentages 2008 compared to 2007, total sales in SEK reached 700 millions. (www.rattvisemarkt.se) Since year 2000 international fair trade sales has increased with approximately 20 percentages (Krier, 2005 from Doran, 2009).

According to the Swedish fair trade organisation Rättvisemarkt (www.rattvisemarkt.se), fair trade products should meet several international standards. The two most important key variables within this process are the wage level and a guaranteed minimum price considered fair towards the producer. Rättvisemarkt has five overall standards; better economic conditions – both for the producer and his or her employees, prevention against children labour and discrimination, improved democracy and ability to form a union, the producer

must socially and financially support the local region and finally, support ecological production methods and environmental sustainability.

While the fair trade concept focuses on social and human aspects, ecological quality labels focus on environmental aspects and opinions. Ecological production can be defined as farming with a sustainable incentive. Plant nutrition pesticides, weed control, forage and fertilizer are used with concern of the environment and are often locally produced and from renewable resources (www.sjv.se). The market for ecological products is constantly growing. During 2007 Swedish retailers sold ecological products to an amount of approximately 4.5 billion SEK. The Swedish retailer ICA increased their sales of ecological products with 50 percentages in 2007 compared with 2006. Moreover, ICA's main competitor Coop also increased their sales of ecological products. Coop's ecological assortment now consists of 12000 products. (www.ecocentrum.info)

Furthermore, there are several ways to acquire an ecological quality label, all depending of the demands that the specific label possesses. The cost may vary from one label to another. The Swedish Consumer Agency is considering six quality labels in order for consumers to be able to purchase environmentally friendly products. Almost all products can be certified with one of these six labels if the certification demands are attained. (www.konsumentverket.se) A further explanation of these six ecological quality labels can be found in section of definitions.

Eastham, Sharples & Ball (2001) argue that there is evidence for an ethical consumer movement. One generation that has grown up under this "green movement" is Generation Y, also called the "Echo Boomers". Marketers who are interested in consumer behaviour find "Echo Boomers" very interesting (Rugimbana, 2007). According to Corporate Eye (www.corporate-eye.com), Generation Y prefer brands that actually try to help the environment, especially food items should be "green" in the minds of Generation Y. Furthermore, this modern generation is becoming more powerful. In the US they represent more than 70 million consumers, spending more than 172 billion per year (Holley, 2008). Bakewell and Mitchell (2003) state that Generation Y has been brought up in an era where consumption no longer is a simple act of purchasing and that the "Echo Boomers" shopping style differ from previous generations. The authors argue that despite the importance of Generation Y, very few academic studies have been made about this generation shopping style and behaviour.

Miller (2006) means that the constant overload of news and Internet usage has made Generation Y critical to media. To separate the strong competition, they turn to their strong social network for advice. Consequently, marketers are dependent on word-of-mouth and peer-to-peer-communication when targeting Generation Y. (Miller, 2006) Generation Y finds eco-labelling as a natural element among different products categories. Their attitude towards different quality labels will affect their purchasing behaviour. This leads to the following problem discussion.

1.2 Problem Discussion

The problem discussion is divided into three areas: quality labels including the fair trade and ecological concepts, the ethical consumer and Generation Y. The discussion of these three terms and of previous conducted research will narrow it down to the thesis's research problem.

1.2.1 Quality Labels

Both the fair trade concept and ecological products are classified as two different quality labels and therefore, the problem discussion starts with an overall description of the phenomena quality labels. A good way to define the meaning of quality labels and marks is "marks used upon or in connection with the products and services of one or more persons to certify regional or other origin, material, mode of manufacture, quality, accuracy, or other characteristics of such goods and services" (Phelps from Moussa & Touzani, 2008, p. 527) The phenomenon of quality labels and certification has boomed during the last ten years. The background and the increased interest in labels are found in the growing interest of fresh food and also due to several scandals. The trend of green and ethical consumerism is also a determinant factor of the increased significance. (Moussa & Touzani, 2008) To respond to all kinds of demands in products, such as organic, power-saving, environmental-friendly, fair trade among many, retailers and producers have met the needs by putting quality labels on products attained the specific requirements given for each mark. (McEachern & Warnaby, 2004)

Grunert (2005) highlights the differences between quality labels. They can be issued from several instances and the criteria for awarding them can vary tremendously. Hence the given conditions, the perceived credibility in quality labels is essential. As the article by Moussa and Touzani (2008) states, there are many labels out there and there seems to be a bit confusion and ignorance from consumers' point of view. The authors also discuss an asymmetry in the product quality information, which also supports the suspicion about possible confusion. The information flow is consequently not symmetric. To evaluate the perceived value and also build quality within the label is essential. Grunert (2005) is sceptical to quality labels and questions whether the labels communicate any meaning at all. Several authors also acknowledge a problem with misinterpretations of the intended message of the label (Verbeke & Viaene, 1999; Juhl, Høg, Poulsen, 2000).

The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (www.nutek.se) is bringing up the discussion that the large selection of environment quality labels may cause confusion. The same concern is highlighted by the Swedish Consumers Association (www.sverigeskonsumenter.se), the Centre of Consumer Science (www.hgu.gu.se), a web based company called [ecoShopping.se](http://www.ecoshopping.se) (www.ecoshopping.se) and the Environment Secretariat of the Västra Götaland region (<http://cf.vgregion.se>) among others regarding consumer confusion when there are too many ecological certifications to evaluate the buying decision from. Also in the fair trade section, various labels are available and according to the Swedish fair trade organization Rättvisemärkt, consumers feel lost in the jungle of labels in the example of coffee, which is one of the most common fair trade certified products

(www.rattvisemarkt.se). The suspicion of confusion among quality labels seems well founded but the question still remains about the consumer behaviour effects of this perplexity and if and/or how this affects the relationship between the two types of labels. This master thesis is interested in this particular area.

The first of two quality labels that this study will touch upon is the fair trade label. Despite the growing awareness of social production aspects, from an U.S. research perspective there has been little attention to discover who really buys fair trade products (Doran, 2009). Blackwell et al. (2001 from Doran, 2009) argue that consumer values are crucial to this knowledge. This is also noted by Nicholls (2002) who state that there has been a shift from self-centric to value-centric consumption. Consumers will satisfy values that include the self as well as others. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p. 551) state that values “are concepts or beliefs, pertaining to desirable end states, which transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and are ordered by relative importance”.

Strong (1997, p. 33) claims that the fair trade concept is a competitive advantage for ethically and socially aware organisations. “Products marketed as environmentally friendly are widely available and extensively consumed by the world's population; fairly traded products offer consumers the added benefit of contributing to the sustainability of the human element of environmental concern”. The author also discusses the fundamental problem of translating fair trade principles into consumer behaviour. There seems to be different opinions about the responsibility for global environmental and social problems. When talking about environmental problems many consumers believe “we all got to do our share”. However, social problems, in opposite, are sometimes often associated with a more cold consumer response. Many consumers believe that social problems and their solutions belong to each nation. (Strong, 1997).

In comparison to fair trade and social responsibility the ecological quality labels have another approach. It is of importance to be aware of the different meanings behind fair trade and ecological products. Consequently, the second quality label category discussed in this study is ecological products. Ecological quality labels are focusing on environmental issues and ecological production. Schwepker and Cornwell (1991) are discussing some issues regarding the buying behaviour among environmentally concerned consumers, i.e. the price issue. If the product is sold to a premium price, there might be a resistance among consumers to purchase this product. The overall demand for sustainable products has increased continuously and the segment of customers buying these kinds of products cautiously grows. (Schwepker and Cornell, 1991)

1.2.2 The ethical consumer

Previous research to track and map the environmentally concerned consumers demographically, socioeconomic or cultural has showed a varied result and is therefore not consistent and reliable (Van Liere & Dunlap, 1981). When it comes to attitude and ecology, Schwepker and Cornell (1991) state that there might be a correlation between ecological concern and buying behaviour. Balderjahn (1988) and Fraj and Martinez (2006) agree when giving the example that a positive attitude about ecological living supports an ecological buying behaviour and attitude. The last mentioned authors also state that high environmental

values equal higher environmental behaviour and consumers who are encouraged by challenges and longing for self-fulfilment are consuming more ecological products.

According to the Cera-Foundation from Vermeir and Verbeke (2008), one well-known case is the study of attitudes towards organic products. Results showed that organic products are perceived to be better in general, i.e. when it comes to taste, quality and impact on environment. The attitude towards locally produced food was also of major importance to the customer, both regarding environmental aspects and to support the local economy. The authors also raise the question whether interested and concerned consumers actually develop their environmental interest into action, in other words purchasing organic products. Further research shows that there is a strong link between interest and actual buying but indicates that there are also other factors playing a role in the buying decision such as quality, availability and convenience (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). McGillivray from Vermeir and Verbeke (2008) explains that quality labels have less than one percent of the market share. This may indicate something about the perception and attitudes towards these quality labels. The question is whether the consumers are saturated in evaluating their buying decisions as a result of too many different labels available on the market. Despite the critique against quality labels above the ethical and green consumption are becoming a part of the modern consumer.

This leads to the inevitable correlation between quality labels and ethical consumption. According to Ethical Consumer Research Association – ECRA – (Eastham, Sharples & Ball, 2001) there is evidence for an ethical consumer movement. ECRA present the term “ethical consumerism” as purchase without harm or exploitation of humans, animals and the environment. Eastham, Sharples and Ball (2001) argue that ethical consumerism allows the consumer to influence the food chain, by deciding items based on criteria other than quality and price. Consumers now demand more and deeper information about how and where food is grown and processed.

Eastham, Sharples and Ball (2001) discuss the term “ethical food”. They claim that environmental issues, agricultural methods and policies, animal welfare, distribution channels, biotechnical aspects and health issues characterize ethical food. Furthermore, ethical food is also affected by international policies, fair trading and management practices and principles. External factors such as social, economic and political climate together with different competitors will also affect ethical food (Eastham, Sharples & Ball, 2001).

Carrigan and Attalla (2001) argue that many marketers today consider marketing within the field of ethical consumption to be very important. The question is how consumers evaluate this conception. The buyer side of this process is somewhat under-researched (Hunt & Vitell, 1992 from Carrigan and Attalla, 2001). It could be said that today’s consumers are getting better informed and sophisticated, but Titus and Bradford (1996) claim that there is a difference between sophisticated consumers and sophisticated consumer behaviour.

“There are those committed ethical consumers who do seek out environmentally-friendly products, and boycott those firms perceived as being unethical. For them, information guides ethical purchasing behaviour. Other consumers possess the same amount of information in terms of ethical and unethical marketing conduct, but this does not lead them to boycott offenders, nor reward ethical firms” (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001, p. 563). There seems to be an attitude-behaviour gap, consumers willingness to buy ethical products are not reflected in their actual purchase decisions (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). This is also noted in a study by

Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) which showed that consumers' most important purchase criteria were price, value, quality and brand awareness. Consumers tended to buy products for personal reasons rather than for collective reasons.

Roberts (1996) argues that expressed environmental consumer interest does not interact well with consumers' actual purchase behaviour. The high levels of environmental and social knowledge expressed through different surveys do not reflect reality. Roberts presents the following reasons for this attitude gap: first, green products are too expensive for the consumer, price, quality and convenience are still very important purchase variables, only few adults (American) believe in comparative environmental claims, unwillingness from some corporations to offer those products and finally, from a consumer perspective, confusion about green products.

Carrigan and Attalla (2001) divide consumers into four different groups according to their attitudes to ethical purchasing. "Caring and ethical" consumers are characterized by high ethical awareness and are likely to respond positively to genuine ethical behaviour. The second type of consumer is the "confused and uncertain". They would like to buy more ethical products but their ethical awareness is low because of the lack of information about those products. The authors describe the third group as "cynical and disinterested". Consumers within this group have high ethical awareness but low intention to actually buy ethical products. "Even if they were convinced, it is debatable whether or not this would make them change their buyer behaviour" (Corrigan & Attilla, 2002, p. 572). Finally, the "oblivious" consumer is a person with low ethical awareness and low ethical purchase intention. Those customers may or may not be willing to shop ethical items. Corrigan and Attilla (2001) claim that ethical consumers, without an attitude-behaviour gap, do exist but they are still a minority. There is a need for more information about ethical products, perhaps new generations of consumers will think more ethically and in reality subsequently act as an ethical consumer (Corrigan & Attilla, 2001).

1.2.3 Generation Y

Corrigan and Attilla (2001) open up for the possibility that new generations of consumers will think and act more ethically. Generation Y's relationship to ethical consumption, more exactly what affects their values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels will be examined. According to Kumar and Lim (2008), Generation Y consists of people born between 1980 and 1994. Generation Y are the sons and daughters of the Baby Boomers (Wilson, 2003). Noble and Schewe (2003) declare that Generation Y is also referred to as the "Echo Boomers" and "the Millennium Generation". The name "Echo Boomers" implies that it is a generation with high ecological awareness. Generation Y has grown up under the development of the ecological aware society which is one reason for the interest in examining this particular cohort.

Fürth (2008) from Svensson and Wedin (2008) has investigated people born in the 80s. The author declares that people from the 80s prefer safe and interesting jobs with a good salary, nice co-workers and a pleasant working environment. According to Miller (2006), Generation Y is well educated and has advanced technical knowledge. It is also an image-driven cohort; Generation Y wants to make personal statements through their image. (www.nasrecruitment.com)

Generation Y has grown up under pressure from society and parents to achieve in life. Fürth (2008) from Svensson and Wedin (2008) discusses Generation Y's relationship to their parents and talks about an unstable identity, formed by the parents' social and regional belonging. This can result in a constant worry for making the right decisions.

Furthermore, Renn and Arnold (2003) from Kumar and Lim (2008) declare that Generation Y is important for marketers because of the influence they have on their families' purchase decisions. According to Kumar and Lim (2008), 70 million people in the USA belong to Generation Y and are therefore an important customer segment. Because of the cohort's size it has a huge social and economic impact (www.nasrecruitment.com). Rugimbana (2007) claims that those marketers who are especially interested in consumer behaviour find Generation Y particularly interesting. It is predominantly of interest to investigate which products this demographic category prefers, uses and how these are chosen. When studying what affects values, attitudes and beliefs towards ecological and fair trade products, consumer behaviour is an area of high relevance. This motivates the choice of examining Generation Y since this cohort is particularly interesting when using and testing theories about consumer behaviour.

Der Hovanesian (1999) from Craig and Turley (2004) declares that Generation Y is likely to spend their money shortly after they have acquired it. Consumer goods and personal services get most attention, which motivates the choice of studying fair trade and ecological food. However, Fürth (2008) from Svensson and Wedin (2008) claims that Generation Y neglects sleep and food when trying to keep up with everything society offers.

McCoy (2008) has examined what is important for Generation Y when making insurance purchases. One criterion was a good web page that easily gives customers the information they are looking for. If the web page is bad, Generation Y tends to consider the company behind the web site as unprofessional. An area close to the insurance sector is private banking. Rugimbana (2007) has examined how one should attract Generation Y within the financial service. Another study by Craig and Turley (2004) has examined how the older Generation Y consumers perceive and use malls.

Two researchers who have compared Generation Y and the Baby Boomers are Kumar and Lim (2008). Kumar and Lim (2008) have investigated age differences in mobile service perceptions and loyalty intentions. The study found that the correlation between emotional value and satisfaction is stronger for Generation Y than the Baby Boomers. Therefore, marketers need to focus on emotional aspects when trying to appeal Generation Y. Kumar and Lim (2008) also found that the relationship between economic value and satisfaction toward the mobile service and the service provider is not as significant for Generation Y as for Baby Boomers.

Since Generation Y is such an important consumer segment, studies about this cohort and its purchasing behaviour have been conducted before. One of few studies that investigate Generation Y's ecological consumption is Hein's (2008). The author discusses a study made by Outlaw Consulting, where people belonging to Generation Y were asked what their favourite ecological brands are and why. The study's purpose was to see which brands were actually seen as environmentally friendly. The study shows that, among other things, packaging and reusable sacks influence one's perception of how environmental the brand is. Hein (2008) declares that Generation Y seeks for information about the environment when

purchasing different brands. Also, people from this generation are willing to pay a little bit extra for products without toxins.

The problem discussion shows that several studies about fair trade and ecological quality labels have been conducted. However, no previous research has compared Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological labels. The relationship between the two quality labels explicitly from a consumer perspective is also an unexplored area. To clarify, this study solely presents the Generation Y consumer's point of view and will not touch upon sales. This observed research gap will be filled in this thesis, which leads to the research question and thesis purpose.

1.3 Research Question

Previous research has been conducted both about fair trade and ecological products. However, a comparison between the two quality labels and their meaning for Generation Y is a relatively unexplored area. It is not written what affects Generation Y's values about each label and how Generation Y's attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels are reflected in terms of consumer behaviour theory. It is therefore of importance to see how these two quality labels are perceived by this particularly important customer segment.

Through investigation of previous material that touches upon the research area, a knowledge gap was found and the following research question was developed: *What affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels?*

1.4 Thesis Purpose

The purpose of this master thesis is to examine what affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels. The purpose is also to investigate how these two quality labels are received by Generation Y, in order to delve deeper into the relationship between the labels. This research will contribute with new insights about Generation Y's important motivational factors in the evaluation process of the two types of quality labels. The intention is as well to contribute with a better understanding of Generation Y's ethical consumer behaviour.

1.5 Definitions

Below, the two components; the fair trade label and ecological quality labels will be defined. The purpose is to give meaningful background information about the master thesis's examined components.

1.5.1 Fair Trade

The concept of fair trade began in the 1980s. In 1988, world coffee prices decreased dramatically, triggering the first fair trade certification initiative. This certification was first branded as “Max Havelaar” – a fictional Dutch person who disliked the working conditions of coffee workers in Dutch colonies. After the introduction of Max Havelaar, several fair trade labelling organizations started throughout Europe and North America. (www.transfairusa.org)

In 1997, a convergence between the early certification labels led to the creation of FLO – Fair Trade Labelling Organisations International (see Appendix). FLO is an umbrella organisation whose assignment is to set the fair trade standards. In 2002, FLO introduced the first international fair trade certification label. According to www.transfairusa.org, fair trade is more than a fair price. The fair trade certification includes:

- A guaranteed minimum floor price considered as fair against the producer.
- Fair and safe working conditions.
- Direct trade without unnecessary middlemen.
- Farmers and workers decide democratically how to invest the revenues.
- Community development through social and business development projects.
- Environmental sustainability through harmful and sustainable farming methods.

To summarize, fair trade could be seen as a strategy for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. The purpose of fair trade is to help and create opportunities for producers and workers who have been shortcoming by the traditional international trading system. (www.rattvisemarkt.se) According to FLO, 7.5 million people now benefit from fair trade efforts, among them 1.5 million represent farmers and workers.

1.5.2 Ecological Quality Labels

According to the Swedish Consumer Agency, there are six ecological quality labels. Svanen, Bra miljöval and the Flower offer a wide spectrum of goods and services and take different environmental aspects into perspective. KRAV, EU:s märkning för ekologiskt jordbruk and Marine Stewardship Council are labels for food and other cultivated products. (www.konsumentverket.se)

1.5.2.1 Svanen

Svanen is the official environmental label in the Nordic countries and was first introduced by the Swedish government in 1989. The label consists of 66 product groups and offers a wide range of goods and services, all from detergent to furniture and hotels. The high number of product groups makes the label the biggest eco-label in the world. Svanen’s goal is to reach a sustainable society with a sustainable consumption. In order to do this, the environmental issues as well as the products’ function and quality are highly tested. (www.svanen.se)

1.5.2.2 Bra Miljöval

The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) is responsible for the eco-label Bra Miljöval. SSNC started eco-labelling in 1988 and today the system has eight products areas. If a product should use this eco-label, it has to live up to hard, but not impossible to reach, criteria from the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation. Both goods and services can use Bra Miljöval. However, only products and not companies are allowed to use the label. In 1996, SSNC started its eco-labelling of electricity delivery contracts; a service that has expanded rapidly since then. (www.naturskyddsforeningen.se)

1.5.2.3 The Flower

The European Commission introduced the official eco-label of the European Union, the Flower, in 1992. Today, seven product groups and 28 product categories get to use the Flower as environmental stamp. The Flower's goal is the same as Svanen's; to reduce negative impact on the environment. This is done by thorough observations of the product's life cycle, from raw material to waste. (www.svanen.se)

1.5.2.4 KRAV

KRAV is one of the main quality labels in the organic market in Sweden. The KRAV symbol represents environmental, consumer and animal welfare together with social responsibility. KRAV is a member of IFOAM – International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, a global organisation for farmers, scientists, educationalists and certifiers around the world. During 2008 the number of KRAV-labelled products increased with 27 percentages. The KRAV symbol indicates that the product is organically produced, but do not have to promise high quality. (www.krav.se)

1.5.2.5 EU:s märkning för ekologiskt jordbruk

This quality label, in English named “organic farming”, represents an agricultural system respecting natural life-cycle systems. In other words, naturally agricultural methods, that will minimize the human impact on the environment. Organic farming also considers factors such as animal welfare, food processing, distribution and retailing. (www.ec.europa.eu)

1.5.2.6 Marine Stewardship Council

According to the Swedish Consumer Agency one of the most important ecological labels concerning seafood is the Marine Stewardship Council stamp. The MSCs certification program recognises and reward sustainable and environmentally friendly fishing. Every member of MSC must follow three core principles; work for sustainable fish stocks by not overexploiting the resources, minimising environmental impact by not harming the ecosystem and finally, be able to demonstrate an effective management respecting local, national and international laws. (www.msc.org)

1.6 Outline

➤ ***Introduction***

In this first section an introduction to the research areas is presented. The problem discussion continues with the thesis's research question and thesis purpose. Finally, definitions of the fair trade concept and the six ecological quality labels will be given.

➤ ***Methodology***

In this chapter the methodological choices for this study is discussed.

➤ ***Theory***

Relevant and suitable theories for this study's research problem are presented.

➤ ***Analysis***

In this section empirical material from the qualitative interviews is highlighted. An analysis of the findings from the qualitative interviews through relevant theories is conducted.

➤ ***Conclusions***

In this section conclusions are drawn. Ideas about future research are presented.

2 Methodology

In this chapter, the thesis's methodological approach will be explained and discussed. In other words, it will be explained and motivated for how data and relevant information have been collected and thereafter treated in order to answer the research question and thesis purpose. Methodological problems in the terms of reliability and validity will be discussed.

2.1 Research Strategy and Design

This study has adapted an explorative approach. This type of reasoning is suitable for studies where there is limited previous knowledge about the research area in the initial phase (Patel & Davidson, 2003). Since the aim of this study is to investigate what affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs about the two types of quality labels and there has not been any specific research within this explicit field in Sweden, the arguments for an explorative investigation method are strong. Patel and Davidson (2003) also argue for an explorative approach if the researchers wish to collect as much facts and material as possible. Seeing that the use of multiple theory areas in this research together with the analysis of the qualitative interviews will provide a broad and versatile conception of the research area and problem, this is a further argument to use the explorative approach in this study. This is agreeable with Kvale's (1997) statement that it may be appropriate to follow *different* interesting aspects from each separate theory and interview in order to collect valuable information.

The explorative approach is also to be used when conducting interviews like the ones in this study. Explorative interviews are not as structured as when testing a hypothesis and will map out and expose a certain topic or research area (Kvale, 1997). The interviewer has followed up and sought for new information and angles of approach to the topic. It will be shown in this study through the variety, depth and outcome of the interviews. Dependent on the answers received, the follow-up questions may vary due to the relevance of the interviewees' answers. As Kvale (1997) states, an explorative research tries to find and reveal new dimensions of the topic. Through the interview answers in combination with the theories, the purpose was to analyse the strength and perceived power of the quality labels on Generation Y and hopefully generate new knowledge about the chosen research area.

The reasoning in this study has adapted an abductive approach, which is a mixture of inductive and deductive theory. That means that after gathering data and evaluation has been carried out, the researcher might want to gather more data in order to analyze if the theory is sustainable and applicable (Bryman & Bell, 2007). To go back and forth between theory and data is a typical method in abductive strategy. The study instigated with a deductive approach when empirical primary data was gathered, evaluated and finally tested in the analysis and discussion chapters. The final part of the study conducted an inductive strategy when theoretical conclusions were drawn from observations and results from investigations. Since this study collected information through interviews and these were later a main part of the analysis compared and evaluated to chosen theories, an abductive approach was necessary. Neither inductive nor deductive elements have been eliminated from the study in order to

create a better understanding to the chosen topic. There was a circular relationship between research and theory in the study, in the sense of theory emerging from collection of new data but there was also a need of the research result in the testing of theories.

When conducting research it is important to acknowledge both sides of an argument. Arguments, criticism and debates are central to this type of study. (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002) This study was focusing on words, personal values and opinions, which is a significant feature to qualitative research. Bryman and Bell (2007) highlight the importance of understanding and interpretation of the social world. Easterby-Smith et al. (2002, p. 85) continue by stating that a qualitative study seeks “to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning”. The purpose with this study was to create a deeper understanding of profound and conscious/unconscious values and beliefs of the people being studied. Jensen (1995) states that the purpose of a qualitative study is to describe a phenomenon and its attributes rather than explaining its propagation. The purpose of this master thesis was to delve deeper into the phenomenon of fair trade and ecological labels in the mind of Generation Y rather than stating how high in numbers the awareness is, how many of the respondents like/dislike the concepts etcetera. However, the reflection upon frequent answers between the respondents showed common thoughts among Generation Y consumers.

Since this study was qualitative, focus lied not only on the direct interview answers but also on the way of answering, communicated feelings, gestures, nervousness, facial expressions and so forth. All these components created the social world this study was trying to understand and were of high relevance to the analysis. Interpretation, the final stage of theory and research, “demands mental space in order to allow insights to emerge from an unconscious level so that connections can be made at lots of different levels” (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 407). The purpose with the qualitative interviews was to be able to read between the lines and therefore was the qualitative method the best suitable for this research. Qualitative material creates meaning and understanding in opposite to quantitative which aims to describe the width and breadth of a phenomenon (Jensen, 1995). A quantitative method is often time consuming and does not give the opportunity to deeper interviews. As mentioned above, quantitative material was not as relevant as qualitative in this study, since the purpose was not to create statistics but to create a profound understanding.

2.2 Collection of Theoretical and Empirical Material

In order to collect foundational material to be able to answer the research question, written sources have been assembled and qualitative interviews have been conducted. The qualitative interviews are data from the original source and have been collected for the first time. The written sources are already collected and produced material, in other words material that does not come from the original source. When dealing with sources, it is of high importance to be critical and scrutinize them closely. (Jacobsen, 2002) In this study material has been collected in the following ways to gain information in order to conduct the research: written sources and qualitative interviews.

2.2.1 Written sources

This research consisted of journal articles, books and web pages, which functioned as a compliment to the primary data collected in order to provide a rewarding analysis to this study. As predicted, journal articles showed to be the most important source in the collection of background information and theories. Some referred journals were *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *Journal of Business Research* and *Journal of Business Ethics*.

Jacobsen (2002) points out that there are some important aspects that the researchers have to evaluate when investigating and exploiting literature, among other things the credibility of the document. Since the majority of the articles are descended from respectable journals and have their foundation in a research base, they can be considered as reliable and trustworthy. The books used are from the University Library and are in many cases present or former course books. The advantages with written sources are that they are easy and quick to access and to a low cost.

The aim was to have a wide range of written sources both regarding the type of source and the age of the source. Older books were used to understand the development of ethical consumption and to get basic theories about consumer behaviour. Old sources mixed with new ones made the background information and theories more vivid when combined with the analysis.

2.2.2 Qualitative interviews

This study was based on qualitative interviews in order to capture what affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards fair trade and ecological products. The study concentrates on Generation Y in the Malmö/Lund region with focus on quality labels in food items.

The type of interview used is semi-structured interviews. Bryman and Bell (2007) declare that this technique makes it possible for the researcher to answer specific questions to be able to answer the research question. At the same time the interviewee can answer freely and the interview can take a different direction if interesting aspects comes up. Open answers are preferable because it is harder to be dishonest. In this case, people may have incentives to be dishonest; perhaps an interviewee does not want to admit that he or she is not environmentally friendly when it comes to food. This was especially confirmed in one interview when a respondent felt the need to make an excuse for not supporting ecological consumption. This information indicates that qualitative interviews with open questions were the right method to use in order to answer the research question and discuss the subject of ethical consumption.

To use a qualitative approach, in other words more in-depth questions and detailed not standardized ways of answering, is preferable in this case. Questions like "Tell us about...", "What does it mean to you..." and "What are your thoughts about..." were frequently used in the interviews. A quantitative approach on the other hand does not suit this type of study, since deeper and detailed answered questions with follow-up questions are going to be a part of the interview strategy and they are not generalizable to standardization.

Since the interviews have the same structure, the advantages with this were that all questions had to be touched upon. This led to a simplified analytical process and coding because it is facilitated the comparison of questions since the questions and answers were provided in the same overall chronological order. In this research, the interviews have only expressed the opinions and preferences of these interviewees. However, the results might be transferable to other Generation Y consumers because it is likely to think that they have similar opinions and that the result therefore is representative. People belonging to the same generation might have similar characteristics because of their shared background regarding consumer movement and information society, i.e. Fürth (2008) from Svensson and Wedin (2008) along with Miller (2006) have described typical characteristics for Generation Y. To transfer opinions is especially justified when the respondents tended to have the same opinions and feelings regarding a particular question.

This research's primary empirical material consisted of ten interviews with consumers belonging to Generation Y. Half of the interviews were male and half female in order to get an equal gender allocation. It is easier to understand a generation if both genders are represented and evaluated; otherwise the study would only look at one of the genders and that is not this master thesis's intention. The reason for conducting ten interviews is that each meeting with a respondent was detailed, deep and covered enough opinions and expressed values to be able to compose a meaningful and rewarding analysis.

During the interviews at least two of the study's authors have been present which decreases the risk of missing asking relevant questions and picking up essential point of views. The interviews took about half an hour each and they were recorded with a computer programme and thereafter transcribed with help from headphones. The empirical material resulted in about thirty pages of transliteration. If new and relevant information was revealed after having stopped recording, the interviewer took notice of this and wrote it down by hand. When announcing the topic of interest the majority of the respondents found it interesting to discuss. During the interviews the respondents showed an easy going and talkative attitude. Few follow-up questions were necessary which indicated that the original interview guide seemed to cover most of the essential areas for this research. This showed the importance of conducting a pilot interview, since it helped to evaluate the validity of the questions. Also, the transliteration was an important part of the interview and analysis process because it may have provided new insights and angles of the answers. Information about the interview topic was not handed out before the interviews took place. This was a choice made consciously since one intention with the interviews was to investigate the respondents' existing knowledge about the quality labels. This prevented them from seeking information in advance.

There are several options to choose from when conducting research to collect primary data; interviews, focus groups and observation among other. The motivated reasons for choosing qualitative interviews have already been stated above. Neither observation nor focus groups are good alternatives in this case since they do not give the opportunity to a more in-depth study, are more time consuming and are not suitable to answer this research problem. Below follows a table with an overview of the respondents divided into gender, age, marital status, occupation and location.

Respondent	Gender	Age	Marital status	Occupation	Location
1	Female	24	Single	Student	Lund
2	Female	24	Live-in partner	Student	Lund
3	Female	25	Engaged	Nurse	Malmö
4	Female	25	Single	Student	Lund
5	Female	27	Live-in partner	Teacher	Malmö
6	Male	25	Live-in partner	Student	Lund
7	Male	25	Live-in partner	Student	Lund
8	Male	27	Live-in partner	Engineer	Malmö
9	Male	24	Single	Student	Lund
10	Male	26	Engaged	Bank accountant	Malmö

Table 1: Overview of the respondents (Hansson Rahnboy, Karlsson & Sjöberg, 2009)

2.2.2.1 Coding

Bryman and Bell (2007) declare that coding of open questions is often done by reading and rereading of the respondents' answers. Categories are found and formed, in which the replies will fit under. Thereafter a coding frame is designed "that identifies the types of answer associated with each question and their respective codes (i.e. numbers)." (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 260) The authors also declare that the questions' number can be used in the computer processing of the data.

This master thesis's interview questions were divided into three main areas that would help to answer the research question; knowledge, purchasing behaviour and feelings. After conducting the interview, the answers could easily be coded into these three areas. As Bryman and Bell (2007) suggest, the questions' number were used in the computer processing of the data. In other words, to get an overview of the respondents' answers to each question, all the answers were organized under the same question number.

Because gender aspects were found to be one affecting factor, the answers from every question were put together from a male and female perspective. To be more exact, under each question the male respondents' answers were written down and thereafter the females' answers; all in order to simplify the analysis. After evaluation of the interview answers five distinct classifications of affecting factors were found. One could say that final coding was made here, when the respondents' answers had been read over and over again. This follows Bryman and Bell's (2007) declaration of how coding of open questions often is done; by reading and rereading the respondents' replies.

2.3 Methodological problems

Two main methodological problem areas will be discussed below. The conceptions considered are reliability and validity. These are often associated with quantitative research but have occurred in this qualitative study as well, which motivates a further explanation.

2.3.1 Reliability

According to Bryman and Bell (2007) there are two ways of evaluating research, through reliability and validity. Reliability evaluates if the study is reliable and trustworthy and its major concern is whether the results would be the same if the research were to be conducted again. Reliability is determining if the coincidence affects the results or not. Since this study consists of ten qualitative interviews the results are not generalizable, but the aim is to describe and create understanding instead of generating statistics. It is often hard to receive a regular measurement tool in a qualitative study (Patel and Davidson, 2003).

When it comes to the interviews, the risk of fake or artificial answers and questions which leads the respondent in a certain way is definitely worth consideration but would be the same if the research was to be made again. Kvale (1997) supports this and highlights that the crucial is not if the questions are guiding or leading the respondent but towards where or what and the outcome of the questions. The proposed outcome of the questions in this research was not to lead the interviewees but the risk was hard to eliminate and as long as the aim remains to highlight values, attitudes and beliefs the purpose was to be fulfilled. In agreement with previous authors, Jensen (1995) declares that the first step in tackling reliability issues is to acknowledge their existence. In agreement with this, the analysis of the collected material was to be considered due to evaluation of how this reliability issue may have affected the outcome.

According to Patel and Davidson (2003), there are other ways to ensure that the research is reliable. One example is to have more than one person supervising the interview, which was the attention in this master thesis. The correspondence between the interviewer and the other person is a reliability measurement called “intergraderreliabilty”. Another way is to ‘store the reality’, to be able to go back, go through and analyze the material further to ensure that the interviewers have understood everything correctly (Patel and Davidson, 2003). In this study, all interviews were recorded in order to establish reliability in our study. The recordings were also used to control and ensure the “intergraderreliabilty”.

2.3.2 Validity

The other way of tackling and handling method problems is through validity, which answers the question whether the research is investigating what it is supposed to (Bryman & Bell, 2007). In other words, in this master thesis it is crucial to reflect upon whether the research examines what affects Generation Y’s values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair label and ecological quality labels and also the relationship between the quality labels. The authors further divide validity into external and internal. External validity can be interpreted into generalization of the results and importance of the choice of respondents. The respondents selected in this study are representatives of Generation Y and are therefore providing the research with valuable information without being representative in the sense of quantifying the results into i.e. the whole country of Sweden, which was not the purpose with this particular investigation.

Bryman and Bell (2007, p. 42) also discuss the problem of ecological validity, which means “whether or not social scientific findings are applicable to people’s everyday, natural social settings”. The scientific findings may be valid technically but not in practice. This is a

problem to consider in this master thesis since the goal was to propose further investigation and maybe in the future, as evasive it may seem, put a concept launch into practice. Ecological validity was met with interview questions applicable into practice and also interviews conducted in a natural setting with no time pressure in order to gain understanding for peoples' everyday life involving fair trade and ecological quality labels.

Patel and Davidson's (2003) definition of validity is a correlation of the purpose and aim of the investigation and the actual research. In this study focus lied on human beings and what affects their values, attitudes and beliefs, which are abstract phenomena. Therefore, much work has been done in order to create an interview guide whose purpose is to answer the research problem. The validity strengthens in the interviews since questions can be asked directly when the interview is conducted. Another measure to secure the validity was that a test interview was carried out before conducting the ten interviews, in order to evaluate our questions and investigate whether they fulfil their purpose or not. To ensure that all parts of the research question will be touched upon, the interviews were structured into three main parts, all which helped to investigate which factors affect Generation Y. Other factors must be considered, such as how honest the respondents are and their way of acting during the interviews. This can be considered as a weakness of the interview since there can be incentives to be dishonest or to portray oneself as better in front of the interviewers. Patel and Davidson (2003) mean that certain abstract phenomena such as beliefs, knowledge etc must initially be defined and thereafter measured through a constructed measurement tools. This motivated the abductive approach of this master thesis in the sense of conducting interviews (mapping/evaluating phenomena), which were followed by construction of the theoretical framework (creating measurement tool).

The final problem to be highlighted is the communicated validity. Focus lies on the way the interviewers retell the interviews. They should be presented in a way that is free to the reader to interpret and form his or her personal opinion (Patel and Davidson, 2003). Feedback is essential and it is important to let the respondents take part of the interpretations and conclusions of the researcher to solve possible misunderstandings. To avoid misinterpretations, all respondents were given a summary of their interview as well as the opportunity to give feedback. According to Patel and Davidson (2003) it is of high importance that the interview answers are not pulled out of their context. However, sequences from several interviews can be merged in order to support an interpretation. In order to make it free to interpret but also structured, the interviews in this investigation were expressed in a merged text with the intention of mapping and support different findings and interpretations.

3 Theory

This chapter starts with a motivation of the chosen theories that will facilitate to answer the research question - What affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels? The theories will be applied on the research question and the relation and correlation between the chosen theories will be explained. Finally, the theories will be presented.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

A model has been developed in order to show the relation and correlation between the factors that affect Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels. The relationships between Generation Y, affecting factors, and the fair trade and ecological quality label will be demonstrated. Through qualitative interviews and literature search, five main factors that affect Generation Y in this matter have been identified and incorporated in this model. These five factors are knowledge, information, purchasing behaviour, involvement and emotions, and gender aspects. To provide the reader with a broader perspective in the chosen research area, theories about the ethical consumer and consumer confusion in regard to labels and products have also been taken into consideration.

The chosen theories can be used to analyse many areas. In this master thesis, parts of the theories have been selected that will facilitate the analysis of the research question and process of drawing conclusions. Research concerning consumer behaviour is the foundation of the theories. All theories can consequently be drawn to and associated with consumer behaviour. The relationship between Generation Y, affecting factors and the two quality labels will be illustrated below in text as well as in a figure.

The initial face of the model is the chosen demographic group, Generation Y. In the next step of the model, affecting factors to this cohort's values, attitudes and beliefs towards fair trade and ecological quality labels are presented. Starting with knowledge; without knowledge consumers are not able to express genuine opinions about a certain label or brand. Therefore, knowledge can be seen as the most essential part in the gathering of opinions and feelings towards, in this case, the fair trade label and ecological quality labels.

Information and knowledge correlate strongly. The information available about the two concepts will help to form, from marketers' point of view, a positive picture about the labels and what they represent.

Values, attitudes and beliefs are reflected in Generation Y's purchasing behaviour. In opposite, the actual purchase will affect values, attitudes and beliefs depending on the consumers' satisfaction with the product.

One of the most critical factors is involvement and emotions. High or low involvement together with emotions concerning the fair trade label and ecological quality labels are strongly correlated with the consumer’s values, attitudes and beliefs.

Finally, another affecting factor to consider is the gender aspect. Empirical evidence shows that there are differences between genders concerning consumer behaviour. This will ultimately affect which values, attitudes and beliefs one has towards quality labels.

Besides affecting the final outcome of Generation Y’s values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels, the factors can affect each other internally. For example, to what extent the consumer possesses knowledge and information influence their purchasing behaviour. The more information and knowledge, the more likely you are to buy a product (with the condition that he or she in fact approves of the concept that the quality label represents). Involvement and emotions as well as gender aspects also affect consumers purchasing behaviour.

Below the developed model that shows the relation and correlation between the factors that affect Generation Y’s values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels is presented.

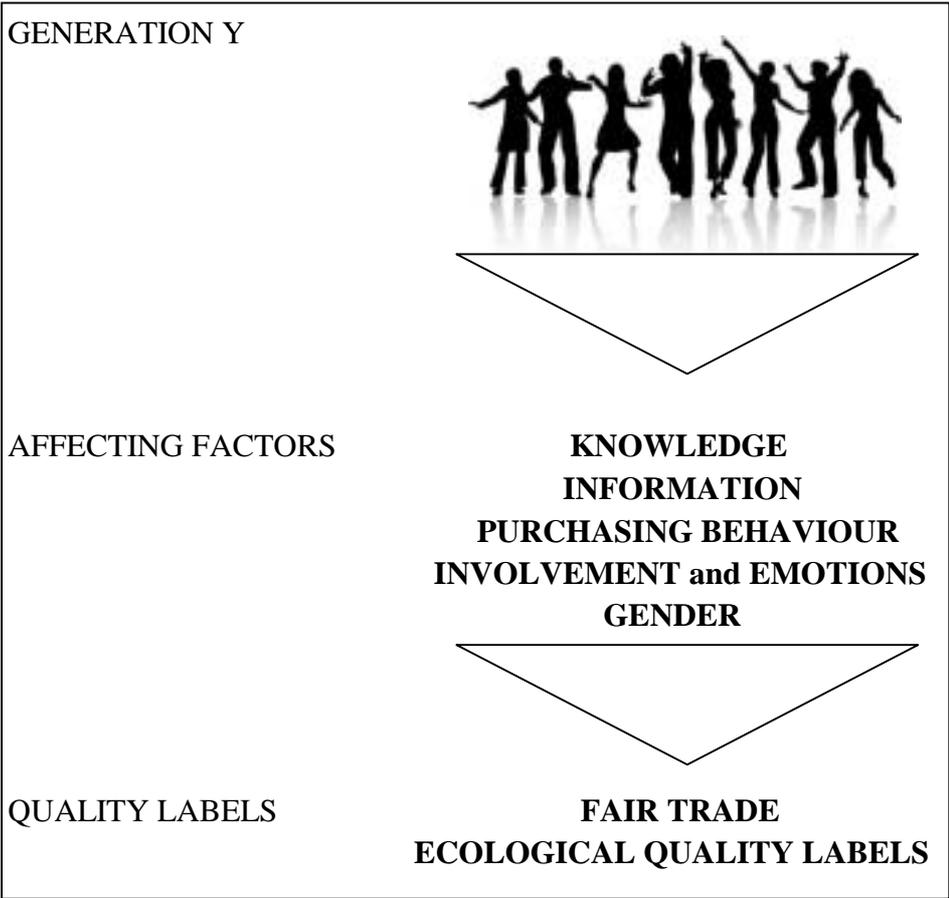


Figure 1: The relation and correlation between Generation Y, the chosen theories and quality labels (Hansson Rahnboy, Karlsson & Sjöberg, 2009)

3.2 The Ethical Consumer

The interest for studying ethical consumption has arisen in the last quarter of the 20th century (Newholm & Shaw, 2007). According to Freestone and McGoldrick (2008), ethical consumers care for more than just environmental issues; they also strive for social responsibility. Memery, Megicks and Williams (2005) say that ethical and socially responsible consumers often are younger, well educated and from middle to upper class.

Mintel (1994) from Newholm and Shaw (2007) declare that consumers are highly willing to be affected in their decision making process by ethical issues. Issues such as these are human rights, labour relations, the environment, land rights, factory farming and fair trade. This statement verifies that people are willing to think in terms of fair trade and ecology when buying products.

Newholm and Shaw (2007) mean that prior research indicates that consumers' involvement in ethical issues give them a feeling of moral responsibility. For the ethical consumer, the identity can be reflected through their consumption. The key to ethical consumption is information. The well-informed consumer demand fairly traded products and puts pressure on retailers and manufacturers to meet the ethical claims. When it comes to ethical decisions, many consumers feel uncertainty towards the available information which ultimately affects their decision-making. (Newholm & Shaw, 2007)

According to Newholm and Shaw (2007), fair trade is the most successful and high profile part of ethical consumption when it comes to marketing. Social marketing, that strives to achieve social goals are preferable to use on fair trade products rather than on the commercial emphasis on price and quality.

3.3 Knowledge

Earl and Kemp (1999) state that consumer knowledge could be seen as the information about an item for consumption stored in consumers' long-term memory. Alba and Hutchinson (1987, from Earl & Kemp, 1999) divide consumer knowledge into a multidimensional construct characterized by an expertise dimension and a familiarity dimension. The expertise aspect is connected with the ability to perform product-related tasks and the information concerning detailed product aspects that consumers have in their memories. The familiarity dimension cover product-related experiences accumulated over time, but also information about the specific relationship between the product and the self.

Earlier studies within the field of consumer behaviour research have divided consumer knowledge into objective and subjective knowledge. Objective knowledge reflects on the information about the product and product category stored in the consumer memory. Subjective knowledge is about the consumer's perception of the quality and quantity of what he or she knows about the actual product. (Balderjahn, Mennicken & Vernet, 1998) The authors continue on page 174; "For some product categories a great knowledge of the product could result into brand loyalty and especially if there are some substantial perceived differences between the brands on the main selection criteria."

Several authors discuss the intensified focus on ethics and environmentalism in the field of consumption. Earl and Kemp (1999) argue that there is evidence for an increased environmental concern by citizen-consumers during the 1990s. Already back in 1983 Assael argued about the increased number of environmentally aware consumers. "Consumers have shown greater awareness of environmental issues, as demonstrated by their willingness to pay more for pollution-reducing costs." (p. 637) The author describes this ecologically conscious group as sensitive to social pressure, they are younger, better educated, and their environmental concern is reflected through their purchasing preferences. Assael (1983) argues that this type of consumers probably will continue to make their voices heard since environmental questions is likely to remain an issue in the future consumer movement.

Vandermere and Oliff (1990) from Roberts (1996) noted several consumer shifts within the field of green consumption. Among them, a greater willingness to pay more for green products and services a consumer preference for green firms and an increased concern for the environment among all demographic groups. For example, 79 percentages of American consumers see themselves as environmentalists, 83 percentages state that they have changed their shopping habits to help protect the environment, 82 percentages of the consumers have recycled and 62 percentages are willing to pay a premium price for environmentally friendly items (Coddington, 1990 from Roberts, 1996). Consumers' knowledge and awareness of ethical consumerism are relatively strong and continue to grow (Strong, 1996). Furthermore, consumers are becoming more caring and interested in corporate behaviour even beyond the areas that directly affect them. Several marketers have noticed that consumers are now "shopping for a better world." (Charter, 1990 from Strong, 1996)

Despite the increased focus on the green consumer movement, Earl and Kemp (1999, p. 172) argue that research must consider the actual level of environmental knowledge among the consumers. "Since ecological processes and human effects on them are extremely complex, it is unlikely that most consumers have full understanding of their relationship to the environment."

3.4 Information

Assael (1983) claims that consumer information-processing include three variables; the exposure to, the organisation of, and the search for information. The author (p. 35) state "In order to influence the consumer's psychological set, stimuli must gain the consumer's attention, be comprehended, and be retained in memory for a certain period of time." The attention process considers noticing of a stimulus or a certain portion of it. The comprehension phase is selective because consumers might interpret the same message differently because of differences in attitudes and beliefs regarding the actual item. Messages that are most important and relevant, from a consumer point of view, are more likely to be remembered. Attention, comprehension and retention are all influenced by the nature of the message, the nature and trustworthiness of the source, and the way the consumer actually processing information. (Assael, 1983)

Earl and Kamp (1999) argue that the consumer information process differ depending on the sort of product. A distinction can be made between low-involvement products with little personal relevance and high-involvement products with high personal importance. When searching for a high-involvement product the consumer is actively searching the environment

for useful and relevant information. For low-involvement products, consumers do not actively search for relevant information; they evaluate the product after purchase and use, not before. Earl and Kemp (1999) continue by stating that low-involvement products characterises a clear majority of consumer evaluations. Therefore, companies and marketers must adapt their marketing strategies to different decision processes.

From Srinivasan's (1990) from Earl & Kemp (1999) perspective, the information-processing approach is composed of two central parts; external and internal search. External search is the ongoing information search process considering product involvement, market environment and situational factors. Beatty and Smith (1987) from Earl and Kemp (1999, p. 527) describe external search as "the degree of attention, perception, and effort towards obtaining information related to the specific purchase under consideration." Internal search take the product information stored in the consumers memory into account. For managers, it is of importance to really understand the determinants of information search (Schmidt & Spreng, 1996, from Earl & Kemp, 1999).

In order to affect and influence consumer behaviour, processable information must be available (Bettman & Kakkar, 1977 from Thompson & Hamilton, 2006). Processability is about how, and to what extent, consumers can interpret information. Higgins (1998) states that greater processability can result in a positive response that is transferred to the product being evaluated. In fact, brand selection depends on the acquired information and how consumers process this information (Assael, 1983).

Sometimes consumers do not have enough useful and good information to make an adequate decision. The consumer will then search for additional information. Assael (1983) states that additional search takes place when the consumer (a) has not enough information about the product under consideration, (b) feels that alternative brands being considered are inadequate, (c) gets information about an item that conflicts with earlier experiences and, (d) is close to a decision and would like to confirm expectations regarding the product's performance.

The importance of information within the field ethical consumerism has been an active subject of research. Newholm and Shaw (2007) state that information is the key to ethical consumption. Additionally, the well-informed consumer is challenging manufacturers to actually guarantee their ethical statements they are making about their products. However, Corrigan and Attilla (2001) argue that this new "consumer sophistication" and ethical concern not necessarily means total ethical behaviour. There seems to be an attitude gap between consumer information and actual purchasing behaviour. Factors such as price, quality and value seem to outweigh ethical criteria (Corrigan & Attilla, 2001).

3.5 Purchasing Behaviour

The following question, asked by Earl and Kemp (1999, p. 92), is valuable to have in mind during this research; "*Do consumers buy goods because of what they do (functional value), or because of what they mean (symbolic value)?*"

Hughes and Guerrero (1971) from Earl and Kemp (1999) claim that purchases are a reflection of one's ideal self-image. In other words, the ideal self-image is reflected in the products

bought. Especially in situations of a negative self-image, products can help a customer to get closer to the ideal self-image. An individual's self image will affect the purchasing behaviour when the self-perception becomes empowered through the consumption of goods as symbols (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967 from Earl and Kemp, 1999). Furthermore, purchases can reflect the social self-image, which is an image desired by others. Sirgy (1982) from Earl and Kemp (1999, p. 93) has divided the self-image research into five areas:

1. The relationship between self-image and socio-psychological factors
2. Consumer behaviour affected by the match between self-image and the product image
3. Consumer behaviour as a direct function of the self-concept (the strive for a match between the self-image and product image does not exist)
4. Product image as a function of consumer behaviour (the product image is like me as a person)
5. Self-image as a function of behavioural effects

Earl and Kemp (1999) declare that a consumer can change his or her attitude towards a product after the purchase in order to become more satisfied with the purchase. This is a form of post-purchase behaviour.

Another form of purchasing behaviour is impulse buying behaviour. According to Harmancioglu, Finney and Joseph (2009), impulse buying behaviour differs from planned purchases in the sense that the buying decision is made much quicker. An unplanned purchase can stimulate both cognitive and emotional reactions. Rook (1997) from Harmancioglu, Finney and Joseph (2009) claim that consumers tend to feel stronger about an unplanned purchase than a planned purchase. Since consumers shop to satisfy a need, an impulse purchase satisfies a particular need consumers feel during their shopping.

Price is a factor that affects purchasing behaviour. Assael (1983) declares that price is highly associated with product quality. If product information is lacking, price is an important indicator for quality. Assael (1983) also points out that one essential determinant of consumers' price sensitivity is expectations regarding normal price level and price range. Consumers put standard prices on products, prices they consider as fair.

3.6 Involvement and Emotions

Consumer involvement has gotten an extensive interest from the 1990s and is still of current interest. One of the key standpoints is that low involvement characterizes limited information processing and evaluation activities. (Laaksonen, 1994) There are many definitions of involvement. Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (2000) from Halepete, Littrell and Park (2009, p. 146) describe involvement as "an emotion characterized by a consumer's interest, enthusiasm, relevance, and excitement in a product".

Meeting the individual needs of consumers is also an important factor when discussing involvement. Xue (2008) agrees when stating that it is the personal relevance based on values, needs and interest that forms the involvement. If there is no interest and motivation, the message that creates involvement will not be acknowledged by the consumer. The lack of motivation affects the attitude and the willingness to embrace new knowledge. On the opposite, a high level of involvement leads to a change in consumer attitude towards a

specific product. Involvement also refers to the degree of interest in and also motivation to find out more about a product. Laaksonen (1994) stresses the importance of knowledge to involvement, which is discussed in another part of the theory chapter. It has been stated that when people pay a premium price for a certain product, the involvement is usually higher. (Puccinelli, Goodstein, Grewal, Price, Raghubir & Stewart, 2009).

Laaksonen (1994) divides involvement into three definition categories; cognitively-based, individual-state and response-based definitions. The author discusses the cognitive aspect of involvement and means that "...involvement can be generally seen to denote the perceived personal importance of an object to an individual" (1994, p. 96). Personal relevance and devotement are two key conceptions in the cognitive approach. The author also stresses the importance of the psychological linkage between an individual and an object. This so called object-related structure refers to the individual's representation of cognitive elements, i.e. beliefs. Involvement is seen as the reflection of self-concept, needs, values and motives in relation to an object. Bosnjak and Rudolph (2008) discuss the self-concept and self-image in combination with buying behaviour and describe it as the choice of brands and products is a way of matching up tangible goods with certain aspects of the self, i.e. the way we want to be seen and treated by others.

The second involvement category is the individual-state approach and focuses on the mental stage of the consumer when determining the level of involvement. In opposition to the previous approach, the individual-state does not require personal relevance. Cognitive factors are not the foundation of involvement. Focus lies on motivation of an individual. How a consumer reacts is a result of environmental stimuli but also the nature of the situation and individual and these affect behavioural and mental responses. (Laaksonen, 1994)

Laaksonen's (1994) third definition of involvement is called the response-based approach. This investigates the mediating role of information processing in combination with personal involvement. External stimuli are important and involvement is described as a behavioural or mental response to the stimuli. Krugman (1965) from Laaksonen (1994) criticize the previous approaches when arguing that involvement does not refer to the amount of i.e. attention and interest. Instead, involvement is operationalized "by counting the number of conscious-bridging connections a viewer made between his own experience and personal life and the stimulus" (Krugman from Laaksonen, 1994, p. 52)

Ethical consumerism is nowadays a well-founded concept. De Pelsmacker, Driesen and Rayp (2003) from Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) mean that the ethical consumer expresses a responsibility towards society, which is reflected in his or her purchasing behaviour. Thus, ethical aspects are not the only factor determining the buying behaviour. Actually, ethical aspects are considered a low motivator which is a key determinant of involvement, not considered and valued high by people in general or only taken into account for a minority of consumers. There are other factors influencing purchase; price, quality, convenience and brand familiarity. To be an ethical consumer engages for some kind of involvement and interest, which descends from an urge to search for information. (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006)

The concern of animal welfare has increased in the last two decades and consumers show a greater will to pay a premium price to ensure the animal welfare (Intel, 1996; Bennet, 1996 from Harper & Makatouni, 2002). Also a greater concern of pesticides, hormones and antibiotics etc. among consumer involvement shows that a health focus exists in the market

today. Consequently the consumer demand, based on involvement, interest and attitude, has increased on products which take the animals and environment in consideration. (Harper & Makatouni, 2002).

Alexander and Nicholls (2006) stress the importance of loyalty in the involvement process. High involvement can lead to consumer loyalty, a rise in consumer awareness and also positive word-of-mouth. The same authors describe both organic and fair traded products as high-involvement products, where the level of engagement is an important determination in the buying decision process. Trust is a component in the creation of loyalty. Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aléman (2005, p. 188) describe trust when the “probability or expectancy that the brand will result in positive outcomes for the consumer”. The authors also mean that through trust brand equity is created, which is something that adds value to the customers and takes time to develop. Finally, the authors claim that it is through trust that a closer relationship to the consumers is created.

Vermeir and Verbeke (2006, p. 169) state that “involvement with sustainability, certainty, PCE (perceived consumer effectiveness), have a significant positive impact on attitude towards buying sustainable dairy products, which in turn correlates strongly with intentions to buy”. The authors continue by stressing the fact that involvement is a type of motivation.

Castaldo, Perrini, Misani and Tencati (2009) discuss consumer trust in relation to involvement towards high-involvement products. Trust is defined as “the trustor’s expectation that the trustee is willing to keep promises and to fulfil obligations” (Castaldo et al., 2009, p. 6). The authors also highlight that trust is especially essential to consumer with an interest in i.e. fair trade products. As mentioned above, interest and a desire to find out more about a product is a significant feature of involvement. Castaldo et al. (2009) further discuss that trust will be nourished by information that the consumers already possess, information in documentary style with direct examples of farmers etc., endorsements and other considerations. The authors also highlight that information creates trust, which influence the consumer’s intention to buy, which finally may lead to consumer loyalty. Loyalty is also considered a source to create involvement.

Along with trust, distrust must also be taken into account in the involvement creation process. Distrust affects the level of involvement by the consumer. Forehand and Grier (2003) explain this distrust as two types of scepticism; situational (momentary state) and dispositional (ongoing tendency). Situational scepticism occurs when there exists dissonance between claims or the intended message is hard to understand. Consumers’ evaluation is affected when this discrepancy occurs. The authors also mean that situational scepticism affects the overall consumer attitude towards a firm or brand. If these effects are strong enough, this might lead to a dispositional scepticism.

3.7 Gender Aspects

The understanding of gender in marketing and consumer behaviour is significantly less developed, compared with gender in the anthropological discipline. “Scholars continue to be satisfied with a finding that men and women behave differently, with little reference as to how and why” (Costa, 2000, from Catterall, Maclaran & Stevens, 2000, p. 272). Bristor and Fisher (1993, from Thompson, 1996) have also argued that there is a need for in-depth research

about gendered consumption in order to understand the psychological and institutional dynamics that shape consumer practices preferences.

In today's advanced industrialized countries equalization between male and female appears to be taking place. Variables such as wage and education are moving towards equity and equality. But the obligation of raising children, feeding the family and caring for the household are still considered being a female task. Moreover, these activities also involve and require a lot of consumption. Therefore, consuming is normally considered to be a female project. (Costa, 2000, from Catterall, Maclaran & Stevens, 2000)

Berg and Teigen (2009) state that consumption is gendered. A number of markets could be seen as female-dominated and some markets could be described as male-dominated. The authors state that the typical consumer is a woman. According to earlier studies in gender and consumption, men take less interest in shopping compared to women (De Grazia & Furlough, 1996 from Berg and Teigen, 2009). This is especially noted within the households' grocery shopping where the women take the main responsibility (Lavik, 1999 from Berg & Teigen, 2009). The traditional purchasing behaviour seems unchanged. Brusdal and Lavik (2007) from Berg & Teigen (2009) state that it is actually the women who most commonly bring home the food from the retailer store.

Several studies have noticed differences between male and female shopping behaviour concerning ethical products with the fair trade label and ecological labels. Blend & van Ravenswaay (1999) studied consumer demand for eco labelled apples. They found that purchase probability for labelled apples were significantly affected by gender. The male consumers were less likely to purchase eco labelled apples compared with the female group. This trend is also noted by Loureiro and Lotade (2005) who argue that female respondents, particularly with higher income, are more likely to pay higher prices for organic and fair traded coffee.

In the study "Green Buying: The influence of Environmental Concern on Consumer Behaviour" the authors (Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan & Oskamp, 1997) found female respondents to be more environmentally friendly. When shopping, female consumers tend to care more about environmental aspects and furthermore be more likely to recycle different types of products. The authors state that many women in their study did the majority of the grocery shopping and as a consequence were more ethical when purchasing different products.

However, several authors have found that gender has no influence on ethical consumption. Among them, De Pelsmacker, Driesen and Rayp (2003) from Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) state that fair trade supporters consist of an almost equal share of men and women. This is also confirmed in a study by Bhate and Lawler from 1997. The authors argue that the environmentally friendly consumer is not of any particular age or a specific gender.

3.8 Consumer Confusion

There are several factors indicating that there might exist confusion about the fair trade and ecological concepts. Eden, Bear and Walker (2008) mean that consumers in developed countries are becoming more distanced from the production in general, both in developed and

developing economies. This has in some cases led to an increasingly damaging production, in terms of production destructive to human health, environment and development. The authors mean that the solution of this issue is “to reconnect consumers with producers through education and information provision about systems of food production, so that consumers will avoid food coming from such damaging systems and instead favour food from more beneficial systems” (Eden et al., 2008, p. 2). They also found that product assurance schemes (i.e. product content, country of origin, charities etc.) are a complex consumer evaluating process.

To study certifications is a quite new phenomenon (Eden et al., 2008). Guthman (2004) and Mutersbaugh (2002) from Eden et al. (2008) highlight the fact that research conducted on consumers within this field is often based on virtual or assumed consumers and not real life consumers. Real consumers may not act the expected way, as when considering assumed consumers.

Eden et al. (2008) found that there was a lot of confusion among the names of the organizations, which is certified with some sort of assurance. The research showed that if the names were too similar to each other, the consumers tended to question the organizations' existence in favour to the organization that was the highest recalled one. In similarity to brand familiarity, organization and certification familiarity are crucial to the consumers.

Grunert (2005) describes quality labels as a blurry category that covers many aspects. The criteria of earning a quality label can both be very strict or none at all. The author also means that the labels are quite often not even considered in regards to quality. Another issue to consider is that the labels may be misinterpreted or make presumptions that do not correlate with the label's intended message. Grunert (2005) concludes by stating that more information may not always lead to decreased confusion and consumer concern but rather to the opposite.

In this thesis, the certifications can be evaluated and seen as brands. Howard, Kerin and Gengler (2000) discuss confusion among brands and trademarks. The degree of consumer involvement is an important factor to consider since it “refers to the extent to which consumers consider product information when making purchases, such that they will be more or less likely to distinguish trademarks and other source-related information” (Howard et al., 2000, p. 250). The authors clearly claim that similarity between trademarks can be seen as the most likely main source of confusion. Trademarks may also cause confusion if they share the same meaning and communicate and create similar impressions in the minds of the consumers. In high-involvement purchasing decisions, brands that communicate the same meaning may cause confusion in the sense that consumers believe that they have the same origin.

4 Analysis

In this chapter, the interviews about what affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels combined with theory are presented and analysed. The analysis is divided into five main factors and these are presented one by one.

4.1 Affecting Factors

Through the interviews, five main factors that affect Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels were clearly noticeable: knowledge, information, purchasing behaviour, involvement and emotions, and gender aspects. With the master thesis's aim in mind, these factors answer the research question: *What affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels?*

4.1.1 Knowledge

Earl and Kemp (1999) argue that studies within the field of consumer behaviour have observed an increased environmental concern among consumers during the 1990s. Generation Y has grown up under this development. Back in the early 80s, Assael (1983) described an increased group of environmentally friendly shoppers. Literature today no longer talk about a specific group, they are talking about a whole generation; the "Echo Boomers".

When asking what the respondents think about when they hear fair trade, many focused on the subject of fair labour conditions, referring to the manufacturing workers found in factories or farming lands. Many of the respondents think of coffee and chocolate production. One respondent, Lisa (25 years old), expresses:

"It should be fair administrated, I think of those who are in the bottom-line of the production, they must have legislative wages and good working conditions. I am thinking of coffee-workers out in the fields."

Human rights and good social conditions within the production process was a common answer among the respondents. Consequently, products and product categories associated with the fair trade logo were coffee and bananas. In other words, import goods from labour incentive industries. The respondents were in general thinking of developing countries such as Brazil, India and different African nations. Many of the respondents had difficulties to describe the fair trade logotype; especially in the male group where none of the respondents could describe the label. This statement illustrates the newness of fair trade but also a need for more relevant and useful information. In fact, great knowledge of a product could result into brand loyalty (Balderjahn, Mennicken & Vernet, 1998).

The respondents were given the opportunity to talk about the meaning of fair trade for them. A common answer among the respondents was acceptable working conditions for the employees. There was in general a positive view of fair trade but one respondent, Ola (24 years old), did not support the concept. Ola's sceptical thoughts about fair trade illustrate Generation Y's awareness and knowledge about ethical consumption. This generation is not the easiest to win over. In the real world of business, companies do generally behave (Ghauri & Cateora, 2006), but the "Echo Boomers" are critical to advertising (Miller, 2006) and knows that companies not always act ethical. Ola explains his opinion:

"There shouldn't be a need for a label like this. It feels like starting in the wrong direction. Such a label feels like a marketing activity, like you talking bullshit of your competitors, indirectly."

The words ecological products are often associated with environmental aspects concerning production methods and pesticides. One of the respondents, Hanna (24 years old), expresses:

"Then I am thinking of a production method that not affects in such ways as with conventional farming and sprayed products. Also water consumption and not to use chemicals. Products that not affect the environment."

Some respondents were thinking of cattle management and animal rights. Ola was thinking of a hippie movement when hearing about ecological products:

"I am thinking of an environmental hippie movement which is convinced that everything that is ecological is good and better than everything else."

When asking about the meaning of ecological products, a major part of the male respondents showed a negative view of ecological labels and products. Henrik (27 years old) compares ecological tomatoes from Sweden with tomatoes from Spain:

"There is a classic example with ecological and KRAV-labelled tomatoes from Sweden; they are cultivated in greenhouses and hothouses that require much energy. Tomatoes from Spain for example, have the sunlight, they already have the energy. Then you have transportation a few hundred miles, but if look at the total energy aspect than you realize that Spanish tomatoes are better from an ecological point of view."

Ola has the same sceptical thoughts about ecological production:

"Personally I think that it is a step backwards in the development because Sweden already has strong and good environmental controls considering farming. We in Sweden are in the forefront within the environmental industry and as the modern farming looks today it are already very environmentally friendly."

When moving on to products and product categories most associated with ecological labels, the answers were groceries and especially dairy products. Many respondents were thinking of ecological milk and eggs, fruit was also a common answer. One respondent associated ecological products with the Swedish retailer ICA's ecological assortment named *I love Eco*.

A common ecological quality label mentioned by the respondents was the KRAV label. In most cases this label was actually the only ecological label the respondents could think of. The fact that the respondents answered KRAV directly shows that the KRAV label is stored in their long-term memory. Some of the respondents also mentioned the Svanen label. Only

two respondents could name ecological stamps other than KRAV and Svanen. In general, all respondents knew how to visually describe the ecological labels they mentioned.

Several marketers have noticed a consumer shift to ethical consumption (Charter, 1990 from Strong, 1996) but Earl and Kemp (1999) state that, despite increased focus on green consumption, it is unlikely that consumers have full understanding of their relationship to the environment. In order to investigate if the respondents knew the main difference between the fair trade label and ecological quality labels we asked them the following question; what do you believe is the main difference between the concepts? Many of the respondents connected fair trade with social and human aspects. When fair trade was strongly linked with working conditions, ecological labels in opposite, was connected with the environment and animal welfare. One respondent, Erik (25 years old), expresses:

“When it is about fair trade the human being is in bigger focus. When it comes to ecology it feels like the environment and the production is in focus.”

Lisa reasons in the same way as Erik and says:

“Fair trade is more about those who produces and work for the product. Ecological... is more about the actual product, it should be a good product, clean, and without biocide.”

Most of the respondents see themselves as more knowledgeable about fair trade and ecological labels compared with their parents, especially the female respondents. Some respondents believe that knowledge differences depend on information and education. Generation Y is well educated (Miller, 2006) and they has grown up under a period influenced by ethical consumption, social responsibility and global warming. Their parents, in opposite, have grown up under a period when global warming was unknown and colonialism still was alive. Another aspect was deep-rooted buying behaviour among older generations. Stina (24 years old) expresses:

“It is probably a matter of habit also. My parents buy the same products they always have bought. And this with fair trade and ecological products are quite new stuff.”

Many respondents thought that the fair trade label was not that common among older generations. Ola says:

“I think it is a difference in knowledge between generations because fair trade is a new label and the younger generation can relate to it more.”

The respondents tend to have relative high knowledge about fair trade and ecological products. Despite their trouble to mention different labels, they actually understand the concepts behind ecological quality labels and fair trade. Furthermore, they demonstrate knowledge by discussing the truth of fair trade and the way ecological products are produced. Because of its newness, the respondents want more information about fair trade. The role of information will be looked at in the next section.

As described above, all of the respondents named the KRAV label when discussing different ecological labels. There seems to be confusion among the respondents regarding ecological logotypes. According to the Swedish Consumer Agency there are six ecological labels of importance on the Swedish market today. In fact, those six labels are not the only ones on the

market; there exists several other ecological labels not mentioned by the Agency. Perhaps it could be too much labels to handle. The twenty-first century could be described as the century of environmental awareness (Ghauri & Cateora, 2006), and there is now a wide range of ecological labels within consumer good markets.

Despite a relative high knowledge about the ecological concept among the respondents, it was obvious that they had difficulties to describe other labels than KRAV and Svanen. This experience is studied by Howard, Kerin and Gengler (2000). The authors state that trademarks can cause confusion if they are similar and share the same meanings from a consumer point of view. One respondent, Ola, described the increasing number of ecological labels as a market strategy. He was somewhat sceptical:

“Almost everything is named ecological nowadays, but I do not see ecological items as generally positive all the time.”

4.1.2 Information

Newholm and Shaw (2007) declare that consumers are dependent on information to make good decisions. In other words, the more information consumers have about products with the fair trade label and ecological quality labels, the more they are likely to purchase more of these products. This statement was confirmed through our interviews; many of the respondents see information as the one thing that most likely would motivate them to buy more fair trade and ecological products. The degree of, or in this case lack of, information affects consumers' decision-making process. However, one must be aware of the difference between what consumers say and what they actually do. More information would not necessarily lead to increased purchases since the economic factor also plays a huge part for many consumers (Corrigan & Attilla, 2001). The economic factor and especially Generation Y's economic situation will be analysed in the next section.

Many of the respondents answered that there is a lack of information about fair trade products. They have no idea of how the fair trade organization is cooperating with the producers and how the trade conditions and the concept really work. There seems to be quite an extensive interest in getting more information. There is also an interest of further proof that this concept works as it is supposed to. The majority of those who wanted proof and more information brought up older examples where programmes and incentives like fair trade have not worked before. Corruption in certain countries and money gaining “wrong” people were also frequent responses to the scepticism. As Ola expresses it:

“Without child labour and without people living in poverty to produce this product. I have no idea if this is correct... I doubt that fair trade works. I have not seen any TV documentaries or read an article that it really works, that they are treated fairly... If I had seen clear proof that those who work really improved their living standard, I would consider paying a little bit more and buy the product. It might be a label that they just put on the product without any control, which authorities control this production?”

Henrik expresses the same scepticism when saying:

“The concept of fair trade is of course very good but I'm sceptical if it really is so fair trade as it's supposed to be because you don't have or I do not have any proof of how the production

is prosecuted...I want to have proof that it really works. They must have more campaigns, show how it is, TV documentaries.”

The quotations above highlight the need for more information about the concept of fair trade, especially inside the store. Processable information must be available in order to influence consumer behaviour (Bettman & Kakkar, 1977; Thompson & Hamilton, 2006). In fact, consumers’ choice of brand depends on the acquired information and how the consumer processes the information (Assael, 1983). Furthermore, the sceptical view should put pressure on fair trade organizations. The well-informed consumer is challenging manufacturers to act ethical and follow the statements they are making about their products (Newholm and Shaw, 2006).

There is an interest in getting more information, preferable directly on the packages. A larger selection of products is also acknowledged. Stina showed an interest in learning more about the fair trade label which shows that this is a product with high personal relevance for her. According to Earl and Kamp (1999) a distinction can be made between low-involvement products with low personal relevance and high involvement products with high relevance. The majority of retailer products are associated with low involvement, but a product with the fair trade logo could automatically give the product higher personal relevance because of its background. Buying a product with the fair trade logotype is more an active choice in contrast to low involvement products who consumers not evaluate before purchase. Therefore, marketers must adapt their marketing and information strategies to either low or high involvement products (Earl & Kemp, 1999). Stina declares her demand for more information and describes what would motivate her to buy more fair trade products:

“Maybe more information about the certification. It could be explained pretty pedagogical next to the label. For example explain: What happens if I buy this product? ...Fair trade and ecological products are quite new phenomena. You need to find information on your own; you do not get fed with information that this is good.”

According to Newholm and Shaw (2007) information could be seen as the key to ethical consumption. However, critic has been pointed at the retailers as well; some respondents experience that it might be hard to find fair trade products in the store. Anders (26 years old) reveals:

“I don’t actively search for fair trade products. Even if I think it is good. Maybe I should be doing that if there was a display in the store that showed that this is fair trade. Poorly conducted marketing inside the store. It should be more visible in the display cases – the fair trade message.”

Erik says:

“...first of all, I do not think that one can see fair trade that often. It is not promoted that hard.”

Regarding products with an ecological quality label, many of the respondents believe there is a lot of information out there and that this concept is well established in the society. It is obvious that the respondents are more familiar with ecological labels, especially the KRAV label. The relative long history has created consciousness among consumers who also search their information about ecological labels internally. The information-processing approach is composed of internal and external search and Beatty and Smith (1987, from Earl & Kemp, 1999) argue that internal search reflects the product information stored in the consumers

memory. The respondents are more familiar with information about ecological labels than the fair trade label but a majority still wants additional information concerning the two different concepts. Ulrika (26 years old) highlights the difference in promoting fair trade versus ecological labels:

“...more information and pressure from all different instances, information in TV and papers and also commercials contribute to an increasing attention. And the more you acknowledge it, the bigger the chance that you buy it. There has been a lot of commotion around the ecological products and KRAV and then it becomes more convenient to buy that over fair trade. Fair trade has not received as much space and attention.”

Even though many of the respondents agree on the fact that there is a lot of information available about ecological labels and their concepts, they believe it could be better. Anders believes his motivation to buy products with an ecological label would increase when stating:

“They should be more visible and that the ecological options would increase.”

To sum up, a demand for more information about the two concepts, especially the fair trade concept is noticeable. Fair trade is somewhat a new concept and it is therefore important to provide the sceptical consumer with useful information as evidence. After all, consumer attention, comprehension and retention are all influenced by the trustworthiness of the source, the nature of the message and the way consumers processing information (Assael, 1983).

The respondents had no problem connecting fair trade with social aspects but they are rather confused regarding the relationship between the fair trade organization and the producers. In other words; the actual course of event when a fair trade product is produced, traded and sold. As Eden, Bear and Walker (2008) declare; consumers in developed nations are becoming more separated from production in general. Therefore it is essential to provide the confused consumer with information about the whole process regarding fair traded products. Once again, fair trade is a rather new concept for many of the respondents and it takes time to actually consolidate and secure a clear picture of fair trade in the consumers' memory.

Information is a critical variable when the consumer evaluates fair trade and ecological quality labels. As stated before, the “Echo Boomers” has grown up under the development of ethical consumption and they are a generation critical of media. This is something marketers must have in mind when focusing on Generation Y (Miller, 2006).

4.1.3 Purchasing Behaviour

It became clear through the interviews that many respondents have bought a product with the fair trade label. However, they do not tend to search actively for fair trade products. Coffee and chocolate are the two most common fair trade products the respondents have bought. There is a difference in how often the respondents buy products with the fair trade label. Many respondents do not buy fair trade products regularly; it just happens once in a while. Ulrika declares that circumstances affect whether she buys fair trade or not:

“I don't buy fair trade every time I go shopping but sometimes. When I like to, when it gets thrown at me, when I see it or if it is up-to-date for some reason, if you have seen it on TV or read about it.”

Consequently, if a product with the fair trade label is in the shelf or if the concept has been of immediate interest in the media, it is more likely that the respondent will buy fair trade. Harmancioglu, Finney and Joseph (2009) refer this type of purchasing behaviour as an impulse buying. Ulrika makes an unplanned purchase when she is surprisingly exposed to products with the fair trade label. An impulse purchase can stimulate an emotional reaction and it is likely to believe that Ulrika is stimulated emotionally when she buys a product with the fair trade label. Another respondent, Lisa, is also stimulated when she buys fair trade. She buys fair trade once every other week and sometimes she even goes for a fair trade coffee:

“I buy fair trade when necessary, about two times a month. I often go for a fair trade coffee and I always buy the same fair trade coffee label. Sure, the coffee is good but I mostly buy it because the coffee is fair trade. I pay a little extra for the coffee to be fair trade. If I can contribute a little bit, I will.”

Lisa assures us that the coffee is good, although she mostly buys it since it is fair trade. This can be a sign of her trying to convince herself that the fair trade coffee tastes just as good as regular coffee in order to justify the purchase. This phenomenon is called post-purchase behaviour. (Earl and Kemp, 1999) It is important for Lisa that the coffee has the fair trade label, which can make her attitude towards the product more positive. As Earl and Kemp (1999) declare: the attitude towards a product can be altered after the purchase to make the purchase more satisfying.

Not all the respondents were as satisfied as Lisa. Henrik declares his lack of purchasing intentions as a result of his scepticism against the label. The same respondent shows scepticism towards charity organisation in general. A reason for not buying fair trade can also be that the respondent has not actually been in a situation, were he or she should choose between a fair trade or a non-fair trade product. Another factor that decreases the purchasing intentions is the lack of interest. Ola says:

“I don’t care if it is fair trade.”

When the respondents discuss the feeling after having bought a product with the fair trade label, their feeling was that they did something good for the world. One respondent believes it feels better to buy products with the fair trade label or to take a coffee at a fair trade café instead of buying a coffee at a huge chain where they do not think much about working conditions; they just want to have the cheapest possible. The feeling of having contributed to something good can be seen as the ideal self-image being reflected in the product bought (Hughes and Guerrero, 1971 from Earl and Kemp, 1999). The respondents buy fair trade products because it makes them feel good; the ideal self-image and the longing for being perceived as a good person are factors contributing to the consumption of fair trade products. As Stina expresses it:

“You feel good. It feels like you are making a good deed by choosing and paying a little bit more. You know that it is for a good cause.”

When moving on to products with an ecological label there is a huge difference in purchasing behaviour from fair trade products. In opposite to fair trade products, ecological products are bought regularly, especially ecological milk, egg, vegetables and fruit. One respondent mentions ICA’s series of ecological products *I love eco* and has a positive attitude towards it.

When the respondents go shopping most of them tend to buy something ecological. As Stina puts it:

“I buy ecological every time I buy food, it is milk. I always choose ecological products if they are available.”

For some respondents it is a part of every day life to buy ecological products and they therefore do not feel anything special when buying them. However, buying ecological products gives the feeling of having done something good. Stina reflects upon the product's origin:

“It feels good that you are doing a good deed. You stop and think for a second, why do I choose this product instead of the other? It is after all two crowns more expensive but you have reflected upon it, where does the product come from and so on.”

Emelie is very much aware of the existence of ecological products and buys them regularly. The respondent thinks that purchases of ecological products shows towards which direction you want to go. By purchasing products with an ecological quality label consumers can show that there is a demand for these products. You as a consumer decide the assortment in the stores. If it was up to Ola, the ecological assortment would not be that large. He has never bought an ecological product and explains why by saying:

“They are too expensive and I don't really believe I like the ecological movement and therefore I don't think I want to promote it. If the products had cost the same, I probably would have bought the regular. I would have bought the ecological product if it were cheaper. The economical is huge. The ideological factor is smaller but it exists. I am a bit anti ecological...I hope I do not sound evil for being anti ecological.”

Although Ola does not like ecological products he feels obligated to apologize for this; he does not want to sound like a horrible person for not supporting buying products with an ecological label. Consequently, the following conclusion can be made; you are perceived as a good person if you buy ecological products. This is, according to Sirgy (1982) from Earl and Kemp (1999), identified as the product image being a function of consumer behaviour. For example, “I buy product X, which makes me a good person; therefore, the product image is like me”. In similarity to products with the fair trade label, the consumption of products with an ecological quality label gives people the chance to come closer to their ideal self-image (Hughes and Guerrero, 1971 from Earl and Kemp, 1999). The social self-image, which according to Earl and Kemp (1999) is an image desired by others, can be empowered when purchasing ecological products.

Regarding the price issue some respondents, in opposite to what Ola expressed above, feel that it is worth paying a little extra for ecological products. Anders says:

“It is a little bit more expensive but it is worth it. That you actually need to take your responsibility and do something good for the environment.”

Although many feel it is worth paying a premium price for products with the ecological label, price reduction is seen as a strong motivation factor for buying more ecological products. Emelie discusses this by saying:

“I keep nagging awfully a lot about the price, but I feel that way. If it would cost the same, I would of course choose the ecological product... ICA has improved the last year I think but there are still some products that cost way more if they are ecological...If the price were the same, I can't see a reason for not buying ecological products.”

This is a clear example of what Assael (1983) refers to as expectations regarding normal price level and price range. In this case, ecological products do not meet the respondents' expectations of normal price or price range. They perceive products with an ecological quality label as too expensive which decreases their purchasing power. Consequently, it is supported by theory that price affects purchasing behaviour.

In the end of the interview, the respondents reflected upon if they believe they buy more products with the fair trade label or an ecological quality label than their parents. Many thought they did, foremost because they believe that they are more knowledgeable and more committed to the area than their parents. Ulrika also refers to possible differences between generations:

“Maybe it is the involvement you have when you are in my generation, that you have it from the start and that you are informed somehow. Even if my parents also know about it; if you would asked them about this, they would also be well informed. But perhaps it is more common that you as a younger person are more idealistic.”

Finally, when discussing the respondents' purchasing behaviour it indicated that there was some confusion regarding the labels. In some cases the respondents talked about ecological quality labels when asked about the fair trade label. This agrees with Grunert's (2007) statement that labels may be misinterpreted and consumers can make presumptions that do not correlate with the label's intended message. As noted before the message behind the fair trade label and ecological quality labels is different and should not be mistaken for one another. Anders is one respondent who was insecure when answering the question if he has bought any fair trade products:

“Sometime I guess... The coffee is something special. Could it be fair trade or just ecological? Yes, it should be fair trade.”

Stina mentions products with ecological quality labels although she is asked about the fair trade label:

“Yes, coffee. I buy a lot of ecological food but that is not fair trade, not yet anyway...”

Emelie expresses her confusion strongly and also mentions ecological products when asked about fair trade:

“I have a hard time keeping the fair trade, KRAV or keyhole label apart. I buy ecological milk but that is not fair trade.”

However, the respondents never mentioned the fair trade label when asked about ecological quality labels. This can be a sign of a clearer and more confident understanding and distinction of ecological quality labels. Another explanation could be that the respondent were asked about the fair trade label first, which could have resulted in an eager to mention ecological quality labels since the respondents could not be sure that questions about this would appear later on.

4.1.4 Involvement and Emotions

Consumers purchase products that fit into their values and beliefs; a purchase is a reflection of one's ideal self-image (Hughes and Guerrero, 1971 from Earl and Kemp, 1999). In other words, the ideal self-image is reflected in the products bought. Especially in situations of a negative self-image, products can help a customer to get closer to the ideal self-image. An individual's self image will affect the purchasing behaviour when the self-perception becomes empowered through the consumption of goods as symbols (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967 from Earl and Kemp, 1999).

The self-image and how to be perceived by others and also expressing the way we want to be is crucial to the consumer. (Laaksonen, 1994; Bosnjak & Rudolph, 2008) Some of the respondents express a certain feeling after purchasing a fair trade product. They feel like they achieved something and contributed to something. They make an active choice when buying fair trade and also want others to know this. They respondents who feel this way do not question the fair trade organization and its motives excessively either. Christian puts it in a simple way when stating:

“I felt like a good person.”

Emelie continues by expressing her well-reasoned action:

“I think I feel a little bit proud. When I put my fair trade product in the dorm's refrigerator, I feel pride. “I spent my money on this and I believe this is important” and that is something I like to show others then.”

In agreement with Castaldo et al. (2009) information is a critical aspect to consider when speaking about involvement. The authors stress the issue of consumers searching and take part of the information provided. Maybe Hanna's sceptical attitude is a result of not being that informed about fair trade products. She is sceptical but expresses at the same time hope that the fair trade organization actually works the way it is supposed to. Hanna's way of processing information about fair trade products might not yet be to the level that she created trust to the concept. Thus, this scepticism does not stop her to buy fair trade products. This somewhat hopeful attitude reveals in Hanna's thoughts:

“I thought that, oh well, why not make a contribution? I guess it always feels good, somewhat self-fulfilling... When I buy fair trade I really hope it works, that it contributes to fairness.”

Laaksonen (1994) discusses the individual-state approach and argues that it does not necessary have involve cognitive factors. Personal motivation is the key in involvement and it is necessary that some kind of stimulus exists in relation to involvement. What this stimulus exactly means and communicate can be of a various kind. A couple of the respondents take a more humble approach. They do not want to be put in the spotlight and do not consider their purchase as something extraordinary. Ulrika highlights this by saying:

“I did not receive a certain feeling. I do not put too much thought in “oh my God, now I did something good”, that is not the way it goes.”

Lisa's answer is in agreement with Ulrika's; there is not too much thought behind the purchase. Instead it is something natural and something everybody should do. The underlying

thought is that it is so natural and self-evident with products being produced with fair trade conditions, and there is not really a reason of not buying these products. Lisa tells her story:

“First time I bought fair trade, I thought why not check it out. After this first time I buy fair trade without even thinking of it. I buy it because I do not have any other excuse, the coffee tastes good and I know I am contributing to something good.”

Involvement may have a highly emotional approach. The cognitive aspect that Laaksonen (1994) highlights seem to be of high relevance in attitudes to certain labels. Xue (2008) stresses the significance of motivation, which leads to a positive attitude towards certain labels. The author also highlights that involvement is strongly linked to interest. When it comes to ecological labels and products, the animal welfare and environmental concerns are a frequent theme. It seems like the respondents care a lot about how the animals are treated. The ecological labels are not considered a 100 percent guarantee for animal welfare, but it is more promising than products without the label. Ulrika highlights this by saying:

“For me personally does it mean that I want to buy all animal products certified with the KRAV-label because I want the animals to have a good and decent life. That is what it means to me...I bought one litre of milk yesterday and I bought it ecological like I always do, it felt really good and it is something I want to do. It is very important to me that the cows are happy. Even if it is not ensuring this, I find it very positive to show in which direction you want to go.”

Harper and Makatouni (2002) highlight the increasing consumer demand of environmentally friendly products. The demand is based on involvement and interest, but also a concern about the animal welfare and environment. Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) mean that a consumer who takes ethical aspects into personal account feels a responsibility towards society. Emelie continues by arguing for the choice of products certified with ecological over noncertified products:

“One can feel tricked sometimes but I rather buy it (ecological products) anyway because I feel that it is better to at least try, rather than reject it totally and buy “non-environmentally friendly” products just because...”

Forehand and Grier (2003) state that distrust can be a result of discrepancy between the claims and the consumer. Castaldo et al. (2009) mean that trust is built from keeping promises and fulfilling obligations. Even if trust is a part of the creation of involvement, other factors are essential as well, i.e. interest. (Halepete et al., 2009). This is somewhat shown in the answers quoted below. The involvement in the ecological labels is also of a directly sceptical kind. The quite recent criticism against ecological production is a critical question and some people take a standpoint in this issue. Quite a few of the respondents are well-read and involved in the current discussion. Henrik expresses his doubts when saying:

“I think it is misleading in a way with an ecological product, you should look deeper into the total picture... One can sometimes feel a bit fooled that the producer forces up the prices in ecological produced products.”

Hanna, who is deeply involved in ecological questions, shows some concern:

“I may think “it is nice that the products are not sprayed with pesticides” and that it is natural primary products. Very reasonable. I was just thinking, if you compare a normal and an ecological potato production, the farmer gets a smaller harvest taken land and water use in

consideration and it gets more expensive. Maybe it is not the best but I am not sure. It is hard to see and investigate if products that are not ecological farmed, if those farmers try to strive for a better type of production even if they are not certified.”

There are two kinds of scepticism and distrust and the ongoing tendency to a sceptical attitude is called the dispositional scepticism and stems from situational scepticism, in which dissonance between claims from the messenger prevails. (Forehand & Grier, 2003) Ola is one of the respondents who is very sceptical towards ecological products and labels. This negative attitude may derive from the discrepancy in the communicated messages, in one hand farming without pesticides and the other efficiency loss of ecological production. Ola has consequently taken a very critical standpoint and also taken his reasoning one step further than Hanna when arguing:

“An ecological product is produced without any pesticides, chemicals and such things. I personally think it is a step back in the development because Sweden has had for long time and still has very hard and good environmental controls on farming. I myself am a farmer son... The knowledge that you can produce more per square kilometre must be spread out in the world, especially to the countries where people live in poverty. I hope I do not sound evil, who is anti ecological products.”

Ethical aspects to consider in the buying decision are not the only factor to evaluate. In fact, other factors may be even more influential than the ethical. These are among others, price, quality, convenience and brand familiarity. (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (2000) from Halepete, Littrell and Park (2009) argue about interest and enthusiasm in a product as crucial in the development of involvement. According to the interview responses, there are people who does not put any thought in their purchases and who does not reflect over the labels. On the question on why he buys ecological products, Erik says:

“Not because they are ecological. Not with the value that “this is ecological and that is the reason why I buy it”... I might be a little egoistic haha. I think I buy products on a habitual basis, products that taste good and are of high quality.”

Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) discuss the importance of brand familiarity. This in turn is a result of receiving and searching for more information. A few of the respondents feel that the fair trade concept is a bit hard to embrace and get a picture of since the production is conducted in third world countries far away from the domestic market. It has also shown that the respondents find the information about fair trade as insufficient. That may be one of the reasons that some of the respondents value ecological products higher than fair trade. This is stated by Stina:

“Fair trade does not have so much to do with Swedish production. When something is certified with an ecological stamp it feels more close, locally produced and has taken the environmental aspects in consideration.”

Hanna is of the same opinion and means:

“In one way I know what one should answer but... Personally I believe that ecological and locally produced products are more important. It is somewhat closer and more tangible to me in my sphere. Fair trade is of course also important but ecological labels are more important to me.”

Meeting individual needs is one way of defining involvement. (Laaksonen, 1994; Xue, 2008) In combination with the increased involvement and knowledge on pesticides and hormones etc., this might have led to the health focus that exists on the market today (Harper & Makatouni, 2002). The majority of the respondents consider the two kinds of labels in two different ways. They do not touch upon each other and the connection between them is that they both touch upon humanity. Fair trade is connected to human beings and ecological to animals and nature. Thus, from the consumers' point of view, ecological products are considered better from an end consumer perspective. Christian highlights this by saying:

“The concepts are both important from different point of views. Fair trade – human rights. Ecology – the animals. In the end ecological products are healthier to the end consumer. Fair trade is good to the producer, the feeling after buying fair trade is very rewarding to me.”

Krugman from Laaksonen (1994) describes involvement as the frequency of conscious-bridging connections. The more numerous times a connection between the personal life and a stimulus has been made, the higher the involvement become. Thus, the creation of brand equity and trust takes time to develop and also effort from the producer. (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aléman, 2005) The involvement and emotion towards the two kinds of labels are generally high. Thus, ecological labels are well established in the minds of Generation Y, while the fair trade label is still quite new. It demands more involvement to understand fair trade and the label also more involves a political standpoint in comparison to ecological labels. Hanna's and Henrik's train of thoughts are expressed below:

“... I think more about human rights and more political when shopping fair trade. It is somewhat a political standpoint when buying fair trade. Anybody buys ecological without thinking too much about it, while with fair trade there is some kind of commitment or engagement behind the purchase. One needs to have greater knowledge about fair trade when buying those products than with products marked with an ecological label.”

“I actually believe that fair trade is a more serious label where you try to work more active with fair trade. Maybe it is because... I think ecological labels have existed longer than the fair trade label. Thus, there is *one* organization or something behind this which has a total devotion to their vision and goals. Ecological label have existed for a while and there is an abundance of labels and maybe they make use of the consumers a bit with these stamps. But fair trade seems more important in a way...”

Eden et al. (2008) mean that there exist confusion in the minds of the consumers and that the evaluation process of assurance schemes is a complex consumer issue. The authors also highlight that organizations with the same assurance can be mixed up by the consumers. Certification familiarity is therefore crucial. This is in agreement with Howard et al. (2000), who declare that similarity between names may cause consumer confusion. As mentioned above, many of the respondents are having an interest and are involved in both of the concepts. They consider both aspects to be important. Thus, the common opinion is to keep the certifications separated from each other in order to prevent confusion and that the concepts become watered and blurred. For example, a combined label embracing both concepts is not eligible. The respondents seem to be concerned if the consumers in general can manage an additional quality label. Many of the respondents also question whether it actually is possible to conduct ecological and fair trade production simultaneously. Emelie and Ola express their concern about an additional combined label:

“... Is that even possible? I do not know. I do not want to merge all these aspects into a some kind of large label. I believe they should stick to their vision. Then it is better to have two

labels on the product. I believe the concept may be watered with the combined label. If you merge everything then you cannot really separate what they are doing anymore.”

“I do not like that at all. I believe it is two separate things. I believe it is better to have two labels on the product if that is the case. I do not believe one should merge them and that all products should be ecological. However, you should try to aim that all products should be fair trade. To merge them together would probably cause confusion because then you should have to adopt and learn about yet another label. It is better to have two certifications if that is the case.”

4.1.5 Gender Aspects

One of the advantages to use both male and female respondents are the possibility to analyse possible gender differences. A significant part of gender theories regarding consumption points out a clear difference between male and female consumer behaviour. Among them, Berg and Teigen (2009) who declare that consumption is gendered. However, several authors have presented results in opposite direction. (Doran, 2008).

Through the interviews it became clear that gender plays an important role in the respondents' behaviour and attitudes towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels. Regarding knowledge about the two concepts it could be stated that both the male and female respondents was relative well-informed about the two concepts. It was noteworthy that none of the male respondents could describe the fair trade logotype. This was not a problem for the other half of respondents. According to Lavik (1999, from Berg & Teigen, 2009) women take the main responsibility for the household's grocery shopping. Perhaps this could explain why male respondents failed to recognize the logotype.

Already in the beginning of the interviews, when asking about the respondents' general knowledge towards the two concepts, a clear scepticism regarding ecological labels among the male respondents was noticeable. Especially Henrik and Ola show critical thoughts about the need for ecological production in Sweden. The female respondents were more positive about ecological products and the underlying concept. In fact, female consumers tend to be more environmentally friendly when shopping (Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan & Oskamp, 1997).

When discussing the fair trade concept a more positive attitude from female respondents were also noted. The male respondents were, in general, quite positive but required additional information about the concept behind fair trade. Fair trade is somewhat a new concept and it is important to provide the sceptical consumer with useful information. Newholm and Shaw (2007) argue that information is the key to ethical consumption.

There was a difference between men and women's purchasing behaviour foremost regarding products with the fair trade label. All women were aware of what the concept fair trade stands for and they have bought fair trade products. The men on the other hand, were not sure if they have actually bought products with the fair trade label. The conclusion is that women buy more products with the fair trade label than men. The male respondents do not buy it regularly in opposite to some of the women. This tendency is also noted by Laureiro and Lotade (2005) who state that female consumers are more likely to pay a premium prices for fair traded and organic products.

Despite some of the male respondents' sceptical view of ecological production, there was no clear distinction between the genders considering purchasing of ecological products. It seems like both women and men buy products with ecological labels regularly.

The answers regarding if the respondents buy more fair trade and ecological products than their parents differ between the genders. All female respondents believe for sure that they do; they buy more products with the fair trade label or an ecological quality label than their parents. The men hesitate more when asked to compare their purchasing habits with their parents; they were not sure about who buys most products with the fair trade label and an ecological quality label. The beliefs in this matter can be reflected in the respondents' own purchasing behaviour. As said before, women buy more products with the fair trade label than men and they believe that they buy more of these products than their parents. The men were not as aware in their purchasing behaviour regarding products with the fair trade label and they therefore do not think that they necessarily buy more fair trade products than their parents. Consequently, your own purchasing behaviour affects your thoughts about if you buy more fair trade and ecological products than your parents.

To summarize, the female group seems to have higher involvement in the two concepts, especially concerning products with ecological labels. The male respondents are, in general, more sceptical when discussing the two concepts. Their sceptical and doubtful attitude is also reflected in their purchasing behaviour. This information stands in contrast with Bathe and Lawler's research from 1997, which not consider gender as important when researching about the environmentally friendly consumer. In fact, gender seems to be an important factor affecting the "Echo Boomers" values, attitudes and beliefs towards the two concepts.

According to Berg and Teigen (2009) a number of markets could be seen as male or female dominated. Having the information about gender differences in mind, it is possible to state that shoppers within the fair trade as well as the ecological market are dominated by female shoppers.

5 Concluding Discussion

In this concluding chapter, the findings of the study will be presented through academic and practical implications with regards of the five aspects suggested in previous chapters. The limitations of the research will also be touched upon in this section and suggestions to future research will be presented. Ultimately, the authors concluding words will end the discussion.

5.1 Academic Contributions

In this section of the conclusion, the findings from the empirical investigation in relation to the five essential aspects taken in consideration in previous chapters are presented. The aspects will be discussed one by one and conclusions will be drawn with regards to existing research, the authors own experiences and personal judgements.

Knowledge is essential in the consumer behavioural process towards quality labels. Without knowledge about the two concepts it is not possible to seriously express thoughts regarding the fair trade label and ecological quality labels. Almost all respondents had relative high knowledge about the two concepts but they demanded more information about the concepts. As described earlier, this generation is critical to media and is not the easiest to win over. This generation is well educated and well informed. Generation Y has grown up during a green consumer movement but also during a time reflected by greed and short term profits. They know that companies not always act ethical. The amount of information will affect Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs.

Purchasing behaviour affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs, but it is also the other way around; Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs affect this generation's purchasing behaviour. An ethical consumer is more likely to buy products with the fair trade label or an ecological quality label since the purchase reflects who he or she is as a person. This is comparable to people who do not buy fur because they do not think it is right towards the animals or people who do not want to support the car industry since it is not good for the environment. People make personal statements through their purchasing behaviour, which also became clear through the interviews. However, a consumers purchasing behaviour can also show the existence of a possible attitude behavioural gap. It is easy to claim that one is environmentally friendly but the actual purchasing behaviour can reflect if it is true or not.

Purchasing behaviour affects the decision making process when buying a product. After the purchase the consumer evaluates the product which will affect his or her values, attitudes and beliefs towards it. The interviews enlightened that external circumstances can affect a consumers' purchasing behaviour. If products with the fair trade label or an ecological quality label are of immediate interest in the media or on a huge display in the store, it will increase the chance of a purchase. This can later on affect values, attitudes and beliefs when the consumer evaluates the product after the purchase. Also, one respondent used post-purchase behaviour to convince herself that the fair trade coffee was just as good as regular coffee although the main reason for buying the product was the fair trade label.

Many of the respondents buy ecological products regularly. Re-purchases are a sign of product satisfaction product which will strengthen ones values, attitudes and beliefs towards a product. In cases of re-purchases, the respondents also had a positive opinion about the fair trade label or ecological quality labels. This verifies the theory that re-purchases can be a sign of satisfaction.

Especially interesting is that the interviews showed that the consumer is thought of as a good person if he or she has a positive attitude towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels. Even one respondent, who was clearly opposed to the ecological concept, hoped he was not perceived as a horrible person for having this opinion. Through the interviews, it became apparent that even if the respondent was sceptical to any of the two concepts, that person still showed some kind of involvement towards the labels. He or she could argue for their thoughts and opinions, and state why they felt the way they did about the concepts. As stated in the theoretical framework, one definition of involvement was that it could be explained as a desire and motivation to find out more about a label or product. It was shown that scepticism can be source of involvement as well and the consumer wants to be able to argue for their opinion.

Just as a negative attitude wants to be supported by well-reasoned arguments, a positive attitude is supported by arguments as well. The most common involvement factor for buying products with the two certifications is that the respondents want to make their share and contribute to a better society, either by supporting fair labour conditions or animal welfare to take a couple of examples. This results in a type of ego involvement, in which feeling proud is a main contributor. This also means that the self-concept, who we want to be and how we want to be perceived by others is important when discussing involvement. Even if the respondents not explicitly said that they felt proud and the reason for buying was just because it is the right thing to do, the way they told their story indicated of some kind of pride.

The consumers tend to be involved in these concepts and the reason for this might be that fair trade and ecology are such actual and trendy topics in Sweden today. Involvement touch upon an individual's values and this is shown in the interviews where several respondents touched upon the political aspect of fair trade in comparison to ecological labels. Since politics is something that is closely connected to one's values, purchasing products with the fair trade label is something that corresponds with involvement.

Seeing that most of the respondents portray themselves as involved in both of the concepts, it is especially interesting that some of them show a major concern about a combined label. They express an anxiety that "the man on the street" would be confused about the communicated meaning of the new label. However, none of the respondents express the concern that they would be confused personally, which may indicate that they consider themselves as involved and well-read in the concepts.

As stated earlier, a significant part of gender theories points out a difference between male and female shopping behaviour. This was obvious in this study; male respondents were in general more negative and sceptical regarding the two concepts. Sometimes it felt like they compensated their relative low purchasing behaviour by choosing a sceptical attitude. Maybe they justified their low involvement by being sceptical. A clear majority of the female respondents were very positive regarding the two concepts and it was also shown in their purchasing behaviour. During the interviews it became somewhat understandable that grocery

shopping is a female task and responsibility. This confirms older patterns within the field of consumer behaviour. Shopping, especially regarding food items are still a female responsibility in the household. It is obvious that gender affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels.

The respondents were aware of the concepts behind the fair trade label and ecological quality labels, but there were some knowledge gaps. For example, there was some confusion concerning the different logotypes and regarding the relationship between the fair trade organization and the producers. This all indicates that more information about the quality labels is needed, as also stated above, in order for consumers to get higher awareness and knowledge about the labels. If consumers are confused, one can assume that this will affect their purchasing behaviour negatively.

Not all the respondents in this study had a positive purchasing behaviour towards the two concepts. However, the ones that did not support the quality labels could strongly motivate why they did not, which indicates that confusion or lack of knowledge cannot be blamed for the negative purchasing behaviour in these cases.

5.2 Practical Contribution

This section will touch upon some specific consumer tendencies and overall attitudes that have been acknowledged throughout the research. In addition to that, when conducting the interviews the respondents got the opportunity to express and discuss different motivational factors. The practical contribution will therefore present some suggestions of how the values, attitudes and beliefs can obtain positive and also how to motivate the negatively or suspiciously disposed members of Generation Y.

According to the empirical findings through the interviews, a large demand for more information was revealed. The respondents found a lack of information, both on packages but also inside the store. The exposure of information directly connected to the buying decision, in other words when the consumer is actually to be found in the store and making the evaluation, is insufficient. It is also important to the members of Generation Y to be able to find information easily. This insufficient information flow was mainly exposed in the case of the fair trade labels but also to some extent towards the ecological labels. That it turned out to be an acknowledged lack towards mainly the fair trade label may have the explanation in the newness of this concept.

The information desired was for example, which will show the entire value chain from producers via middlemen if any to the end consumer. Also information about what the possible purchase might contribute with was of interest. This was especially desired with the fair trade label. The respondents want to be ensured that their purchase, in some cases the premium price they pay for a product certified with the fair trade label, will make a contribution to a better society. This issue of proof was particularly highlighted by the sceptical respondents. There was an indication that no proof was a sign of unreliability of the label. Other ways, suggested by the respondents, to gain credibility and provide proof is to increase the media exposure through documentaries, articles in newspapers etc.

A difference in values, attitudes and beliefs between men and women was shown in the interviews. Women seem to be the main grocery shopper in the household and also the ones with a more positive approach towards both of the labels. By that said, there is a tough decision to be considered of how to provide the above mentioned required information to the consumers. An evaluation must be made of which approach is more favourable, whether it is a gender neutral, an approach with a feminine touch directed to the main buyers or one with a masculine touch to motivate more men to buy products certified with a quality label.

Finally, there seems to be a common opinion that there are too many labels on the market, especially regarding ecological labels. Since two of the labels, KRAV and Svanen, were the two most recognized maybe other ecological labels could be incorporated in these two. The other four suggested labels by the Swedish Consumer Agency were neither that recognized nor recalled during the interviews. In addition to that, KRAV represents ecological aspects regarding food and Svanen other goods in regard to sustainable consumption. Thus, to fusion the fair trade label with ecology does not seem to motivate the respondents, who show a concern that this might lead to an increased confusion to the meaning and content of the concepts.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

If given more time a bigger qualitative study would have been motivating to do. The opportunity to conduct more interviews would have made it possible to have a wider range in age. In this study, Generation Y is defined as people born between 1980 and 1994 and it would be interest to cover all ages in this interval if given more time. The time limitation also restricted the possibility to search deeper among existing theories.

We were not appeal to dig deeper if there is a demand for a mutual quality label including both the fair trade and ecological concepts. The area was touched upon briefly but since this research area demands a deeper understanding of consumers' values, attitudes and beliefs, this had to be investigated initially. This master thesis could be used as a preliminary investigation to a research like this.

This study was limited to consumers' point of view. Due to this limitation the retail aspects were not covered and may be worth investigating, such as price and other factors affecting the consumer behaviour.

The limitations prohibited us from covering all aspects of the chosen research area. Studies worth considering conducting in the future are presented below.

5.4 Suggestions to Future Research

While conducting this research, several other areas that would be of significance to examine in the future, were noticed. Suggestions of future research follow below:

- Since this research is qualitative, a quantitative study with a representative selection of Generation Y consumers would be motivating to conduct.

- During the interview we felt an indication of too many quality labels, especially concerning ecology, which caused confusion. It could therefore be of interest to delve deeper into a possible demand for a mutual quality label including the both concepts.
- Investigate whether or not Swedish retailers have a genuine ethical interest behind their quality labels and ethical statements or if it is just a marketing strategy.
- Because of the different gender aspects, future research could delve deeper in the underlying factors affecting one gender's consumer behaviour.
- Investigate which information consumers want about quality labels and how they want to receive it in order to increase their purchasing power.
- Conduct a quantitative study which examines what label is the most preferable and marketable visually. In other words, which logotype is the easiest to adapt.
- An economic study that examines how price sensitive Generation Y is. This study should explicitly focus directly on sales figures, in the sense of actual and real life buying behaviour, and not on consumer behaviour attitudes.

5.5 Concluding Words

To summarize, knowledge, information, purchasing behaviour, involvement and emotions, and gender aspects is the answer to the following question: *What affects Generation Y's values, attitudes and beliefs towards the fair trade label and ecological quality labels?* Why these factors are the most affecting ones, has been explained both in the analysis and in the academic and practical contribution sections. Through the empirical investigation and existing theories and research, a causal relationship has been found between the five factors. The gender aspect may affect how the consumer's motivational level towards the concepts is developed and constructed, due to initial ethical concern and interest regarding fair trade and ecology. The interest and concern decides whether there is an urge to search for new information. Through information, knowledge is created which is crucial and affects the level of involvement which in turn is reflected in the purchasing behaviour. This is illustrated by a simplified figure below. This research showed that Generation Y is aware of the meaning behind the fair trade label and ecological quality labels, whether or not they have a positive or negative view towards the two concepts. We believe that the confusion among Generation Y consumers is lower than among other generations. After all, Generation Y is called the "Echo Boomers".



Figure 2: Concluding figure of the empirical study, analysis and discussion (Hansson Rahnboj, Karlsson & Sjöberg, 2009)

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Appendix 1: Logotypes

Fair Trade



The Fair Trade symbol in Sweden



Early Fair Trade Certification Marks

Ecological Quality Labels



Svanen



Bra Miljöval

Bra miljöval



The Flower



KRAV



EU:s märkning för ekologiskt jordbruk



Marine Stewardship Council

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Gender:

Age:

Questions about the fair trade concept

1. What is the first you think about when you hear fair trade?
2. Can you describe the fair trade logo?
3. Which product/product category do you most associate the fair trade label to?
4. What is a fair trade product for you?
5. How do you feel about fair trade products?
6. Have you bought any fair trade products?
7. If yes, how often do you buy fair trade products?
8. If no, why not?
9. Tell us about the first time you purchased fair trade products.
10. Why did you start to buy fair trade products?
11. How do you feel after having bought fair trade products?
12. What would motivate you to buy even fair trade products?
13. Does the fair trade label equals high quality?

Questions about ecological products

14. What is the first you think about when you hear ecological products?
15. What ecological labels do you know about? Name them.
16. Can you describe the logos you just mentioned?

17. Which product/product categories do you most associate ecological marks to?
18. What is an ecological product for you?
19. How do you feel about ecological products?
20. Have you bought any ecological products?
21. If yes, how often do you buy ecological products?
22. If no, why not?
23. Tell us about the first time you purchased ecological products?
24. Why did you start to buy ecological products?
25. How do you feel after having bought ecological products?
26. What would motivate you to buy more ecological products?
27. Does an ecological label equal high quality?

General questions

28. What is most important for you, fair trade or ecological products? Why?
29. What do you believe is the main difference between the concepts?
30. Do you see yourself as more knowledgeable about fair trade and ecological products than your parents? Why do you think it is like this?
31. Do you buy more fair trade and ecological products than your parents? Why do you think it is like this?
32. What would do you think about a product that has both the fair trade label and an ecological label, in other words for a product with a mutual stamp?
33. Would you be willing to pay a premium price for a product with this mutual stamp?

Appendix 3: Swedish Interview Guide

Kön:

Ålder:

Frågor om fair trade

1. Vad är det första du tänker på när du hör ordet fair trade?
2. Kan du beskriva fair trade logotypen?
3. Vilken produkt/produktkategori associerar du mest med fair trade märket?
4. Vad innebär en fair trade product för dig?
5. Vad tycker du om fair trade produkter?
6. Har du köpt några fair trade produkter?
7. Om ja, hur ofta köper du fair trade produkter?
8. Om nej, varför inte?
9. Berätta om senaste gången du handlade fair trade produkter.
10. Varför började du köpa fair trade produkter?
11. Vad är din känsla efter att ha inhandlat en fair trade produkt?
12. Vad skulle motivera dig till att köpa mer fair trade produkter?
13. Innebär fair trade stämpeln hög kvalitet för dig?

Frågor om ekologiska produkter

14. Vad är det första du tänker på när du hör ordet ekologiska produkter?
15. Vilka ekologiska märken känner du till? Namnge dessa.
16. Kan du beskriva logotyperna du nyss nämnde?
17. Vilken produkt/produktkategori associerar du mest med ekologiska märken?

18. Vad innebär ekologisk produkt för dig?
19. Vad tycker du om ekologiska produkter?
20. Har du köpt några ekologiska produkter?
21. Om ja, hur ofta köper du ekologiska produkter?
22. Om nej, varför inte?
23. Berätta om senaste gången du handlade ekologiska produkter.
24. Varför började du köpa ekologiska produkter?
25. Vad är din känsla efter att ha inhandlat ekologiska produkter?
26. Vad skulle motivera dig till att köpa mer ekologiska produkter?
27. Innebär en ekologisk stämpel hög kvalitet för dig?

Övergripande frågor

28. Vad är mest viktigt för dig, fair trade produkter eller ekologiska produkter? Varför?
29. Vad tror du är den största skillnaden mellan fair trade stämpeln och ekologiska stämplarna?
30. Anser du dig själv ha högre kunskap om fair trade och ekologiska produkter jämfört med dina föräldrar? Varför tror du att det är så?
31. Tror du att du köper fler fair trade produkter och ekologiska produkter än dina föräldrar? Varför tror du att det är så?
32. Vad hade du tyckt om en produkt som har både fair trade stämpeln och en ekologisk stämpel, det vill säga en gemensam stämpel?
33. Skulle du vara villig att betala mer för en produkt med en gemensam stämpel?