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**Master's Thesis**

The Influence of Cruelty-Free Label in Consumer Decision-Making Process

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The ethical consumerism has been rising and the interest towards ethical production has increased among recent years and when going to the supermarket there are various different ecolabels on products. The consumer buying behaviour, consumer decision-making process and ethical consumerism have been widely studied, but there have not been made any researches about the ecolabels in the cosmetic industry and how the consumers make their decisions when buying cosmetics.

This research focuses on the cosmetic buying behaviour and which factors influence the consumer decision-making process when buying cosmetics, such as make-up and skin care products. The focus is on Cruelty-Free label, which refers to the fact that the product is not tested on animals. The goal of this research is to understand the consumers and do their purchasing in cosmetics go hand in hand with their other possible ethical habits, and if not, why.

This research was a qualitative research and the data was collected by interviewing consumers. The results show that the Cruelty-Free label does not influence the consumer decision-making process, since the consumers buy Cruelty-Free cosmetics by accident. The consumers rely on recommendations, coming from friends, social media influencers and sales persons. Another strong influencer is their own existing habits and their own preferences on specific brands, so the consumers do not pay attention to the Cruelty-Free label when they buy cosmetics, even though they might have ethical habits when they buy other products. For further studies it would be interesting to understand the attention-behavioural gap when buying Cruelty-Free cosmetics and how it could be minimized or eliminated.

## TIIVISTELMÄ

<b>Tekijä:</b>	Miia Ruuskanen
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Eettinen kuluttaminen on nouseva trendi, kuluttajien kiinnostus eettistä tuotantoa kohtaan on noussut viimeisten vuosien aikana ja päivittäistavara-kauppojen tuotteisiin on ilmestynyt ekoleimoja. Kuluttajan ostokäyttäytyminen, kuluttajan ostopäätösprosessi ja eettinen kuluttaminen ovat laajasti tutkittuja aiheita, mutta tutkimusta ei ole tehty liittyen ekoleimoihin kosmetiikan ostamisessa tai miten kuluttajat muodostavat päätöksensä, kun he ostavat kosmetiikkaa.

Tämä tutkimus keskittyy ostokäyttäytymiseen kosmetiikassa ja mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat kuluttajan ostopäätösprosessiin, kun kyseessä on kosmetiikan, eli tässä tapauksessa ehostus- ja ihonhoitotuotteiden ostaminen. Tutkimuksen keskiössä on Cruelty-Free -merkintä, joka viittaa siihen, ettei tuotetta ole testattu eläimillä. Tutkimuksen tavoite on ymmärtää kuluttajaa ja sitä, kulkevatko kosmetiikan ostamisen taipumukset samassa linjassa muiden mahdollisten eettisten tapojen kanssa ja jos ei, miksi.

Tämä tutkimus on toteutettu laadullisena tutkimuksena, jonka aineisto on kerätty haastattelemalla kuluttajia. Tulokset osoittavat, että Cruelty-Free -merkinnällä ei ole vaikutusta kuluttajan ostopäätösprosessissa, sillä kuluttajat ostavat Cruelty-Free tuotteita vahingossa. Kuluttajat luottavat suositteluihin, tulivatpa ne sitten ystävilta, sosiaalisen median vaikuttajilta tai liikkeiden myyjiltä. Toinen suuri vaikuttava tekijä on kuluttajan omat tavat sekä mieltymykset tiettyihin tuotemerkkeihin, joten kuluttaja ei kiinnitä huomiota Cruelty-Free merkintään, ostaessaan kosmetiikkaa, vaikka muissa ostoksissa kuluttajalla saattaa olla eettisiä tapoja. Jatkotutkimusten osalta olisi mielenkiintoista ymmärtää huomio-käytös-kuilua kun kuluttaja ostaa Cruelty-Free kosmetiikkaa ja miten sitä voisi pienentää tai poistaa kokonaan.

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This has been quite a journey. I started my studies in LUT in August 2014 and these 4,5 years have been the most eventful years of my life, in good and bad. LUT has given me valuable lessons about life itself: from courses that some I loved, some I hated, but one valuable journey has been working in Abitiimi. The three years in Abitiimi, working towards getting more applicants in LUT, have taught me more about myself and people in general that I thought would ever be possible.

This thesis was a major push for me. When I started working on this, it seemed impossible to someday finish it. I had some bumps in my personal life while writing this, but I still kept going. I am very proud of this process, even though I did it with a tight schedule and it might have been a better one with more time. However, writing this thesis got me thinking and question my own consumption and ethical habits and think more of my own behaviour in this world. That is more than I thought one thesis could ever give.

I want to thank my supervisors Laura Olkkonen and Kaisu Puumalainen, for guiding me through the process. Laura, you were the best supervisor I could have got for the beginning of the process and the middle part. Thank you both for your fast guidance in the last part, without your support I wouldn't be graduating according to my plan.

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## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND.....	1
1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, OBJECTIVES AND LIMITATIONS .....	4
1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	6
1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	7
1.5 DEFINITIONS AND KEY CONCEPTS .....	13
1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY .....	14
<b>2. CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR .....</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 MODEL OF BUYING BEHAVIOUR .....	17
2.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR .....	17
2.3 CONSUMER BUYING PROCESS.....	26
2.4 THE BUYER DECISION PROCESS OF NEW PRODUCTS .....	33
<b>3. ETHICAL CONSUMERISM .....</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1 RISING INTEREST IN ETHICAL CONSUMERISM.....	35
3.2 THE INTENTION – BEHAVIOURAL GAP IN ETHICAL CONSUMERISM.....	36
<b>4. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>40</b>
4.1 DATA COLLECTION .....	43
4.2 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY .....	45
<b>5. FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>47</b>
5.1 CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS .....	48
5.2 CRUELTY-FREE LABEL .....	65
5.3 ETHICAL CONSUMERISM.....	69
<b>6. DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>7. CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>99</b>

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

**Figure 1:** The Framework of the Research

**Figure 2:** Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen 1991, 182)

**Figure 3:** Model of Buying Behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010, 159)

**Figure 4:** Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 162)

**Figure 5:** Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow 1943)

**Figure 6:** Types of Buying Behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 176)

**Figure 7:** Consumer Buying Process (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177)

**Figure 8:** The Consumer Buying Process and the Buyer Decision Process for New Products (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177, 181)

**Figure 9:** Intention-Behaviour Mediation and Moderation Model of the Ethically Minded Consumer (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell 2010, 144)

**Figure 10:** Research Onion (Adapted from Saunders et al. 2009, 108)

**Figure 11:** The Data Structure of the Research

**Figure 12:** The Findings of the Research

## **LIST OF TABLES**

**Table 1:** Cruelty-Free labels on cosmetic products

**Table 2:** Interviewees

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This master's thesis focuses on the influence the Cruelty-Free label has in consumer decision-making process when buying cosmetic products, such as make-up and skin care products in Finland.

In this chapter the insight and the main goals of this thesis are presented and explained. In this introduction the research background, research problems, objectives and limitations and the literature review are presented. The final part of the introduction presents the structure of the research.

## 1.1 Research Background

Eco-labels are very common nowadays and consumers can choose which ethical issue they want to support through their buying behaviour, by choosing the products they buy. There are labels that inform that the farming of the product is sustainable, for example UTZ-certification, labels that tell that the product is ethically and reliably monitored, for example Fairtrade, and label that informs that the product or its ingredients is not tested on animals, which is called Cruelty-Free (UTZ 2018; Fairtrade 2018; PETA 2018a). This research focuses on the Cruelty-Free label and how it influences the consumer decision-making process when buying cosmetic products.

There are multiple companies, that use animals to test the safety of their products before they release the products to the consumer markets (Chitrakorn 2016). According to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (2018), animal testing consists for example of forcing mice and rats to breathe toxic fumes, force-feeding dogs with pesticides and for example in cosmetic industry, dripping corrosive chemicals into rabbits' eyes. More than 250 brands use animal testing, and it is estimated that over 27 000 animals are tested on yearly. (PETA 2018). According to Cruelty Free International (2018), the worldwide number of animals used for testing may be over 115 million.

There are globally three organizations, that give these labels and in cosmetic industry they use the symbol of a bunny and term "Cruelty-Free". The three organizations are PETA,

Cruelty-Free International and Choose Cruelty-Free, and in all of their label is a bunny (Mikesell 2018).

The three organizations have all different looking labels, and the label which the company uses, depends of the organization that certifies the brand and also where the company is from. For example, in Australia, the only organization that gives the label is Choose Cruelty-Free (Choose Cruelty-Free 2018). The certification can be given if the company meets with the criteria the organization has. For example, Cruelty Free International (2018) forbids testing any ingredient on animals, requires active monitoring of the supply chain and agreement to ongoing independent audits that the company meets with Leaping Bunny criteria. (Cruelty Free International 2018). Below are examples on how the labels can be presented on the products.

Brand and organization	Product
<p>PETA's Cruelty-Free label on Anastasia Beverly Hills eyeshadow palette package's background</p>	 <p>Picture 1. Ruuskanen 2019</p>
<p>PETA's Cruelty-Free label in Wet'n'Wild's product front</p>	 <p>Picture 2. Ruuskanen 2019</p>

<p>Cruelty Free International's Leaping Bunny logo in background of The Body Shop's body lotion</p>	 <p>Picture 3. Ruuskanen 2019</p>
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Table 1. Cruelty-Free labels on cosmetic products

It is up to the brand if they want to put the label on the product or to let it out of the packaging. Company can also choose where the label is put, on the front of the product like Wet'n'Wild has done above, or behind like Anastasia Beverly Hills and The Body Shop have done above. Not all Cruelty-Free labelled brands show the label on their products. Examples of these brands are Dermalogica, Urban Decay and Smashbox (Dermalogica 2018; Urban Decay 2018; Smashbox 2018).

If the products are not all labelled, that actually are Cruelty-Free, how can the consumers know about the products not being tested on animals? Well, each organization has a list on their website that show the brands that the specific organization has certified. So, for example, Anastasia Beverly Hills can be found on PETA's list but not on Cruelty Free International's list (PETA 2018b).

For the past 25 years, the consumer demand for Cruelty-Free cosmetics has risen and that has led to companies swearing off animal testing (Engebretson 2017). According to a survey made in 2016 in Australia by Roy Morgan (2017), 46% of Australian women would choose Cruelty-Free to be an important feature to them when they buy cosmetics. In 2012, that percentage was 34%. According to Amanda Nordstrom from PETA, searches in Google for vegan skin care have risen by 83% year after year. PETA had a poll for their subscribers, and according to the responses, 96% of the respondents are more willing to purchase a Cruelty-Free labelled product than a product that does not have the label. (Chiorando 2018)

There has been rising a new type of consumer that is called "the ethical consumer". If a consumer is ethically minded, the consumer feels responsibility towards the environment and/or to society and seeks to express the values he or she has through ethical consumption

and purchasing or boycotting behaviour. (De Pelsmacker, Driesen & Rayp 2005; Shaw & Shui 2002). However, it has been studied that many consumers are saying that they are ethical consumers, but they actually are not. A study by Futerra (2005) showed that 30% of the consumers said that they would purchase ethically, but only 3% of them actually did. That said, even if consumers might be ethically minded, they rarely purchase ethical products (Auger & Devinney 2007). There seems to be a gap between the intention and the actual behaviour.

This leads to the research question this study focuses on: the increased sales and raised interest on Cruelty-Free labels and products, are they really because of the label, or has it more to do with the brands' popularity itself? The purpose of this study is to understand why the consumers choose the Cruelty-Free products: do they choose them because of the label, or do they base their decision on other factors? Does the label actually have influence, and if yes, what kind of? This leads to the research questions which are next presented.

## **1.2 Research Questions, Objectives and Limitations**

The objective of the study is to examine how the Cruelty-Free label influences the consumer decision-making process. The main research question is stated as follows:

*“How does the Cruelty-Free label influence the consumer buying process?”*

In order to find an answer for the main research question, sub-questions are needed. The sub-questions of this research are stated as follows:

1. *“What are the main factors that influence the decision-making process when buying cosmetics?”*
2. *“Why does the consumer choose to buy a Cruelty-Free product over a regular one?”*
3. *“How do the consumer's other possible ethical habits affect the purchase decision when buying cosmetics?”*
4. *“Is there an intention-behavioural gap in buying Cruelty-Free cosmetics? If yes, why?”*

The sub-questions help to answer the main question, since there are multiple factors behind a buying decision that needs to be studied. The first sub-question studies what are the most important factors that influence when the consumer is making the decision to purchase a cosmetic product. The second sub-question seeks the answer to question why the consumer buys a Cruelty-Free product over a regular one. The third question is about finding out if the consumer's other habits affect the purchase decision when buying cosmetics, and if there are some ethical habits or thoughts that are influencing. Finally, the fourth question is focusing on the intention-behavioural gap of ethical consumerism and if it happens in the cosmetic buying behaviour.

There have been made some limitations in this research. In this research the consumer behaviour is studied only when buying cosmetic products. That is because Cruelty-Free labels can be given to cosmetic or household products. The reason why the household products are left out, is that the research would have been too wide. The focus on cosmetics, more specifically skin care products and make-up instead of the household products, is because the cosmetic brands are more visible than brands that produce household products in medias, social or traditional, so the amount of money the companies use in the marketing might be very different. That is why it is interesting to understand the buying behaviour in cosmetics industry.

Another limitation is the gender. This study is made only about women's buying behaviour. The reason for this limitation is that the reasons behind the behaviour would be more difficult to study and understand if the differences between sexes would have been part of the research.

The purpose was to find participants that are highly interested in cosmetics, so the participants of this research were gathered through a beauty-related group in Facebook. That means, that the participants are not somewhat regular consumers, but they are more interested or more high-involved, since they belong to a group that is beauty-related. The reason why the group and its members were chosen to be the place from where to gather the participants, is that the highly-involved consumers are probably more into cosmetics and buy probably more products and use probably more money on cosmetics than the ones that are not in the group. That means, that the behaviour of that kind of consumer segment has a big influence in the companies' sales and influence in the bigger picture, through

recommendations for example. Also, studying the behaviour of those kind of consumers might give deeper information about the researched topic. The women that took part in the research were all Finnish and the research takes place in Finland.

### 1.3 Theoretical Framework

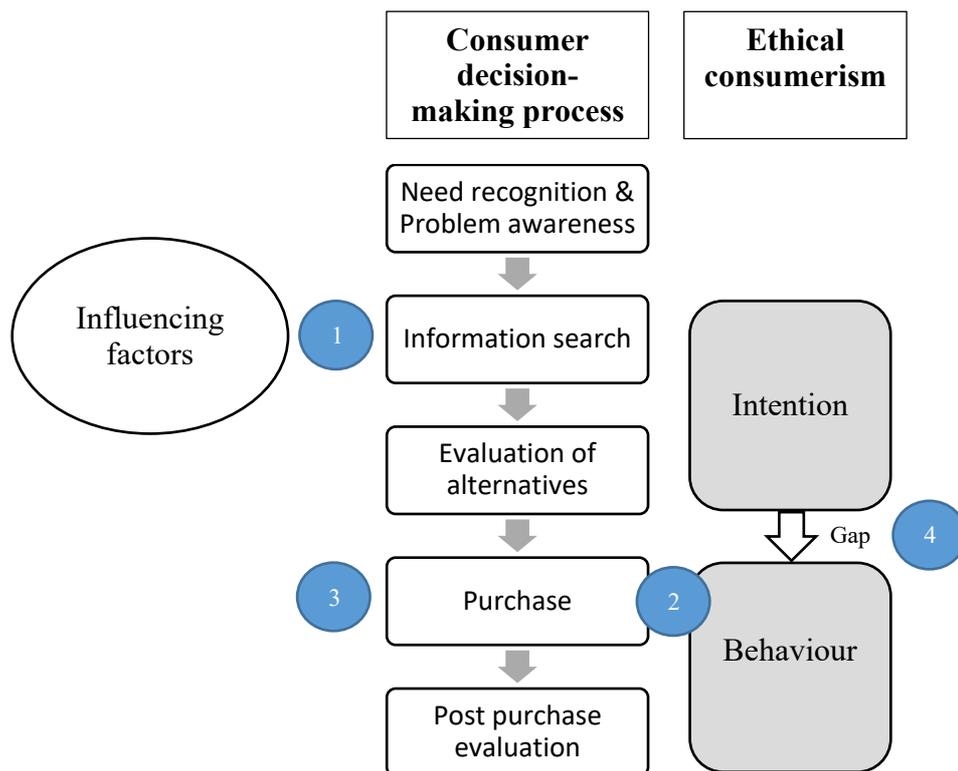


Figure 1. The Framework of the Research

Figure 1 visualizes the theoretical framework of the research. The research takes place in the Finnish context and the Finnish consumers and their behaviours when buying cosmetic products. The first sub-question focuses on the influencing factors in the consumer decision-making process. The second sub-question focuses on the actual decision to buy the Cruelty-Free cosmetic product over a non-labelled regular one. The third sub-question is focusing on how the consumers' other habits affect the purchase decision when buying cosmetic products and if there are some habits of ethical consumerism that have influence. Finally, the fourth question focuses on the intention-behavioural gap that has been studied in ethical

consumerism. Is there an intention-behavioural gap when buying Cruelty-Free products or not, and if yes, why?

## **1.4 Literature Review**

This literature review presents the research made around consumer behaviour and the influencers in the process, ethical consumerism and the buying behaviour behind it. The literature review shows that there are a lot of studies made about the intention-behavioural topic. The consumer buying process has been also widely studied and there are multiple studies made about the influencers in the buying behaviour and about the decision-making.

### **1.4.1 Influencers in the buying behaviour**

The brand influencing the buying behaviour has usually been studied from a point of view of a specific brand and how it influences the buying behaviour. Wells (2008) studied the influence of a brand on consumer buying and the research was made in the area of air conditioning products. The findings of the study were that the influence of the brand varied depending on the end goals of customers, brand image, feature, price and experience for example. Chovanová, Korshunov & Babcanová (2015) did a research on the impact of brand on consumer behaviour when purchasing a product in retail context. The study was a quantitative study and the findings were that the purchasing of products or services by brand varies depending on the age of consumers. Another finding was that half of the consumers did their purchase because of the brand. Kurtkoti (2016) did a research of the factors influencing consumer buying process of different products and brands. The findings of the research were that the factors influencing the consumer buying process varies depending on the products or the brand. For example, in the service sector, emotional and functional values drive the consumer behaviour.

Corporate social responsibility can also influence the consumer decision-making process. Pradhan (2018) did a research on the role of CSR in the consumer decision-making process which was a case study in India. The goal of the study was to investigate the decision-making process of customers when purchasing from socially responsible firms. The research was made by interviewing 60 consumers and their responses were analysed by using content analysis. The findings were that most respondents believed that it was the duty of the

company to give back to the society. Another study on the role of CSR is by Rodrigues (2018), who did a study on corporate social responsibility and its impact on consumer decision-making. The purpose of the study was to explain the relationship between the consumers perceptions of corporate social responsibility and the buying behaviour in the clothing brand Salsa. The research was made through a survey in Portugal. The findings were that there were four dimensions of perceptions of CSR: ecological reasons, anti-discrimination reasons, recycling reasons and communication reasons. It was observed that the knowledge of social responsibility practices and the different dimensions of perceptions of CSR that were revealed by the consumers, influence the purchase of the company's products.

The influence of social media has also been studied. Shaheen (2016) did a research on the impacts of social media marketing on consumer decision-making process. The study was made in Pakistan. The research was made by collecting the data with a questionnaire that was randomly distributed among the graduate and undergraduate social media users of a college and a university. The findings came from 110 answers and the results were that 74,5% of consumers would change their minds after reading positive comments on social media sites. Social media also made the decision-making process more complex.

Another factor that can have influence in the buying behaviour is the packaging of the product. Butkeviciene (2008) did a research on the impact of consumer package communication on consumer decision making process. The purpose of the research was to present the theoretical and empirical study that verifies and points out consumer package factors and their communication importance in the decision-making process. The results show that the verbal components of packaging do not influence on repeated purchase, for example the behaviour after the purchase. It seems that the effect of non-verbal package components communication for the decision making in the impulse purchases is bigger than in the non-impulsive purchases. Another study about the role of packaging was by Gómez (2015), who did a research on the impact of packaging in purchase and usage behaviour. The purpose of the study was to analyse how consumers evaluate product packaging in two phases of the decision-making process: at the moment of acquisition and post-consumption. The results showed the most and least valued attributes, the primary differences between the four types of packaging and the perception generated at each moment.

The prior knowledge has also a role in the decision-making style. Karimi (2015) did a research on the effect of prior knowledge and decision-making style on the online purchase decision-making process, which was a typology of consumer shopping behaviour. The research studied how the online purchase process is affected by individual decision-making style and knowledge of product. In the research four different archetypes of online consumers are presented and the purpose was to improve the understanding of the different types of online consumers. The results showed that the amount of cycles, duration, number of options and criteria were dependent on both decision-making style and product knowledge.

Decision-making can also be affected by impulsivity or branding. Huang (2012) did a research on how impulsivity affects decision-making in e-commerce. The research investigates if a person's mood influences impulsivity in online shopping decisions, and how involvement can regulate it. The results showed that incidental moods have an impact on process impulsivity and it may not be restrained by involvement. The research also divided the decision-making process into two parts, orientation and evaluation. It seemed that the impulsivity is most evident in the stage of evaluation. Philiastides (2013) investigated the influence of branding on preference-based decision making. The research used a preference-based decision-making task and computational modelling to identify which internal factors of processing are influenced by branding.

#### **1.4.2 Influencing Factors in Ethical Consumerism**

The influencing factors have also been studied when choosing green products. Maniatis (2016) did a research on the factors that influence consumer decision-making while choosing green products. The research data was gathered from Athens. The purpose of the study was to investigate the consumers' knowledge, commitment and general awareness related to green products on their green consciousness while making decisions for buying green products. The outcome of the research was formed into a model that presents *"how consumers use their general awareness, knowledge, and commitment to green products in shaping their overall consciousness about environmental benefits, economic benefits, green reliability, and green appearance such that they can decide for purchasing a green product."* (Maniatis 2016, 215)

The ethical buying process has also been studied itself. Shim (2018) made a research about modelling the consumer decision-making process to identify key drivers and bottlenecks in the adoption of environmentally friendly products. Another study was about the risk perception and reduction. Mitchell (1994) did a preliminary investigation into pre- and post-purchase risk perception and reduction. The results of the study showed that the risk perceptions and risk-reducing strategy usefulness varied between the two states that were investigated. There were no large differences, but they were sufficient to cast doubt on the assumption made.

Deng (2015) did a research on understanding Chinese consumers' ethical purchasing decision-making process, which was a combination of qualitative and quantitative study. The purpose of the study was to analyse the underlying factors that prevent consumer from translating their stated ethical intentions into actual ethical buying behaviour. The findings showed that added to the personal factors and ethical consciousness, economic rationality, buying inertia, cynicism, and ethical cognitive efforts all have significant influence on the relationship between ethical intention and action.

Customers' own personalities have also influence on the decision-making, and Karimi (2018) did a research on the impact of consumer archetypes on online purchase decision-making process and outcomes. The results of the study were that the decision-making style and product knowledge influence the structure and complexity of decision-making processes. The study also showed that consumers with higher knowledge about the product were more satisfied with decision-making process and the relationship was mediated by the length of decision-making process.

#### **1.4.3 Motivation Towards Buying Green**

Customers have intentions, but there is sometimes a gap between the intentions and the actual behaviour. Carrington (2014) did a research on exploring the ethical consumer intention-behaviour gap. The research studies the underlying mechanics of the gap in the consumers everyday lives. The findings were that there is a motivational hierarchy that guides the selection. The translation from intentions to behaviour depends on concerns. Another study from the same area was by also Carrington (2010), who did a research on "why ethical consumers do not walk their talk" which was about building a framework for

understanding the gap between the ethical purchase intentions and actual buying behaviour of ethically minded consumers.

Consumers responses to ecolabels have also been studied. Thøgersen (2010) studied the consumer responses to ecolabels. The purpose of the study was to develop a framework for understanding consumer responses to ecolabelling. The ecolabel that was used in the study was an MSC label for sustainable fishery in Denmark. The findings were that the starting point of the consumers adoption process of the ecolabel depends on the motivational factors, past experience with using ecolabels and trust in the endorsing organisation. Another ecolabel that has been studied is the Fairtrade label. Yamoah (2016) did a research on creating a framework for understanding Fairtrade purchase intention in the mainstream environment of supermarkets. The study represents a model that integrates individual and societal values into the theory of planned behaviour. The theory is tested to challenge the thought of ethical consumption being driven only by ethical considerations. One finding was that the personal values do not significantly influence consumer perceptions of factors that may prevent them from buying Fairtrade products.

Consumers can have different reactions to media when talking about green consumerism. Matthes (2014) did a research on testing the relationship between green consumerism and scepticism toward advertising. The findings were that green consumers found more informational utility in green ads but did not have any influence on green advertising scepticism. Another finding was that the concern of marketers who desire to target the green consumer is not so severe than previously thought.

Cultural values, individual factors and media can also influence the motivation in green consumerism. Cho (2011) did a research on the impact of cultural values, individual factors and attention to media content on motivation for ethical consumerism. The purpose of the study was to provide a deeper understanding of motivation for ethical consumerism and to find if it is affected by cultural differences. The surveys were done in Austria and South Korea. The findings were that there are significant cultural differences between the two countries: the Austrian respondents showed higher motivation for ethical consumerism than the South Korean respondents. Individual factors and attention to media content were found to have a significant impact on ethical consumerism.

The motivational drivers have also been studied by Chekima (2016), who examined green consumerism motivational drivers and does the premium price and demographics matter to green purchasing. The purpose of the study was to determine the motivational factors that affect the green purchase intention and simultaneously assess the moderator roles of the premium price and demographic characteristics. The findings were that the environmental attitude, eco-label and cultural value significantly affect the green purchase intention. Another finding was that the green purchase intentions' motivational factors were greater among highly educated people, specifically among female consumers. Another study about the motivational factors was by Moisander (2007), who did a research on the motivational complexity of green consumerism. The study was conducted by using a model of motivation as an analytical tool. The purpose of the study was to understand the challenges that environmentally green consumers may face in the markets as well as to illustrate the limitations of framing and targeting environmental policy measures in terms of individual motivation and morally responsible decision making.

Pricing can also have influence in the behavioural intentions. Tseng (2016), who did a research on the effect of price discounts on green consumerism behavioural intentions. The study consisted of two experiments: first experiment was about the relationship among a green promotion setting, perceived nonmonetary and monetary sacrifice and purchase intention toward the list price. The second experiment was about investigating the relationship between price discount levels and frames and a green or general promotion setting used by take-out beverage shops. One finding was that the variation in consumer purchase intention in response to green consumerism promotion was 20% which was higher than that in a general promotion setting.

The consumer can also be influenced by the product attributes. Schuitema (2015) did a research on green consumerism and the influence of product attributes and values on purchasing intentions. The findings of the study were that if product attributes fulfil self-serving motives (low price, familiar or well-known brand) green product attributes (Cruelty-Free and low environmental impact) affect purchasing intentions more than when self-serving motives are not fulfilled (high price, unfamiliar or unknown brand).

## **1.5 Definitions and Key Concepts**

### **The Leaping Bunny Standard**

The Leaping Bunny standard is the standard the Cruelty Free International (2018b) gives and states about the label: *“The Standard is short for the Corporate Standard of Compassion for Animals, a voluntary pledge that cosmetic, personal care, and/or household product companies make to clear animal testing from all stages of product development. The company's ingredient suppliers make the same pledge and the result is a product guaranteed to be 100 percent free of new animal testing. All Leaping Bunny companies must be open to independent audits, and commitments are renewed on an annual basis.”*

### **Cruelty-Free label**

Three different organizations that give the label. Cruelty Free International, PETA and Choose Cruelty Free. Cruelty-Free label refers to the fact that the product is not tested on animals. (Cruelty Free International 2018b)

### **Consumer buying behaviour**

Consumer buying behaviour is the total of consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions and decisions regarding the behaviour when he/she buys a product or service. (Kotler, 2000, 98)

### **Consumer buying process**

The behavioural model has five steps in it: problem recognition, information search, evaluation and finally purchase, post-purchase decision. (Kotler, 2000, 98)

### **Ethical consumerism and ethical consumer**

If a consumer is ethically minded, the consumer feels responsibility towards the environment and/or to society and seeks to express the values he or she has through ethical consumption and purchasing or boycotting behaviour. (De Pelsmacker, Driesen & Rayp, 2005; Shaw & Shui, 2002).

### **Green consumerism**

Green consumerism refers to the wider category of ethical consumerism, including for example environmentalism. (Freestone and McGoldrick 2008)

## **1.6 Structure of the Study**

This research is divided into theoretical and empirical parts. The theoretical part starts by presenting the theory behind consumer buying behaviour in chapter two. In detail, which different factors influence the buying behaviour, what kind of types of buying behaviour there are and what are the steps of consumer decision-making process. After presenting the theory behind consumer behaviour the ethical consumerism is presented in chapter three. What it means to be an ethical consumer and how do the ethical consumers act when they buy. The intention-behavioural gap of ethical consumerism is presented.

After presenting the theory behind the phenomena studied, the fourth chapter is about the methodology of the research. In this chapter the research onion, data collection and analysis methods are presented. The fifth chapter presents the findings and categorization of data used of the interviews conducted. The next chapter is about analysing the findings with comparing them to theory presented earlier in this research. The sixth chapter also presents the answers to the research questions of this thesis. The seventh chapter concludes this thesis and gives propositions to further studies.

## 2. CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour has been changing dramatically over the past decades. Nowadays, consumers can buy online various customized products that range from trainers to computers. Online sources have also become more important channels for consumers for getting information and reading for example newspapers. According to Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg (2013), a consumer is usually thought as an individual that has a need or desire, makes a purchase and then disposes the product. Consumer behaviour is nowadays considered as an ongoing process instead of only the moment of purchase (Solomon et al. 2013, 6). According to Schiffman, Kanuk, Hansen (2012, 2), consumer behaviour refers to the behaviour the consumer displays in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that the consumer expects that will satisfy the need the consumer has. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 159) It also refers to how the consumers relate to each other and with other elements around them, what influences their choices among multiple products, services and companies. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 2)

Consumer behaviour focuses on how people make decisions to use the available resources that are for example money, time and effort, on items referred as consumption (Schiffman et al. 2012, 2). Consumer buying behaviour refers to the buying behaviour of final consumers. Meaning, individuals and households that buy goods and services for personal consumption. Consumers around the world vary in age, income, education level and taste, and how much they buy different products or services. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 159) Consumers make purchase decisions daily and the point of decision is an important point in the marketer's effort (Schiffman et al. 2012, 63).

In order to understand how the consumers behave and why they behave like they do, various model are presented. To start, the theory of planned behaviour by Ajzen theory is presented below in figure 2.

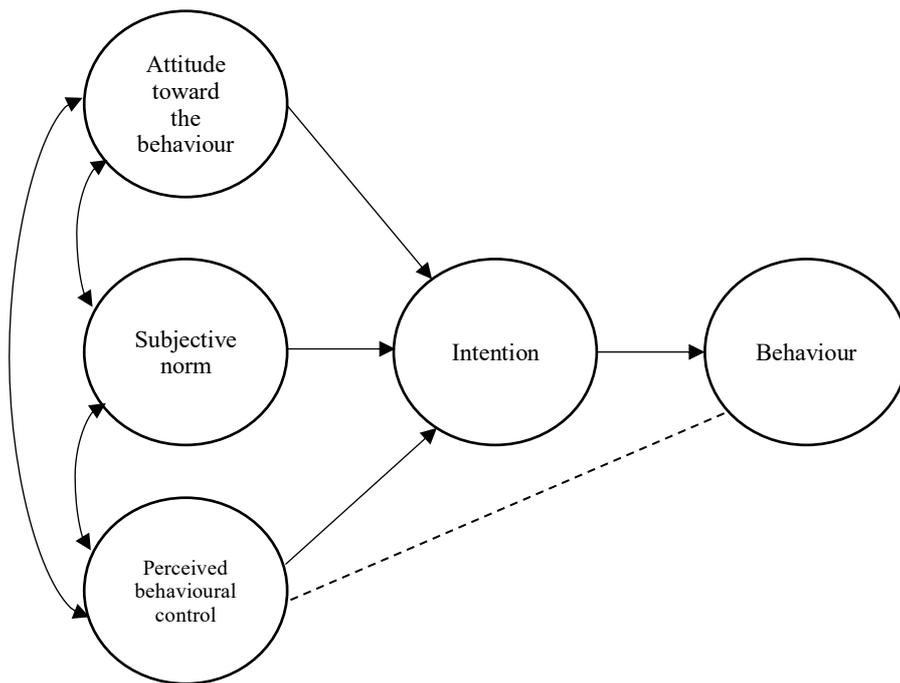


Figure 2. Theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 1991, 182)

According to the theory of planned behaviour and the model in figure 2, the intention depends on three factors: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Behavioural, normative and control beliefs are seen as indirect constructs. According to the theory, the performance of a behaviour is a sum of intentions and perceived behavioural control. (Ajzen 1991)

In the theory of planned behaviour, the central factor is the person's intention to perform a behaviour that is given. Intentions are expected to capture the factors that are motivational which affect the behaviour. The intentions are indications that show how hard individuals are ready to try, how much effort they plan to put so they can perform the behaviour. The general rule is that the stronger the intention to do a behaviour, the more likely it is to happen. There are factors that influence the behaviour, that are non-motivational, for example available opportunities and resources, such as time, money and skills. Altogether, those factors make the actual control over the behaviour. (Ajzen 1991)

Next, in order to understand how the consumers respond to multiple marketing efforts the companies use, the issue can be studied by starting from the stimulus-response model of buying behaviour, which is presented below in figure 3.

## 2.1 Model of buying behaviour

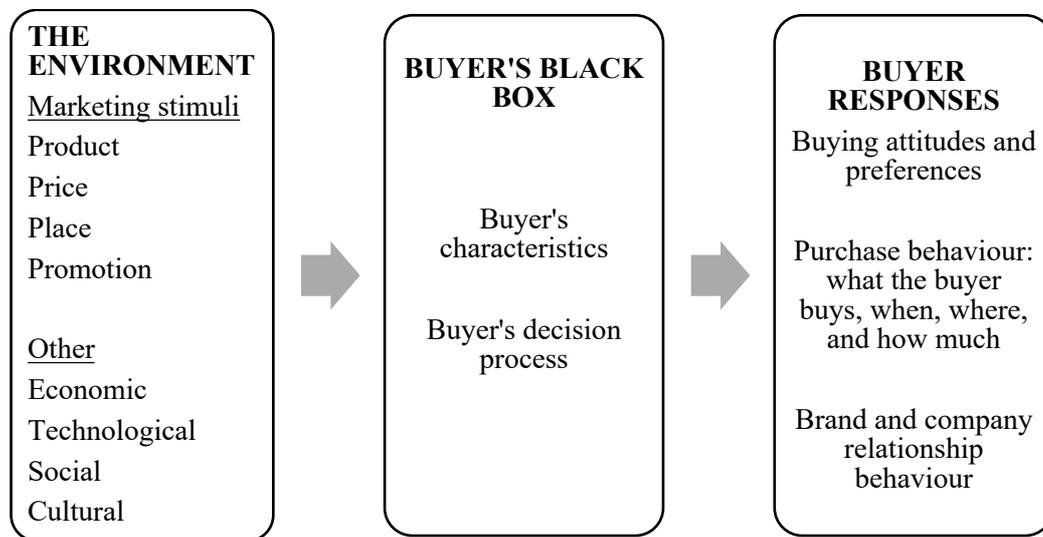


Figure 3. Model of Buying Behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 159)

As presented in figure 3, marketing stimuli consists of the four p's: product, price, place and promotion. Other stimuli consist of economic, technological, social and cultural which are forces and events in the buyer's environment. All of these inputs go to buyer's black box, in which they are transformed into a selection of buyer responses: the buyer's brand and company relationship behaviour and what the consumer buys, when, where and how often. The box is called black box because it's very difficult to see or understand the "why's" of buying behaviour. In the buyer's black box, the buyer's characteristics affect on how the consumer perceives or reacts to the stimuli (Chisnall 1997, 195). The other part is the buyer's decision-making process itself. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 160-161)

## 2.2 Factors influencing the consumer buying behaviour

Next the different factors that influence the consumer behaviour are presented. There are cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. They have different influence on the buying behaviour, and the figure by Kotler & Armstrong (2010) is presented below in figure 4.

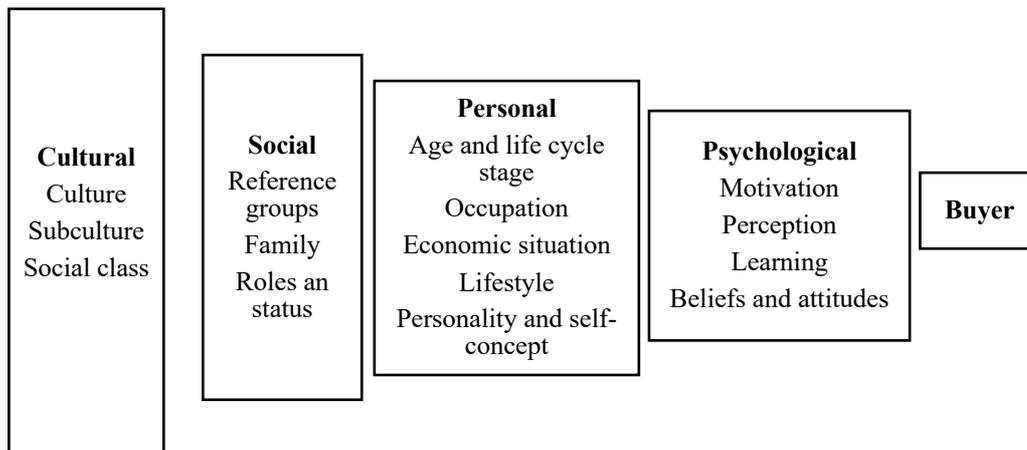


Figure 4. Factors influencing consumer behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 162)

As presented in the figure 4, the decisions that consumers make when they buy a product are strongly influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics, as shown above. Mostly, the marketers can not control the factors, but they need to take them into account. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 160)

### 2.2.1 Cultural factors

Cultural factors have a broad influence on consumer behaviour, since culture is the most basic cause of a person's wants and behaviour. When a child grows up in a society, he or she learns basic values, perceptions, wants and behaviours from the family and other important institutions. When being a child, the individual usually learns or is exposed to some of the following values: achievement and success, activity and involvement, efficiency and practicality, progress, hard work, material comfort, individualism, freedom, humanitarianism, youthfulness and fitness and health. Each group and society has a culture and the influences of culture on to buying behaviour vary between countries. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 161)

Cultural categories can go to meanings into products. Culture makes separations between various times of day, meaning between spare time and work hours, and also other differences as well. For example, clothing industry provides products that signify these categories, such

as evening wear, leisure clothing and work clothing, and masculine, feminine or unisex styles. (Solomon et al. 2013, 36)

Culture is divided into smaller cultures: subcultures or groups of people that have a similar value system based on common life experiences and situations. Nationalities, religions, racial groups and geographic regions can be subcultures. Many subcultures can be considered as important market segments and companies often tailor their products to meet the specific needs of some subcultures. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 161)

### **2.2.2 Social factors**

The behaviour of the consumers is also affected by social factors, for example consumer's small groups, family and social roles and status. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 68) For example, comments from friends, editorials in the newspaper or user experiences from family members are all non-commercial sources of information influencing the decision-making. Many groups have effect on an individual's behaviour. Groups that have direct influence or the person belongs to them are said to be membership groups. The other type of groups that have indirect influence are called reference groups. Reference groups can also have direct influence. Reference groups are involved in forming a person's attitudes or behaviour in comparison or reference. Often the reference groups give influence when the individual does not belong in that group. For example, an aspirational group is something the in which the individual wants to belong, so a young girl who has fallen love in make-up hopes to someday emulate a makeup professional and create a career from it. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 164)

Companies often want to identify the reference groups of the market that they have targeted their business. That is because the reference groups often expose individuals to new behaviours and lifestyles, affect the person's attitudes and self-concept and set pressures to adjust, so the individual's choices of brand and product might be influenced. The amount how much the reference groups have influence differ among brands and products. When the product is visible to others and used by someone that the individual has respect for, the influence tends to be the strongest. According to Wells (2008), the brand's influence varies depending on the end goal of customer, brand image, feature, price and experience. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 68) How much the consumer is influenced by the brand's marketing

efforts is governed by the consumer's perception of those efforts. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 165)

If the brand is meant to have to strong group influence, the companies need to know how to reach the opinion leaders. Opinion leaders are people that have social influence on others. They are in a reference group because they have special skills, knowledge, personality or other characteristics. Companies try to identify the opinion leaders for their products and make direct marketing efforts towards them. Opinion leaders are sometimes made as "brand ambassadors" who spread the word about the company's product. However, according to Solomon et al. (2013, 7), another individual might act as an influencer, that provides recommendations for or against a product, without actually buying or using them. That means, that the influences can come from various sources. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 165)

A relative new way of being an influencer is micro-influencer. Micro-influencers are individuals in the social media, for example Instagram, that are brand advocates and they have a lot of followers that can be seen deeply engaged. (Lyons 2018). Micro-influencers have followers somewhat between 10 000 and 100 000. According to Britner (2018), there is a personal connection between the micro-influencer and the follower, which can be divided into aspiration and trust.

Another channel of influence is online social networks. Online social networks are communities online where people get social and or exchange opinions and information. According to a study made by Shaheen (2016), 74,5% of consumers would change their minds after reading positive comments on social media sites. Social networking consists of blogging and multiple networking web sites such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Companies try to use these channels to promote their products and build closer relationships with consumers. Companies try to interact with the consumers and be a part of their life through social media instead of throwing only one-way commercial messages and advertisement. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 167-168)

Family is also a strong influencer in the buying behaviour in some individual's cases. In society, the most important consumer buying organization is family. Companies find the roles interesting and try to influence on the husband, wife or children on the purchase of different products and services. An individual belongs to multiple groups, family, clubs and

organizations. The position in which the individual can be defined in terms of role and status. A role means the behaviour that an individual is expected to have according to the people around them. Every role has a status that reflects the general respect given to it by society. Individuals often choose products that are appropriate to their role and status. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 169-170)

### **2.2.3 Personal factors**

The consumer's decision to buy is also affected by personal characteristics such as the consumer's age and life-cycle stage, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle and personality and self-concept. According to Solomon et al. (2013), consumers in various age groups have various needs and wants. The products and services consumers buy change over their lifetimes. Taste in food, clothes and furniture are usually related to age. According to Chovanová, Korshunov & Babcanová (2015), the influence that the brand has on consumers depends on the age of the consumer. If people belong to a same age group, they tend to have similar set of values and common cultural experiences which they have with them throughout their lives (Solomon et al. 2013, 9). Consumers also buy differently regarding their stage of family's life cycle. Companies often shape their marketing and products to this life-cycle stage of consumers. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 170)

Consumer's occupation has also influence in the buying behaviour. For example, workers with low wages tend to buy different kind of clothes than executives. Companies try to shape their products and marketing and target those activities to these different segments. Consumer's economic situation has also influence in the buying behaviour. Companies can target consumers due to their income, for example consumers that have a lot of money and income and match their prices to that segment. That can be done either way, companies can also target the lower income consumers and sell cheaper products to them. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 170-171)

Even though consumers come from the same subculture, social class or occupation, they can have very different lifestyles. Lifestyle means a pattern of how a person lives as expressed in his or her psychographics. Measuring lifestyle consists of person's major AIO dimensions: activities (work, hobbies and shopping), interests (food, fashion and family) and opinions (about themselves, social issues, business, products). It captures more than just the

personality or social class of an individual. Lifestyle profiles an individual's whole pattern of acting and interacting in the world. If the lifestyle concept is used with care, it can help companies to understand changing consumer values and how they affect buying behaviour. For example, according to Kurtkoti (2016), in the service sector, emotional and functional values drive the consumer behaviour. Products and services represent values and lifestyles, and when consumers buy them, they buy the values and lifestyles and not only the product. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 171)

Another factor influencing the buying behaviour is the personality and self-concept. Every person has a unique personality that influences the buying behaviour. Personality means "*the unique psychological characteristics that lead to relatively consistent and lasting responses of one's own environment*". Personality can be described by traits as self-confidence, dominance, sociability, autonomy, defensiveness, adaptability and aggressiveness. In some product or brand choices, it may be useful to analyse consumers' personalities. With brand that have personalities, the idea is that the consumer buys a product of a brand with a matching personality. A brand personality is a mix that matches with human traits and can be attributed to a brand. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 172)

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2010), there are five personality traits identified:

1. Sincerity (down-to-earth, honest, wholesome, and cheerful)
2. Excitement (daring, spirited, imaginative and up-to-date)
3. Competence (reliable, intelligent and successful)
4. Sophistication (upper class and charming)
5. Ruggedness (outdoorsy and tough)

Most of the well-known brands have one specific trait. For example, Apple with "excitement" and Dove soap brand with "sincerity". This means, that the consumers that are high on those personal traits, are attracted to the brands with similar traits. Many companies use concept that is related to person's self-concept, for example "we are what we have". If a company wants to understand consumer behaviour, it needs to first understand the relationship between consumer self-concept and possessions. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 172)

The corporate social responsibility has also influence in the buying behaviour. There are four dimensions of perceptions of CSR: ecological reasons, no discrimination reasons, recycling reasons and communication reasons. The knowledge of social responsibility practices and the different dimensions of perceptions of CSR that are known by the consumers, influence the purchase of the company's products. (Rodrigues 2018)

#### 2.2.4 Psychological factors

Other factors that influence the buying behaviour are the psychological factors: motivation, perception, learning and beliefs and attitudes. Individuals have different kind of needs every day. Some of those are biological, such as hunger, and some psychological, such as need of belonging. A need becomes a motive, when it reaches sufficient level of intensity. A motive is a need when the person starts to seek satisfaction. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 171-172). According to Abraham Maslow (1943), human needs are arranged in hierarchy, such as below in figure 5.

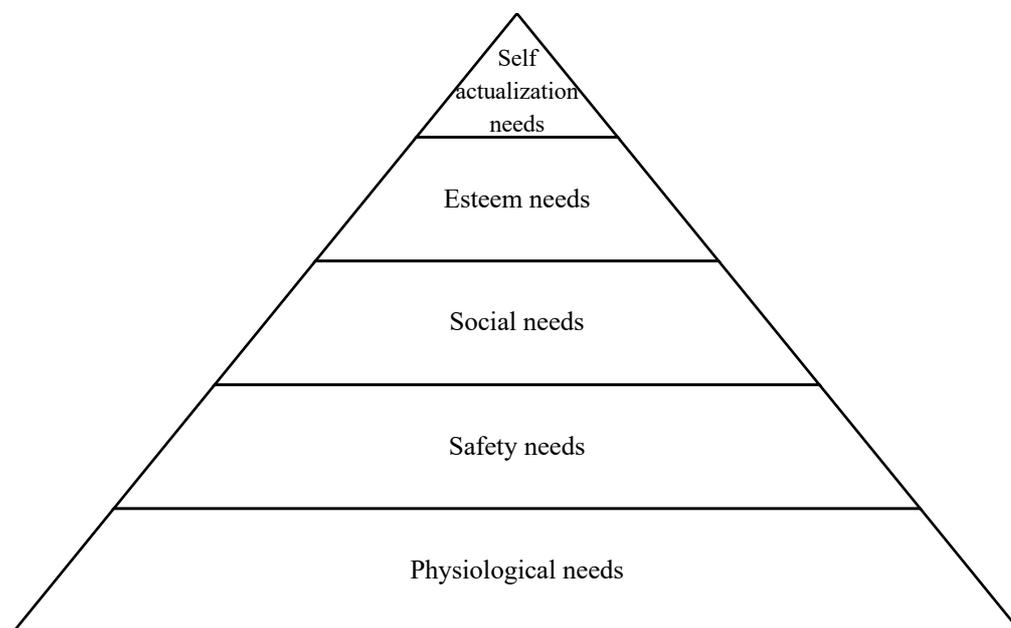


Figure 5. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943)

As presented in figure 5, the hierarchy works from bottom to top. From the most pressing need to the least pressing need. Individuals try to satisfy their most important needs first and when the needs are satisfied, they will try to satisfy the next need. The bottom of the pyramid is "physiological needs" which refer to hunger and thirst. The second is "safety needs" which

refer to security and protection. The middle of the pyramid is “social needs” that refer to sense of belonging and love. Second to the top is “esteem needs” that refer to self-esteem, recognition and status. The top of the pyramid is “self-actualization needs” which refer to self-development and realization. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 173)

The moods of consumers are also one important factor in decision-making. Mood can be said to be a “feeling state” or a state of mind. Mood is usually an unfocused, pre-existing state that already happens at the time a consumer experiences an advertisement or brand or a product. Mood is different compared to emotions, which are responses to a particular environment. Moods have influence when consumers shop, where they do it and if they shop alone or with someone else. Mood is likely to influence how the consumer reflects with the actual purchasing environment. Usually, people with a positive mood recall more information about the product than the people with a bad mood. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 66)

A motivated individual is ready to act. The individual’s own perception of the situation will define how the individual acts. Everyone learns through five senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. Everyone also receives, organizes and interprets the sensory information in a personal way. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 174)

Perception refers to the process in which people select, organize and interpret information towards forming a meaningful picture of the world. A person can form different perceptions of the same stimulus than someone else because of three perceptual processes: selective attention, selective distortion and selective retention. Since people get so many stimuli daily, it is impossible to pay attention to each one. Selective attention means the tendency for people to pick the most important information to them. Selective distortion refers to the tendency of people to interpret information in a way that will support the beliefs they already have. Consumers also forget a lot of the information that they learn. Selective retention means that the consumers are likely to remember the good points made from the brand they like and forget the good points about the competitive brand. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 174)

When people do, they learn. Through learning people acquire beliefs and attitudes. The beliefs and attitudes affect on the buying behaviour. Belief, a descriptive thought that an individual has about something, may refer to real knowledge, opinion or faith. Beliefs might

or might not carry an emotional charge. Companies are interested in the beliefs that the individuals have about specific products and services, since the beliefs make up product and brand images that influence buying behaviour. Individuals have attitudes towards religion, politics, clothes, music, food and almost everything else. Attitude refers to an individual's consistent evaluations, feelings and tendencies toward an object or idea. Individuals are put into liking or disliking something or moving towards or away from something by attitudes. Attitudes are difficult to change, since when an individual's attitude fits into a pattern, the changing of the attitude might require changing some other attitudes as well. It is easier for companies to try to fit into existing attitudes rather than trying to change attitudes. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 175)

### 2.2.5 Types of Buying Decision Behaviour

Consumer's buying behaviour is very different if a consumer buys a toothpaste or a car. More complex decisions require often more buying participants and more buyer deliberation. Below are the types of buying decision behaviour presented in figure 6. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 176).

	High involvement	Low involvement
Significant differences between brands	Complex buying behaviour	Variety-seeking buying behaviour
Few differences between brands	Dissonance-reducing buying behaviour	Habitual buying behaviour

Figure 6. Types of buying behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 176)

When there are significant differences between brands and the purchase requires high involvement, the behaviour is complex. Complex buying behaviour may appear when the purchase is expensive, risky, purchased infrequently and highly self-expressive. Usually, the consumer needs to learn a lot about the product category. When complex buying behaviour appears, the consumer will go through a learning process which starts by developing beliefs about the product and then attitudes. After that a thoughtful choice to buy the product is made. One example product that causes complex buying behaviour is car. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 176)

When there are few differences between brands and the purchase requires high involvement, the buying behaviour is dissonance-reducing. After buying the product, the consumers may have post purchase dissonance, which refers to the discomfort after purchase. That happens when consumers find some disadvantages in the bought product or hear good things about a brand that was not purchased. To avoid that, companies should do after-sale communications and provide support to consumers, so they would feel good about their purchases. One example of this category is carpeting. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 176)

When there are few differences between brands and the purchase requires low involvement the buying behaviour is habitual. One example of this purchase is salt. There is little involvement in the purchase, since consumers usually only take the product from the shelf at the store. If they pick often the same brand, it is more of a habit than brand loyalty. Individuals tend to have low involvement with most low-cost usually bought products. In these cases, consumers do not go through the belief-attitude-behaviour sequence. Since the purchase is low involvement, the consumers might not even be able to rate the choice after buying it. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 176-177)

When there are significant differences between brands and the purchase requires low involvement, the buying behaviour is variety-seeking. In these cases, consumers switch a lot between brands. One example of this category is cookies. The consumer might have some beliefs about the cookies when he or she buys them, and after eating them the beliefs might have changed or stayed the same. After this, the consumer may try some other cookie brand. In these cases, the brand switching is because of variation, not necessarily dissatisfaction towards the brand. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177)

### **2.3 Consumer buying process**

The consumer buying process consists of five steps: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and post purchase behaviour. It can be said, that the buying process starts long before the action of purchase and continues also long after the purchase. Companies should focus on the whole process when thinking about the consumers, not just the purchase action. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177)

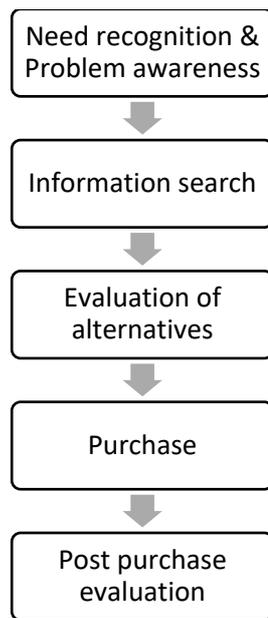


Figure 7. Consumer buying process (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177)

Every time the customers shop, they pass every step of the process presented in figure 7, even if they decide not to shop. If the purchase is a routine one, the consumers can skip steps or even go through them in a reverse way. If the decision is complex, the process can go forward and backwards before the purchase action itself. According to Lindmark (2015, 37) the consumer buying process tends to take a longer time and be more complex for high involvement products as presented earlier. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177)

### 2.3.1 Need Recognition and Problem Awareness

The buying process starts with need recognition, so the buyer recognizes that something is needed or there is a problem (Schiffman et al. 2012, 70; Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 178). Needs can be also referred to as wants, wishes, motives or drives (Chisnall 1997, 197). The consumer can have the need triggered by internal stimulation, for example hunger or thirst, that becomes so important it becomes a driver. The need of the consumer can also arise from an external factor. For example, an advertisement on the street or a discussion with friends can get the customer to want to buy a new dress. In this stage, the consumers search to satisfy their end-goals, which can be simple or fairly complex (Chisnall 1997, 197). This stage means for the companies that they should think about where the problems arise and how they can get the consumer to come to their products. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 178)

There are two types of problem awareness among consumers. The first type is actual state type which refers to consumers that think they have a problem when a product fails them satisfactorily, for example a mobile phone that develops constant static. The other type is desired state type which refers to the consumers that are triggered by the desire to buy something new and that starts their purchasing process. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 70)

### **2.3.2 Information Search**

If the consumer is interested, he/she might search for more information. If the consumer has a strong drive and a product that satisfies the need is easily accessible, the consumer is likely to buy it then (Chisnall 1997, 197). If the product is not easy to get, the consumer might save the need in memory or start looking for information that is related to the need. When a consumer has decided to buy a skincare product, the consumer will at the least probably pay more attention to skin care product advertisement or conversations related to skin care with friends. The consumer might also actively search for information online, talk with friends or collect information in some other way. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 178)

The re-collection of old experiences of the consumer can also be seen as information channel that provides the consumer adequate information to make the present choice. Also, if the consumer does not have any experience before, he or she might need to get into an extensive search of the outside environment to find useful information on which to make the choice. The consumer often seeks his or her memory before starting to seek from external sources of information regarding a given consumption-related need. Many decisions that consumer make are based on the combination of experiences they had before (internal sources) and marketing and non-commercial information sources (external sources). (Schiffman et al. 2012, 70; Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg 2013, 343)

Reviews from consumers online help consumers to evaluate the alternative products and make the buying decision, since it gives them opinions from earlier customer experiences with the products. On the other hand, according to Shaheen (2016), social media makes the decision-making process more complex. However, the social contacts have even more influence on the buying behaviour than the online consumer reviews. The quality of the reviews is the most important factor when the consumer evaluates the reviews. There is always a risk that the reviews are untruthful. (Lindmark 2015, 36)

The strength of the drive, the amount of information the consumer has to start with, the level of capability to obtain more information, the value that new information provides the consumer and how much satisfaction the consumer gets from the information searching defines the amount of information search (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 178). It appears that the less the consumer knows about a product category and the more they find the purchase meaningful, the more they will make time available to use it to find more information before the purchase. The other situation is that if the consumers have high knowledge on the product category, they rely more on their own opinions and evaluations than on someone else's recommendations. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 71)

Consumers can gather information from various sources. The sources possible are personal sources (family, friends, colleagues), commercial sources (advertising, salespeople, websites, packaging, displays), public sources (mass media, consumer rating organizations, Internet searches) and experiential sources (handling, examining, using the product). The product the consumer is about to buy, and the consumers own preferences defines the influence of different sources. According to Lindmark (2015, 36), consumers put more effort and time when they search information about a product that requires high involvement. If the product requires low involvement, the customers are not motivated to spend time or put effort in the search for product information in reviews online. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 178)

Usually the consumer gets the most information from commercial sources, that are controlled by the marketer. However, personal sources appear to be the most effective. Consumer gets usually informed by the commercial sources, but the personal sources legitimize and makes the consumer evaluate. It has been researched, that 78% of consumers found the recommendations from other people to be the most trustworthy form of endorsement. According to Lindmark (2015), customers prefer online customer reviews being more credible information source than the organizations own information or traditional media channels. It has been said that *"It's rare that an advertising campaign can be as effective as a neighbour leaning over the fence and saying, 'This is a wonderful product'"*. Nowadays, the fence is usually virtual, and the recommendations and reviews happen online. Companies should identify the sources that their customers use for information search and understand their importance. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 178)

### 2.3.3 Evaluation of Alternatives

This step of the buying process has critical evaluation of the variety of products or services that have been discovered in the previous phases (Chisnall 1997, 197). When the consumer has searched for information, he/she has multiple options which to buy. The marketers should understand the alternative evaluation, meaning how the consumer processes the information which brand to choose. However, customers do not always use a straight forward or a single way when evaluating the alternatives. Instead, there are multiple processes at work at the same time. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 178)

According to Schiffman et al. (2012, 72) there are two types of information consumers use when evaluating the alternatives. The first type of information is a list of brands or models that they plan to make their selection (the evoked set) and the second one is the criteria they will use to evaluate each brand. Creating a set of samples of all possible options is a human characteristic that makes the decision-making process easier. The evoked set includes a small number of brands the consumer knows and is familiar with, remembers and accepts them. It is important that the brand is in the consumer's evoked set, so it can be chosen to be purchased. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 74; Solomon et al. 2013, 355; Chisnall 1997, 197)

The ways to evaluate alternatives can vary a lot. It can be talking to the salesperson or using the web to get familiar with the product and price information before even entering the store. That gives pressure on retailers, that they give the consumers the value they expect. (Solomon et al. 2013, 63)

The way how the consumers arrive to different brands depends on the individual consumers and the specific buying situation. Some consumers think logically and make careful calculations. Sometimes the same careful consumers buy impulsively or rely on intuition. Sometimes the consumers make their decisions by themselves and sometimes they trust on their friend's opinion or they read consumer guides. The products have multiple attributes, and the importance of different attributes depend on the consumer. Some of them appreciate for example low price and some appreciate the design and are willing to pay more for the product. According to Butkeviciene (2008) the verbal components of product packaging do not influence on repeated purchase, for example the behaviour after the purchase. It seems that the effect of non-verbal package components communication for the decision making

in the impulse purchases is bigger than in the non-impulsive products. The buying decision can be based on one attribute or four attributes. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 179)

### **2.3.4 Purchase**

In the previous stage, evaluation of alternatives, the consumer evaluates brands and forms intentions to buy. Usually, the purchase decision of the consumer will be to purchase the most favourable brand, but there are two factors that can come between the intention to buy and the actual decision to buy. The first factor is the attitudes that other have. If a person that is special for the consumer thinks that the consumer should buy the skin care item with the lowest price, the chances for the consumer buying the luxurious more expensive one is reduced. (Lindmark 2015) If there is a large amount of positive reviews online of the product, the consumer buying behaviour can be positively influenced. Negative reviews have also a negative influence on the buying decision if the product requires high involvement. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 179)

The second factor is unexpected situational factors. When customer shops online, according to Karimi (2015), the online purchase process is affected by individual decision-making style and knowledge of product. The consumer can make the purchase intention based on expected income, expected price and expected product benefits. There can be unexpected events that can change the purchase intention, since making a purchase is not often a simple or routine matter (Solomon et al. 2013, 62). A competitive brand or product might drop its price, or an economic crisis can happen. That means, that the preferences and purchase intention might not always lead to actual choice to purchase. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 179)

The purchase action might be done spontaneously. This unplanned buying can happen if a consumer is unfamiliar with where products lay in a store or if the consumer is under some time pressure or stress. A consumer might also make a spontaneous purchase, if the consumer sees a product on a shelf and remembers that the product there needed to be purchased. In one of three situations the unplanned buying is because the consumer recognizes a new need in the store. A consumer can also have a sudden urge that they can not resist and buys the product, which is called impulse buying. Because of this behaviour, companies are putting effort in their layout in the store, so the impulse buying would happen there. (Solomon et al. 2013, 87)

Consumers make three kinds of purchase decisions: trial purchases, repeat purchases and long-term commitment purchases. When an individual buys a product for the first time and purchases a smaller amount than usual, this purchase is considered as a trial. It can be said that the trial is an exploratory phase of purchase behaviour in which the individual targets to evaluate the purchased item through direct use. Individuals might also try new product through promotional tactics such as free samples. The repeat purchase is quite similar with brand loyalty in which the consumer buys the same product or products from the same brand whenever the old one is empty or new one is needed. Long-term commitment purchases are purchases that require more involvement from consumers and are not usually available for trial, such as refrigerators or washing machines. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 83)

### **2.3.5 Post-Purchase Evaluation**

The companies work does not end in the purchase of customer. When the customer has purchased the product, the customer is either satisfied or dissatisfied with the purchase (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 179; Solomon et al. 2013, 63). This leads to post purchase behaviour. The answer whether the consumer is satisfied or dissatisfied depends on the relationship between the consumer's expectations and the perceived performance of the product. If the product does not meet with the expectations the consumer has towards it, the consumer is disappointed. On the other hand, if the product meets the expectations towards it, the consumer is satisfied or even delighted if the product exceeds the expectations. The satisfaction is specifically important to the companies, that understand that the way to succeed is not only selling the product one time but get an ongoing relationship with the customer (Solomon et al. 2013, 63). With a larger gap between the expectation and the performance, the more disappointed the consumer is. This means, that the companies should not promise something their brand can not deliver, so the buyers will not become dissatisfied with their product after purchasing them. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 179)

According to Schiffman et al. (2012, 84) there are three possible outcomes in a post-purchase evaluation:

1. actual performance meets with the expectations, that leads to a neutral feeling
2. performance exceed the expectations, which causes disconfirmation of expectation (and that leads to satisfaction)

3. performance is worse than expectations, which causes negative disconfirmation of expectations and dissatisfaction.

The purchase decision's importance defines the degree of the post-purchase analysis. If the product exceeds its expectations, the consumer will probably buy the product again. If the product performs under its expectations, the consumer will probably try to find other more suitable alternatives. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 85)

Major purchases can result in cognitive dissonance or dissatisfaction because of a post purchase conflict. Cognitive dissonance means that after making a purchase, the consumer believes that the product fulfils the needs and is happy that he/she did not buy from any other brand. The customer tries to believe that it was a good one. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 179; Schiffman et al. 2012, 84-85)

Satisfying the consumers is in an important role when building profitable relationships with consumers. If the consumers are satisfied, they will probably buy the product again or another product from the brand. They also might recommend the product to their friends or at websites online. Satisfied customers might also pay less attention to competing brands and advertising. Because of this, many companies try to delight their customers instead of satisfying them. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 179)

## **2.4 The Buyer Decision Process of New Products**

If a consumer is considering buying a completely new product, the approach might be different. The consumer makes a decision to adopt or to not adopt the product or service. Adoption process is defined as the process that happens mentally in which the person learns about the innovation and passes to final adoption. Adoption meaning the decision that the person makes to become a regular user of the product. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 181)

Below are the processes of consumer buying and the process consumer buying of new product next to each other in figure 8. In this model, new product means "*a good, service or idea that is perceived by some potential customers as new*". The product might have been on the markets for a while, but the model refers to the consumers that think of the product of being new. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 181)

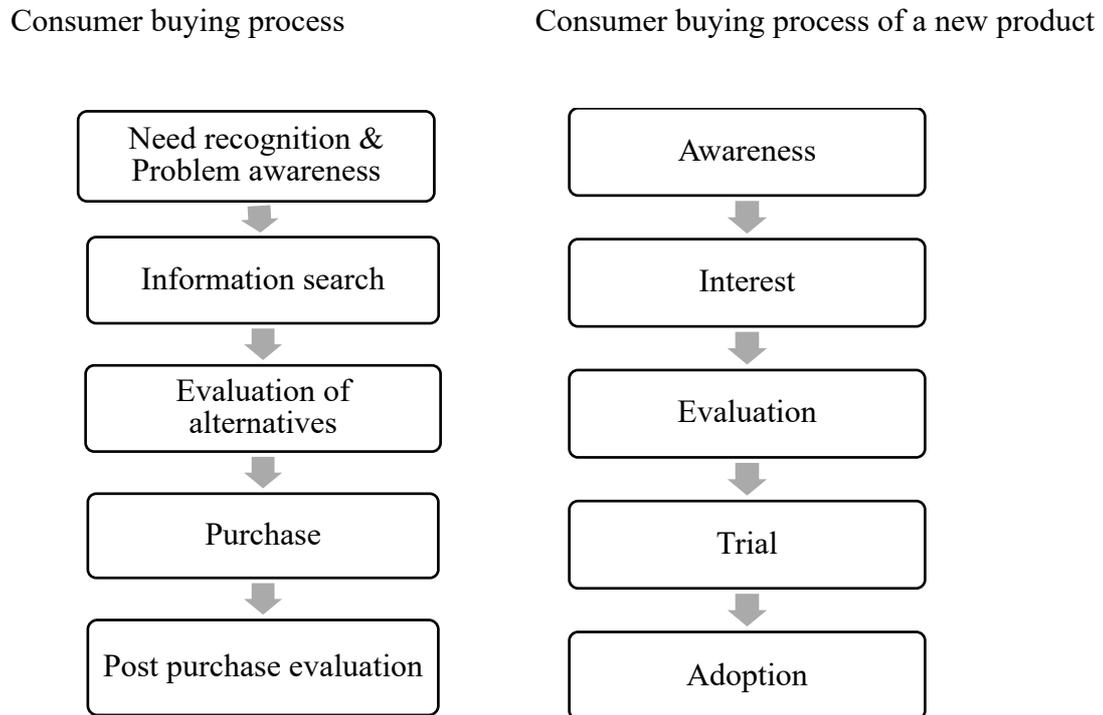


Figure 8. The consumer buying process and the buyer decision process for new products (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177, 181)

Consumers go through five steps in the process of adopting new product. The first step is awareness, in which the consumer becomes aware of the new product but does not have information about it. The second step is interest, in which the consumer searches for information about the new product. The third step is evaluation, in which the consumer considers if the new product is worth trying. In fourth step, trial, the consumer tries the product on a small scale to have a better evaluation of the value. The last step is adoption, in which the consumer makes the decision to make full and regular use of the new product. There are differences between people in their readiness to try new products. In every area of product, there are “consumption pioneers” and those that adopt early. Other consumers adopt the products later. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 182)

### **3. ETHICAL CONSUMERISM**

#### **3.1 Rising Interest in Ethical Consumerism**

During recent years, there has been ethical concerns about the impact of the modern culture of consumption on society and the environment and the grown importance of these environmental and social issues in mainstream media, the consumer activist groups that have activated and the grown selection and availability of ethical products have all been leading to a rising awareness by consumers of the influence their purchasing has and their consumption behaviour (Carrigan & Attalla 2001; Connolly & Shaw 2006; Crane & Matten 2004). There has been rising a new type of consumer that is called “the ethical consumer”. If a consumer is ethically minded, the consumer feels responsibility towards the environment and/or to society and seeks to express the values he or she has through ethical consumption and purchasing or boycotting behaviour. (De Pelsmacker, Driesen & Rayp 2005; Shaw & Shui 2002). Another definition of ethical consumer behaviour is “decision-making, purchases and other consumption experiences that are affected by the consumer’s ethical concerns” (Bray, Johns & Kilburn, 2011, 598; Cooper-Martin, Holbrook, 1993, 113). According to Freestone and McGoldrick (2008), being “ethical” means different things to different consumers: different environmental/green issues, sustainability concerns, workers’ rights, country of origin, arms trade, fair trade and animal welfare.

Since the ethical culture has risen and popularised (Shaw et al. 2006), the companies are interested to seek how to meet the needs of their stakeholders, which include the “ethical consumers” (Polonsky 1995). Different kinds of products, such as carbon neutral beer and Fair Trade -endorsed coffee, have marketing strategies that are targeted to the ethically minded people. However, now they are widely adopted to potentially profitable ethical segments of market to enhance the sales of the ethically and environmentally sustainable credentials of products, brand, services and/or corporations. (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell 2010, 140).

### 3.2 The Intention – Behavioural Gap in Ethical Consumerism

Since the beginning of the latest decade, ethical consumerism has grown from cultural fringes to mainstream society. (Carrigan, Szmigin & Wright 2004; Crane & Matten 2004; Shaw, Newholm & Dickinson 2006). Chatzidakis, Hibbert and Smith (2007), present that the intentions to purchase of ethical consumers are driven by personal values, moral norms, internal ethics and other similar factors. However, it appears that even though there are consumers in increasing amount that have absorbed and are motivated by the values of ethical consumerism, their consumption behaviour has not changed as much. It seems, that ethical intentions do not often translate to the actual buying behaviour. (Auger & Devinney 2007; Belk, Devinney & Eckhardt 2005; Carrigan & Attalla 2001; Follows & Jobber 2000; Shaw, Shiu, Hassan, Bekin & Hogg 2007). A study by Futerra (2005) showed that 30% of the consumers said that they would purchase ethically, but only 3% of them actually did. That said, even if consumers might be ethically minded, they rarely purchase ethical products (Auger & Devinney 2007). There seems to be an intention-behavioural gap. The model that is used to present the gap is by Carrington, Neville & Whitwell (2010) which is presented below in figure 9.

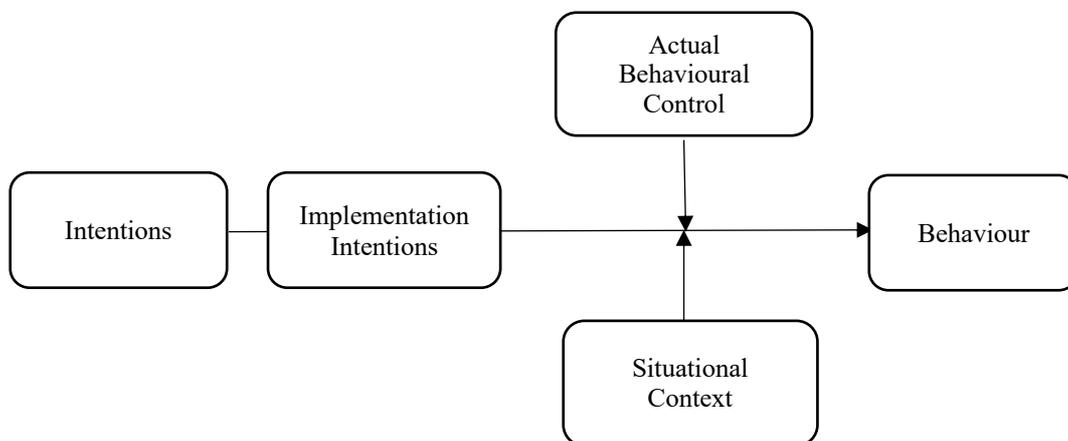


Figure 9. Intention-behaviour mediation and moderation model of the ethically minded consumer (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell 2010, 144).

### 3.2.1 Intentions

In the figure 9, intentions specify a desired end point and shows a commitment to get that outcome. Implementation intentions specify the plan how to bring the intention to fruition. (Dholakia, Bagozzi & Gopinath 2007). An implementation intention is a plan of if/then that the individual forms when outlining when, where and how the individual's intention will be realised as actual behaviour (Gollwitzer & Sheeran 2006). The individual forms the plan cognitively beforehand the purchase and then specifies the situational mark that starts the intended behaviour (Gollwitzer 1999). For example, a consumer that is ethically minded and wants to buy only coffee that is Fair Trade, the consumer will develop an implementation intention: "when I'm at the supermarket and I need more coffee beans, I will purchase only Fair-Trade labelled coffee products". It appears, that if a consumer makes those kinds of implementation intentions, he or she is more likely to implement the behaviour. (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell 2010, 144).

Implementation intentions relay positively the relationship between intentions and behaviour. That is because a simple plan helps the consumer to get started in realising his or her intentions, protects their intentions from impacts that are not wanted and avoids conflict. (Dholakia et al. 2007). When an individual makes if/then implementation plans, they also help the individual to change the existing habit he or she has. Those existing habits allow them to shop on "auto-pilot". That leads to the individual potentially to create new habits. (Ajzen, 2002; Gollwitzer & Sheeran 2006).

Some people have difficulties getting started towards realising an intention since they forget to act accordingly, specifically when the intended behaviour is not familiar or not a part of their routine (Gollwitzer & Sheeran 2006). The forgetting is relevant to the consumers that are ethically minded, if ethical products are recently adopted in their purchasing selection. (Dholakia et al. 2007) If a consumer mentally rehearses an implementation intention or plan that he or she has determined beforehand, that assists the consumer to protect his or her intentions from not wanted and conflicting influencing factors. (Gollwitzer 1999). That said, the gap of intention-behaviour in ethical consumerism can be positively influenced by implementation intentions/plans (Carrington, Neville & Whitwell 2010, 144).

### 3.2.2 Actual Behavioural Control

According to Carrington et al. (2010, 145) in the framework cognitive and environmental influencers act as barriers or facilitators so the consumer transfers the intentions to buy ethical into ethical buying behaviour. Behavioural control and situational context can be seen as moderating influencers to the intention-behaviour chain. The actual behavioural control a person has moderates the transformation of the purchase intentions into buying behaviour (Sheeran, Trafimow & Armitage 2003, 396). The gap between the perceived behavioural control and actual behavioural control is the main factor that supports the intention-behaviour gap. That said, the actual behavioural control affects positively to the intention-behaviour gap of ethical consumerism. (Carrington et al. 2010, 147)

### 3.2.3 Situational Context

When handling consumer behaviour, situations can be seen as “momentary encounters with those elements of the total environment which are available to the individual at a particular time”. There are two kinds of stimulus in the environment, that has impact on the consumer’s behaviour, and those are situation and object. The situation means a single point of time and space and the situational characteristics happen in the moment, for example promotion of price or that the consumer has her or his child in the shopping place. The situational factors play an important role in the situational context in the framework. The other kind of stimulus is the object. The object means the characteristics of the product or the environment that do not happen in the moment, for example an ongoing price or packaging graphics. (Belk 1975, 157-158). According to Carrigan et al. (2010, 148), the object carries a bigger role in the construct of perceived behavioural control and actual behavioural control.

Belk (1975, 159) presents five groups of situational characteristics, that are consistent with the situation that is currently defined:

1. Physical surroundings, which are the readily identified physical features that are in the marketing environment. For example, product placement, visibility, décor, sounds and accessibility of price comparison.
2. Social surroundings, which are for example other persons’ presence, their characteristics, their roles and their interpersonal interactions.

3. Temporal perspective, which means the dimension of situations that may differ from day to season of the year. For example, time since last purchase or time since or until meals or payday.
4. Task definition, which refers to the purpose of the individual in the situation. For instance, if a person is intending to select, buy or collect information about a purchase. It may also differ depending on the buyer's role, if he or she is the end-user or not.
5. Antecedent states, which means states that happen in the moment that the individuals have. For example, anxiety, hostility or excitation or momentary constraints, tiredness or illness.

According to Carrington et al. (2010, 148) the gap of intention-behaviour in ethical consumerism is positively and negatively affected by the situational context.

### **3.2.4 Behaviour**

According to the framework created by Carrington et al. (2010), the implementation intentions, actual behavioural control and situational context are a whole instead of three separate insights. All three have their role in the influence on behaviour. Consumers form an implementation intention or plan before the elements of actual behavioural control or situational context affect them. The actual behavioural control or situational context can happen at the same time or one before other. (Carrington et al. 2010, 148-149)

For example, an ethically minded consumer visits a cosmetic store and has intentions to buy a Cruelty-Free labelled body lotion at a price he or she can afford. When arriving at the store, the consumer finds out that the Cruelty-Free labelled body lotions are temporarily out of stock (situational context) and priced significantly higher than he or she thought (actual behavioural control). A sales assistant approaches the consumer in the store (situational context) and provides the consumer with details of a competing range of non-Cruelty-Free labelled body lotions (actual behavioural control), which are also on a reduced price temporarily (situational context). Even though the consumer has ethical intentions, he or she walks out of the store with a body lotion tested on animals in his or her bag, having found that the actual decision was not in his or her control and influenced by the situation that was in the store. (Carrington et al. 2010, 149)

## 4. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the used methodology in this research. This research is a qualitative research. That is because the nature of this research is to be exploratory. Qualitative research is based on meanings expressed through words and images (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2015, 568). Qualitative methods usually provide a wealth of detailed information from a smaller amount of people and situations compared to quantitative methods. That increases the depth of understanding of the cases and situations but reduces generalizability. (Patton 2002, 14). Qualitative approach supports the goal of this research, which is understanding the consumer behaviour in a specific product group rather than getting

In qualitative research, the researcher takes place in the real-world settings and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest. The researcher studies things in the settings that are natural and attempts to make sense of or interpret the studied phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 3). The phenomenon of interest unfolds by a natural way so that it has no predetermined course established by and for the researcher. This means that the setting is not controlled. The observations the researcher makes become from people that are for example interviewed with open-ended questions in places and under conditions in which they feel comfortable and familiar with. (Patton 2002, 39)

The analysis strategy of this research is holistic perspective. When qualitative research is made to understand a phenomenon or a program as a whole, it means that the description and interpretation of an individual's social environment is essential for overall understanding of what has been said in an interview. The holistic approach assumes that the researcher understands the whole as a complex system which is greater than the sum of its parts. (Patton 2002, 59)

The research onion formed by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, 108) is used below to present the made research choices of this study.

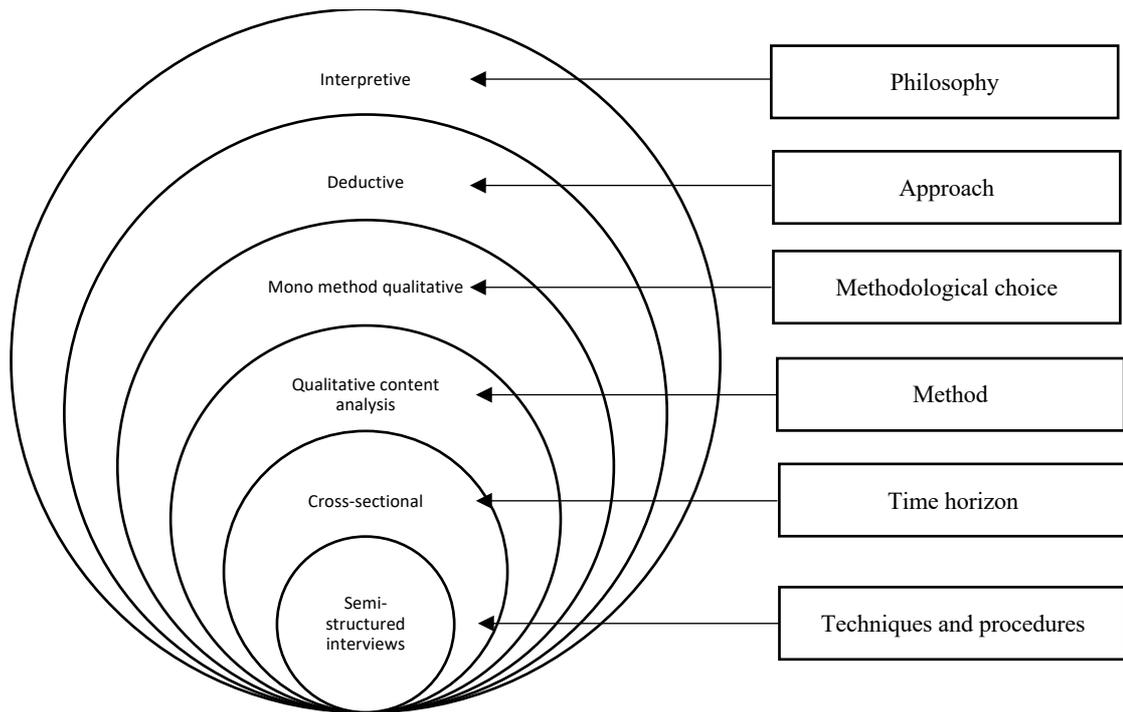


Figure 10. Research onion (Adapted from Saunders et al. 2009, 108)

The research philosophy refers to the way the researcher sees the world and creates new knowledge from the researcher's own point of view. This study is made with an interpretive philosophy, because it is suitable to use in qualitative research with a sample that is quite small. The purpose of a research that is interpretive, is to create a new deeper understanding and explanation of social worlds and contexts. The focus of an interpretivist researcher is in complexity, richness and multiple interpretations and making meaning. (Saunders et al. 2009, 140)

The approach of this study is deductive. In a deductive analysis, the data is analysed according to a framework that is already existing (Patton 2002, 453). This research is done deductively, since the purpose of this study is to understand, if the existing theory explains the behaviour of consumers when buying cosmetic products. According to Elo & Kyngäs (2007), if the researcher chooses to do a deductive analysis, the researcher needs to create a categorization matrix and code the collected data according to the categories. The matrix of this research is presented later in page 48 in figure 11.

The methodological choice of this research is mono-method qualitative. That means, that the data used in this research is collected in a single way. In this research the data collection way is interviews, which are done semi-structured, and corresponding qualitative analytical procedure, which is in this study qualitative content analysis. (Saunders et al. 2009, 168). The reason why the methodological choice is mono-method, is that in this research the interviews as a technique is seen as a good way of gathering information from the consumers. The semi-structured method was also chosen since it brings more conversation and possible additional thoughts in the interview situation rather than an interview with open ended questions.

The method of this study is qualitative content analysis. Qualitative analysis changes the data into findings. There is no existing formula for the transformation. There can be offered direction, but the final destination is unique for each inquirer. The data is analysed through the method of content analysis. Content analysis helps the researcher find the core meanings which are often called patterns or themes. The data is analysed deductively, which means that the data is analysed compared to an existing framework. Content analysis requires identifying, coding, categorizing, classifying and labelling the primary patterns of the data. (Patton 2002, 432, 453, 463). The method was chosen because the content analysis appeared to be a good way to get into the data through codification and dividing the data into smaller pieces so it could be analysed.

When the matrix for categorization is created, all the data will be reviewed for content and coded by the categories made (Polit & Beck 2004). In this research the data is themed into nine sub-categories. Those sub-categories are summarized into three generic categories and those three generic categories summarize to a one theme.

The time horizon of this study is cross-sectional. Cross-sectional means that the study is involved in a specific phenomenon in a specific time (Saunders et al. 2009, 200). The reason why the time horizon of this study is cross-sectional, is because the purpose of this research is to understand the consumer behaviour in cosmetics in a specific time, which was in winter 2018.

The techniques and procedures of this study are data collection and analysis. The data is collected by interviewing the chosen interviewees through purposeful sampling. In

purposeful sampling the persons to the interviews are chosen purposefully to permit inquiry into and understanding the phenomenon in depth. The purpose of purposeful sampling is to select information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study. Qualitative data captures and communicates someone else's experience of the world in his or her own words; qualitative data tells a story. The sampling was made by using criterion sampling, in which the logic is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance. (Patton 2002, 46, 47, 238)

The techniques and procedures used in this research is semi-structured interviews. If the interview is conducted in a semi-structured way, the framework is open, in which is possible to communicate in two ways, focused and conversational. The interviewer has a guideline which to follow but is able to ask further questions and ask the interviewee for details. (Keller & Conradin 2018). In this research the interviews are made semi-structured, because the purpose is to understand the consumer behaviour around a specific theme, so it is important to ask specific questions and in the other hand ask for details or ask the question in different words if the interviewee does not understand the question. This way the interview situation is not so limited, and the interviewee can freely express herself.

#### **4.1 Data Collection**

In order to answer the main research question and the sub-questions of this research, data needed to be collected. The method of data collecting was interviews because that was the most suitable method in order to get a full overview and understanding of the consumer's mind set, attitudes and habits when shopping make-up and cosmetics in general.

The interviewees for this research were gathered through a beauty related group in Facebook called "Nordic style & beauty" and the group has 61 000 members (Facebook 2019). There were 19 interviewees that showed their interest by answering to a post that explained that a master's thesis is being worked on and there is a need for interviewees. The interviewees needed to be women and they were informed that the study is about consumer behaviour in case of cosmetics such as makeup and skincare items. After interviewing 13 women, which were chosen in the order of messaging, there appeared to be saturation in the data, so the answers started to repeat themselves and no more new information appeared.

The interviews were performed in Finnish, so the interviewees had the most natural setting of answering the questions and the interview questions or answers would not be misunderstood because of a non-mother language. The interviews conducted in this research consisted of 39 questions. The interview questions were divided into three parts: questions related to consumer buying behaviour when buying cosmetic products, Cruelty-Free related questions and questions about ethical consumption in general. The interviewees did not know that there were different themed questions or how much questions there were in all. The one-on-one interviews lasted from 15 minutes to 25 minutes and they were all performed online, through Skype. In order to conduct the data analysis, the performed interviews needed to be transcribed into writing. The interviews were recorded and transcribed from the recordings into text with no editing, so the textual answers would be as original as possible. After transcribing the answers were translated in English. The transcript was over 50 pages long.

Interviewee	Age	City	How often buys cosmetics?
1	24	Helsinki	Monthly
2	26	Kauniainen	Monthly
3	24	Joutseno	Every two weeks
4	25	Porvoo	Monthly
5	23	Ristiina	Monthly
6	22	Tuusula	Monthly
7	28	Joensuu	Weekly
8	36	Lappeenranta	Monthly
9	20	Espoo	Every two weeks
10	35	Imatra	Monthly
11	24	Kerava	Every two weeks
12	25	Helsinki	Every two weeks
13	27	Helsinki	Monthly

Table 2. Interviewees

Above is the table presenting the interviewees. In the table the interviewees age and city are presented and also the answer of the first interview question which was *“how often do you*

*buy make-up or skin care items? ”. The interviewees’ answers were put in the table to present their buying habits next to the demographic factors.*

## **4.2 Validity and Reliability**

Reliability means replication and consistency. That means, that the research could be done again, and the researcher could achieve the same findings. Then, the research could be seen being reliable. Validity means that the used measures are appropriate, the analysis is accurate when looking at the results and the findings are generalisable. Reliability can be handled in two ways: internal reliability and external reliability. Internal reliability means making sure, that the research project is done consistently. The consistency can be tried to ensure by writing memos about coding the data, analysing and interpreting it. External reliability means whether the technique of data collection and methods of data analysis would give consistent findings if the research would be repeated by some other researcher. (Saunders et al. 2009, 202)

In this research the consistency of the study was ensured by different ways. First, the interviews were conducted in a small period of time, only a couple of weeks, so the setting remained the same each time. Another way of being consistent is that the interviews were transcribed into writing carefully by writing every word the interviewees said. The data was coded and categorized carefully and during a short period of time, so the researchers mind did not have time to change or affect differently in the categorization.

There are four different threats of reliability: participant error, participant bias, researcher error and researcher bias. The participant error means that the participants performance might be affected by any factor, for example if the participant is asked to complete a questionnaire before a coffee break may influence the way the participant responds, when compared to a timing that is not so sensitive. The second risk is the participant bias. That means any factor that might induce a false response. For example, if there is a risk of the interviewee being listened by a third party, she might give a false answer. The third risk of reliability is researcher error. That means, any factor that influences the researcher’s analysis. For example, that might be that the researcher is not fully prepared or focused in the interviews or the researched might understand the sayings of the interviewees wrong. The fourth and final risk is the researcher bias. This means for example that the researcher

might give her own subjective view a role to get in the way of the fair recording and analysing the interviewees responses. (Saunders et al. 2009, 203)

The risk of participant error was tried to keep as small as possible, by giving the interviewees the option to choose the time for the interview. Some interviews were then conducted during the day and some of them were during the evening. The interviews were also kept quite short, maximum of 25 minutes, so the interviewees would not get distracted or bored. With few of the interviewees was an issue with them understanding the question a bit wrong, so the question was then asked again and explained a bit more. One example of this was the question is *“how they think the advertising of companies influences their decision-making process?”*. The term “decision-making process” with its steps needed to be explained so the interviewees could answer to the question of in which phase the advertising influences.

The risk of participant bias was tried to keep in minimum by informing the interviewees that their answers would be kept anonymous and nobody else besides the researcher would hear the interview recordings. The interviewees were also told, that there are no right or wrong answers, since the purpose is to study the actual thoughts and behaviour of regular women. With that, the possibility of the interviewees saying what they think the researcher would probably want to hear was kept in minimum.

In this research the risk of researcher error was tried to keep in minimum by conducting each interview carefully and focused. If the researcher did not understand something the interviewees answered, they were asked to explain in other words or to specify their answers. In this research the researcher tried to be as neutral as possible, giving the interviewees their space to answer.

## 5. FINDINGS

The findings of the research are presented based on the categorization presented below. The transcripts of the interviews were coded, and they were categorized by using the theory used earlier in creating the categories. The data was divided into these nine sub-categories, three generic categories which together summarize into one main category.

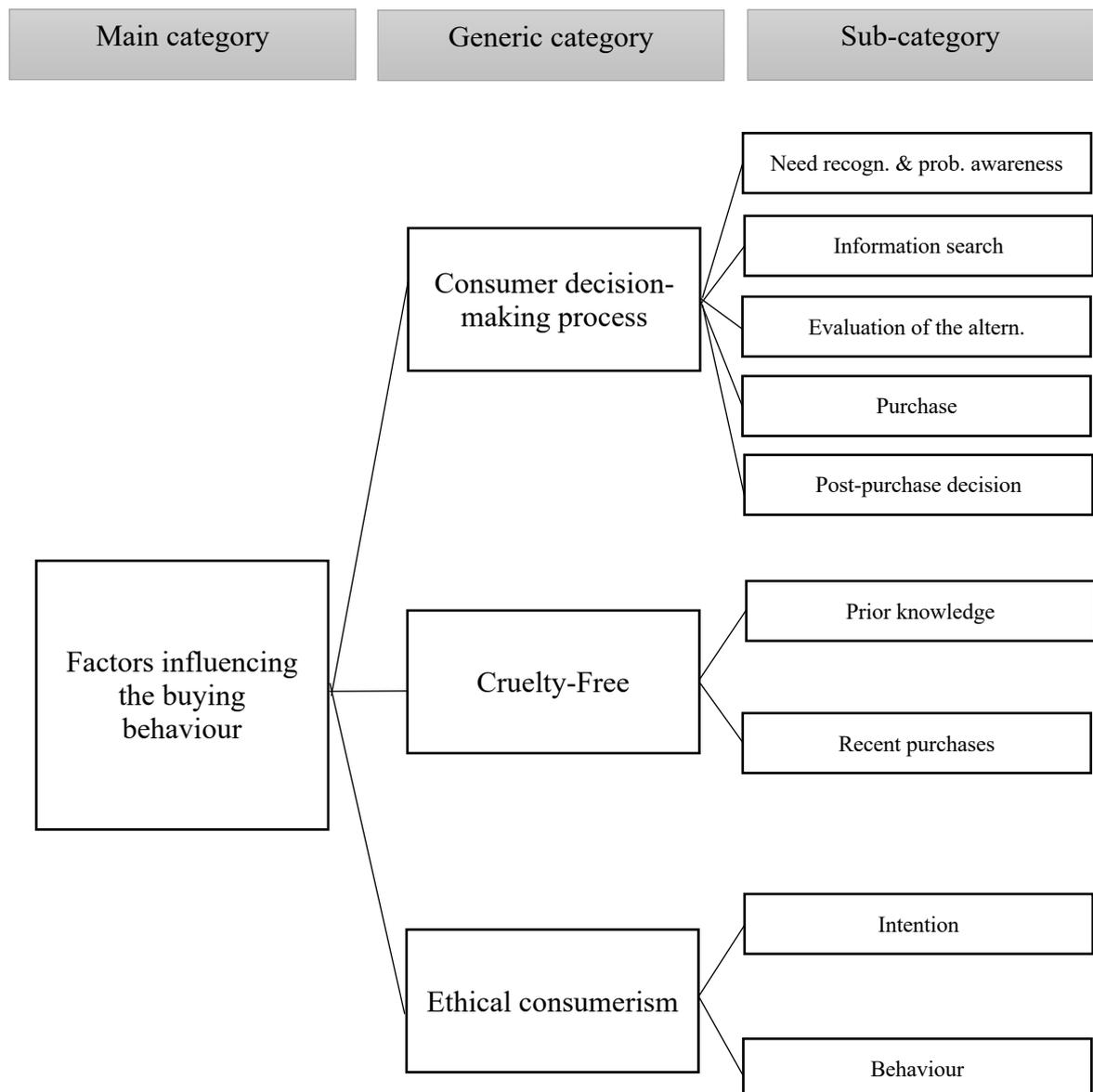


Figure 11. The data structure of the research

As presented above, the factors influencing the buying behaviour is the main category, and consumer decision-making process, Cruelty-Free and ethical consumerism are the generic categories. Next, the interviewees answers are presented through this categorization.

## **5.1 Consumer decision-making process**

In this consumer decision-making category is divided into five sub-categories: need recognition & problem awareness, information search, evaluation of the alternatives, purchase and post-purchase decision.

### **Need recognition & problem awareness**

The interviewees can get ideas to buy new cosmetics from various sources. When the interviewees were asked from where they get their ideas to buy new cosmetics, interviewee 1 answered *“Well... I do not really know, I feel like I have been using a long time the same products, for example specific highlighter and foundation and those are the basic products, so I do not think I get any triggers to buy those, for example I have not seen advertisements from those products in ages, I just use them. Maybe my friends give me ideas? Or social media? I do not know. But I do get triggers when I go to store and see beautiful setting in the make-up section of the store”*. Interviewees 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 mentioned all that their first source of inspiration is the recommendations of their friends.

Interviewee 3 said *“From friends and online. I mean a lot from social media, for example Instagram, even though I do not follow anyone specific, but I get commercials and posts so through those I get ideas”*. Interviewees 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 also mentioned blogs and nowadays even more than blogs social media and in addition interviewees 6, 9, 12 and 13 pointed out YouTube videos. Interviewees 7 and 10 mentioned also that the sales persons give her inspiration to buy new products that they recommend. So, it seems, that most of the interviewees get ideas to buy new cosmetics from friend’s or someone else’s recommendations.

Next, the interviewees were asked that when they see an advertisement of a new product, which factor in the advertisement gets their attention. Interviewee 1 said *“I’m quite visual, the products packaging gets my attention, I find it very important, the price is not so*

*important to me, I think everything else is*". When in comparison, interviewee 2 said *"At first I think what the product is for and then the price, and why it would be better than something already existing"*. Interviewees 6, 8, 11, 12 and 13 had similar thoughts, but interviewee 12 mentioned also the brand as being an important factor to which she pays attention to. Interviewees 3 and 9 said the most important factor for them is the brand and if the package is beautiful or not. Interviewee 9 added that she does not even look properly at the advertisement if she does not prefer the brand.

Advertisements can also create scepticism against the brand. Interviewees 4 and 5 both pointed out that mascara advertisements are not trustworthy since the models have eyelash extensions instead of the mascara being advertised. Interviewee 5 added *"I also pay attention to what feeling the advertisement gives me and how the product looks like, if it would suit me"*. Interviewee 7 said *"Well I pay attention to the visual effects, colours and so on, and I do not pay attention to the informative content, I might read about it afterwards, but rarely I remember the informative content from advertisements"*. Interviewee 10 said she pays attention to the ingredients that are mentioned in the advertisement.

Next, the interviewees were asked how they think the advertising of companies influences their decision-making process. All of the interviewees did not quite understand the word "decision-making process" so they were informed which steps the process has, so they could point out the step in which they think the advertising influences. Interviewee 1 said that the advertising through social media influences her by *"I feel like the recommendations that bloggers make or that the advertisement has customer's reviews on it, those are influencing me. The advertisement in traditional media does not get my attention easily, but advertisements can help that the product gets on my list of comparison, so it gets my attention but the final decision I make based on the reviews I read online"*. Interviewee 9 had similar thoughts, that the other people's reviews or videos influence her, they make her get needs, more than traditional advertisements do from companies.

Interviewee 2 thought *"It has influence but not a lot, since I buy so much from the point of view that I have a need and then I think which product might be good for me, well if the advertised product fits my need, for example if I'm looking for a moisturizer for dry skin and then I see an advertisement about that kind of product, I might buy it, but if I have a favourite mascara, I will not change my mind anymore, then the advertising does not have an*

*influence. The advertising has influence maybe most when I compare options, but it does not get me needing something*". Interviewee 10 had same thoughts, and she added that she does not want to buy bad products for her, so she would not buy anything by seeing only the advertisement.

In comparison, interviewee 3 said *"Well actually they influence quite a lot, because of the advertisement that is not so straight forward, for example when I see ads in social media accounts, I feel like the influence is big. If I get advertisements home like magazines about sales, those do not influence me that much."* When she was asked to specify the stage in which she is influenced, she answered *"I feel like they get me needing something, so the first stage and if I already have a need, I pay more attention to the advertisements, and with some products I'm willing to try new ones, for example with mascaras."* Interviewee 11 had similar thought and she said also that the influence happens when she evaluates the alternatives. Interviewee 13 also thought the advertisements through influencers influence her, and she gets needs from them, but it does not mean she will buy it.

Interviewee 4 thought the image of the company influences more than the advertisement, but she thought the advertising might get into her subconsciously through blogposts, and she thought the influence is small. When she was asked to specify the stage, she answered *"it influences more when I'm about to choose which product to buy"*. Interviewee 5 had the same thoughts as interviewee 4, so she thinks the influence is in the evaluating of the alternatives phase. She also said that if a product is familiar to her because of an advertisement, she might go to the store more likely to look at the product.

Interviewee 6 said she sticks to the products she already has and likes, but if she sees an advertisement of an interesting product it might get her attention and she might do a research on the product. When she was asked to specify the stage in which the influence happens, she answered *"a traditional commercial has influence in the beginning of the process, so need recognition, but YouTube videos that are informative about the product, might influence the evaluating of the alternatives phase."* Interviewee 7 said some advertisements affect influence positively and some negatively and she pointed out mascara commercials in which the model has eyelash extensions, that those have negative influence on the purchasing. She added that if commercials are natural and beautiful, that raises her interest towards the products. When she was asked to specify the stage in which she is influenced, she said *"the*

*advertisement gets my attention when I have a need, or I may be using a product and if I see an advertisement of a new product I might think that might be even more moisturizing, that might be a nice one to test out”.*

Interviewee 8 said that the influence is not so big, the last time she bought a mascara was because of an advertisement and she was curious by its promises. She also said, that if the product is something that she actually needs, like a foundation or powder, she relies on her own experiences and the information that comes from the sales persons. Interviewee 12 said *“well if I see advertisements about new products from my favourite brand, I always tend to want them... I know it’s bad, but I get interested. It depends on products, for example, a new eyeshadow launch is much more interesting than an ad about a bronzer or powder. I feel like the advertisements get me needing the products.”*

The next question was *“how do you think blogs and magazines influence your buying behaviour?”*. Interviewees had various answers about the influence. Interviewee 1 said those give her needs and they affect in the beginning of the buying process, but she would not ever do a decision based on a blog post or an article in a magazine. Interviewee 2 said *“magazines do influence me, I follow only food blogs, but magazines get me thinking, for example that I do not need everything new, this can also be recycled and so on. So, I could say magazines rather gets me buying less products instead of buying more, but if I see some sale advertisements that might get me going to the store”*. Interviewees 3 and 8 said the influence is strong, and they get their ideas to buy from blogs and magazines. Interviewee 4 said she takes recommendations from those channels but do not think they raise needs for her.

Interviewee 5 said *“yes it influences, and if there would be more information or advertisements about these ethical and green products, maybe I would buy more of them. If I see basic products that does not so much interest, I just make my own decision, but if there would be more of these ethical issues and factors, I could pay attention more on those products at the store.”* Interviewee 6 and 9 said they do not read so much magazines but blogs a bit, and they thought they influence, and they get new ideas from there and there can be very profound reviews about the products. Interviewee 7 said *“yes I can get some ideas, but I rarely decide while reading something that hey I’ll buy that product. Usually I need to hear user experiences, or I want to get a sample before I buy it”*. Interviewee 10 said she likes to read about new products on magazines and sometimes she goes to the store and look

at them in real life, but only when she is actually already needing a new product. She also said, that magazines are nowadays full of articles about getting rid of things and ethical consumption, so she has started to think more about what she buys.

Interviewee 11 said *“I do not really read magazines, but blogs do influence me so that I become aware of products I would not otherwise know about. But I do not think I would buy anything based only on a blog post, unless it’s something harmless, like laundry detergent”*. Interviewee 12 said *“I get ideas and inspiration through blogs to some products or things that you can get from Finland, because in YouTube all the influencers I’m following are Americans so the products they recommend are on shelves there but not here”*. Interviewee 13 said she does not think she is so much influenced, she said she reads magazines a bit but she feels like the products are there only because the companies have sent the products to the magazine’s writers, so she does not think them as impartial reviews, but she likes to read user experiences through blogs.

Next the interviewees were asked if they follow some cosmetic or beauty related influencers in social media and if yes, who and why. Interviewees 1, 2 and 10 said that they do not follow. Interviewee 3 said *“I do not follow anyone particular, I look at random videos here and there, I can not name anyone. I look tutorials, advice and for example if I want perfect eyebrows, I google that and watch the videos that come out”*. Interviewee 4 said she follows some influencers but none of them make beauty related content. Interviewee 5 said she follows an influencer that posts fitness related content, but she also has beauty recommendations *“because I like content that varies a lot, I think she gives realistic reviews, she does not have only luxury brands, they vary a lot, like “I tried this and this and I like it”*.

Interviewee 6 said she follows only her friends in Instagram but in YouTube she follows some influencers, but they are more lifestyle content creators than beauty-related. Interviewee 7 said *“I do not follow but I do not think you can miss those persons, because you get Facebook advertisements and in Instagram without following them. I read blogs and I read those like so that I google a product and read the blog posts that handle the topic, so they vary a lot”*.

Interviewees 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 follow some beauty related channels in YouTube. Interviewee 8 said *“I like the tips and reviews she gives, and I get new ideas for make-up for*

*example to parties*". Interviewee 12 had similar thoughts with interviewee 8. Interviewee 9 said *"I follow a couple of channels because I like their humour and videos, and one of them has similar skin than I do, so I believe in her recommendations"*. Interviewee 11 had similar thoughts, but she added that *"it is nice to see reviews or testing of products that are not available in Finland, so it's easier to order them online if I have seen videos about them"*. Interviewee 13 said she follows some influencers but she rarely watches their videos.

After this the interviewees were asked if they take recommendations to buy or bans from these influencers they follow. Interviewees 1, 2 and 11 did not answer since they did not follow anyone. Interviewee 3 and 12 said they take recommendations to buy but they do not take bans from them. Interviewee 4 said *"yes, if they have good reasons and if something looks good"*. Interviewee 5 said *"yes, it influences, for example I once bought this foundation that she recommended to me and it has worked well on me, so I think I rely more on her recommendations now, so I might take some new ones as well"*. Interviewee 9 had same thoughts. Interviewee 6 had same thought than interviewee 5 about the positive recommendations, but she talked about the bans as well *"well if someone says that 'do not buy this product' or 'buy this product', it would not be the only thing influencing my decision, but it might have some role in it"*.

Interviewee 8 said she does not remember that the influencers she follows have ever been saying something against buying from a brand, but recommendations she takes and likes to go to store and see the products in real life, but everything is not sold in Finland. Interviewee 7 said *"yes I take recommendations by some level. But now when I think more, I follow this influencer in Instagram and she is a brand ambassador for a make-up brand, but it does not raise my interest at all towards the products, especially if she talks very well about the products, I question a lot why she talks so well about them and so on"*. Interviewee 13 said she takes in some amount, but she tries to think hard does she really need the product or not.

### **Information search**

Next the interviewees were asked how important the packaging of the product is for them and do they study it thoroughly when they are buying a product. Interviewee 1 said *"I do not really study the package when I'm buying since I have 99% of the time already googled the products, I have seen it already online"*. Interviewee 2 said she does not study it that

much, but she does not like if the package is wrapped in a lot of plastic. Interviewee 8 had similar thoughts that she does not study the product's package and the most important thing for her is that it covers the product and she can get it home safely.

Interviewee 3 said she thinks the package is important, since she wants to have a luxurious feeling when she does make-up since *"I like that I can use something that makes my day feel more special and nicer, and I want to get a good feeling when I take the product in my hand"*. When she was asked to specify if she studies the information in the packaging she answered *"no, only how it looks, I have never read the small texts on product, I have no idea what a lipstick for example has in it, no idea"*. Interviewee 12 thought also that if the packaging is beautiful, it gets her attention. Interviewee 9 said she orders so much online, that she does not get to see the packaging so well.

Interviewee 4 and 6 said the packaging is important to them and they like it to be beautiful. Interviewee 10 and 13 said they read the ingredients list and interviewee 10 looks also how long the product stays good. Interviewee 5 said *"I do not really study it, it is nice that the product is good-looking and gets my attention, but I do not pay attention more on the packaging."* Interviewee 11 had similar thoughts. Interviewee 7 said she pays attention to it but it does not have influence in the buying, so she does not leave the product in the store because of the packaging.

Next the interviewees were asked when they compare products, do they compare the packages or their information and if yes, which information. Interviewees 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11 and 12 said they do not compare the information. Interviewee 1 added that when buying food, she compares, but when buying cosmetics, she does not. Interviewee 2 said *"if I'm buying by myself, I read the packages and compare the descriptions of the products"*. Interviewee 6 said she has been using same products for years but when she started using those, she carefully compared the ingredients of the skin care products, and she compared them to a list of good ingredients on the skin and based on those results she made the decision. Interviewee 10 also said she compares the ingredients lists. Interviewees 7 and 13 said they compare the features of the products.

### **Evaluation of the alternatives**

Next the interviewees were asked if they have any specific brands they prefer to buy over some other brands. Interviewee 1 said *"Yes I prefer some brands, I can say I'm quite loyal to some brands that I have used a long time and I know they work. When buying cosmetics I rarely buy impulsively, I more tend to use the brands and products I have used a long time already"* and interviewee 2 had quite similar thoughts but she mentioned buying new products: *"Well I have some brands that I have noted to be good before so I may buy those but if I'm buying a completely new product, for example I recently bought my first lipstick, so in that case I do not have any preferences which brand to buy"*.

Other interviewees, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 mentioned some brands by name that they prefer to buy. Interviewees 9 and 11 also said they like to try new brands. Interviewees 4, 6 and 13 mentioned that they have some products that they want to buy from specific brands. Interviewee 7 said that she prefers to stick to one brand in skin care, so the whole range of products are from the same brand, but she was open to any brand, even though she had some specific brands that she has used and liked before.

Next the interviewees were asked where they compare products when they are in the comparing stage of buying process. Interviewee 1 said *"Definitely online, I google everything, and I think Sephora's web store is very good, there are a lot of reviews and there are basically every product I use so I always look the reviews there and from some other web sites also"*. Interviewee 11 also mentioned that she compares products by reading the customers' reviews online and asks her friends for recommendations. Interviewee 4 said *"I google everything, and if I find some cosmetic blogs I read them, and sometimes I ask my sister or friends for experiences if they have some"*.

In comparison, interviewee 2 said *"Usually I do the comparing in the store and based on what I have been told about the product buy the sales person. Sometimes I ask more profound questions about the product and for example if I go to the pharmacy to buy a moisturizer, I might tell the sales person that I have dry skin and then I remember that the moisturizer needs to go well with make-up on top of it and so on"*. Interviewees 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 also said they go to the store to do the comparing. Interviewee 5 said that if she does not go to

the store to do the comparing, she googles the product and watches reviews from YouTube about the specific product she is interested in. Interviewees 9, 12 and 13 also watch YouTube videos when they compare. Interviewee 12 said she rarely compares products, since she gets interested in one product at a time and wants to get to know that better.

Interviewee 6 said that she compares online and in store, but if she is buying a skin care product, she reads the ingredient lists online and compares the information to a list “ingredients that you want to avoid in skin care items” and makes her purchase decision based on that information. Interviewee 7 said *“I think at first I read and then I go to the store and test the product. I talk to the sales persons and then I make my decision”*. Interviewee 7 was asked to specify from where she reads and she answered *“from different blogs, sometimes I have read from magazines, but I start to think a lot of why those specific products have been chosen in the magazine... so I think blogs are more, well, bloggers get a lot of products from brands in intention to advertise them, but I think I trust on blogs more, and if I read from multiple websites it feels more reliable.”*

## **Purchase**

The interviewees were asked how often they buy make-up or cosmetics in general, and the answers are presented in the table on page 45 and their answers were from buying weekly to buying monthly.

Next the interviewees were asked from where they buy their make-up and/or skin care items the most often. Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 mentioned one or two specific stores and interviewee 3 in addition to buying from store mentioned that she buys a small number of cosmetics online. Interviewee 6 listed four different stores and “online” as a one source of buying. Interviewee 9 said she buys online and abroad from trips. Interviewees 2 and 4 both said they buy skincare items from the pharmacy. Interviewees 12 and 13 mentioned that they buy mainly from online stores.

Next the interviewees were asked if they buy cosmetics when they need it or when they want it. All interviewees answered that they buy when they have a need, but interviewees 5, 6, 10, 11 and 13 said that they buy sometimes when they want if they have a party or a special event coming in the future. Interviewee 6 added also *“I do not know if anyone can say they*

*buy make-up only for a need, since people actually do not need make-up*". Interviewee 3 said that *"I buy both, most of the time for a need, but I also tend to reward myself with buying make-up or cosmetics products"*. Interviewee 8 said she buys both, in need and when wanting, and interviewee 9 had similar thoughts but she added *"more when I want, that's why I have a lot of makeup"*. Interviewee 12 said that she has so much cosmetics that it can not be said to be in need, she thinks of it more as a hobby.

Next the interviewees were asked what kind of buyer they consider themselves: do they consider their purchases with time, do they compare options a lot or do they buy impulsively. Interviewees 1 and 4 said that they do a lot of comparing when in comparison interviewee 3 said she buys a lot impulsively. Interviewee 2 said *"I think I'll buy easily the product the sales person recommends at the store, I tell the sales person what I'm looking for and he/she can give me a couple of options and I can choose from those the one that fits my budget"*. Interviewee 8 had similar thoughts and she said she buys impulsively when sales persons recommend something for her.

Interviewee 5 thought that the situation differs by the product she is about to buy: if she sees a nice looking eyeshadow palette she might buy it impulsively and does not compare for example prices online, but if she is about to buy a skin care item, she thinks more carefully which product fits best with her own skin and what she has used before. Interviewee 9 had similar thoughts on that it differs depending on the product category she is about to buy.

Interviewee 6 said *"I compare with time and investigate, especially all moisturizers, I'm very precise with those, I do not buy those without doing my research. I have been using same products a long time and I have carefully studied the product's ingredients. In make-up I'm not so careful, but I'm not ready to buy an expensive product without testing it or hearing a lot of good things about it."* Interviewee 10 had similar thoughts on using the same products over and over, and she does not do much impulsive buying. Interviewee 7 said that she compares but if she sees a product that she does not have on sale that is from the same product range she already owns, she might buy impulsively.

Interviewee 11 said *"if I buy cheaper products, I do not think so much of it, but if I buy more expensive ones, I do my research"*. Interviewee 12 said she buys a lot impulsively and *"if I get interested in a product, I usually buy it immediately, I need to have it right now to*

*myself*". Interviewee 13 said she takes more time with the purchases, she really thinks does she need the product or does she already have something quite similar.

Next the interviewees were asked to tell about the most important factors in a product when they are buying a product. Interviewee 3 said *"Quality, so the product lasts. And in overall the price vs quality, but so that the product is not too expensive compared to its quality or purpose. For example, if the product is a basic eyeliner, I'm not willing to pay so much from it, in maximum 20 euros, but if the product is an eyeshadow palette which is for a specific purpose and I know it's good and lasts long and it needs to last long I'm willing to pay more from that product"*. Interviewee 9 had similar thoughts. Interviewees 1, 4, 5, 6, 11 and 12 mentioned also the quality as the most important factor. Interviewee 2 said *"the most important factor is that the product does its purpose what I'm looking for and after that the price"* and interviewee 4 had quite similar thought with saying *"that if I buy a concealer it covers dark under eyes and that a powder takes away the shine, so that the product does what it claims to do"* but in addition interviewee 4 mentioned that she prefers if the brand is Finnish.

Interviewee 5 said *"the factor that it fits me, colours and quality and price, those need to be in balance, but the price is not the most important factor, however I'm not willing to put so much money into make-up"*. Interviewee 6 said that the quality is most important, but she added *"I'm not so interested in the price, but I'm not willing to buy luxury cosmetics, but basically I'm more focusing on the quality and in overall if the product is something I need and if it has gotten good reviews"*.

Interviewee 7 had a little different angle in answering the question with *"In skin care, at one time a preferred natural ingredients in cosmetics and now I have bought a specific brand because most of their products are made from natural ingredients. Hard to say, but I want to use products that have the minimum amount of ingredients that irritate the skin"*. Interviewee 10 had similar thoughts that the most important factors are ingredients, that they do not irritate her skin, and also the quality. Interviewee 8 said she thinks most of the quality and she prefers the product being ethical, but she does not always check that information out. Interviewee 13 said *"the most important factor is that I actually need it, so I do not have a similar product at home, and then the quality and the price, and also in skin care products that it does not have comedogenic ingredients in it"*.

The next question the interviewees were asked was “tell about your purchasing behaviour five years ago versus now, has something changed?”. Interviewee 1 told “*Yes, five years ago I bought a lot of impulse purchases, in cosmetics and other products as well, and I used a lot of money in cosmetics and if I saw an advertisement or a blogpost of a product I just went and bought it. Nowadays I’m much more for the quality and I do not want to spend my money so much in things just to try. Nowadays I see the trying being more of a risk, especially in cosmetics, which is quite sad because if I think of Fair Trade products and ethical production in food, the food is much cheaper and you do not need to use that product for the next months like cosmetic products, so I think in food the ethical buying is easier to do, because when you buy cosmetics you can not try the product if it’s good without buying it home*”.

Interviewee 2 said her purchasing behaviour has changed and nowadays she thinks more of the organic, Fair Trade and ethical factors when she buys food. She also says that she buys rather one good product, than five bad ones, but that has been always like that. Interviewee 3 told she was a student five years ago and recently moved to a new apartment, so she bought always the cheapest products and she did not think where the products came from, she only wanted to get food in her fridge. Nowadays she looks more into the quality and tries to buy products produced nearby.

Interviewee 4 said “*Five years ago I would have probably bought everything I ever wanted if I only had money, and probably left half of the products unused. Nowadays I think with every purchase ‘do I really need this’ and I try to avoid buying from cheap clothing stores. I buy more organic food products, before I did not even think about it. I also buy less meat and if I see a believable ethical point in one product, I tend to buy it, but usually if the ethical point is not so believable, I question it and think it being only advertising*”. Interviewees 5, 11 and 13 had the same thoughts, that before they did not quite think in every purchase if they really needed them. Interviewee 11 added that she preferred amount versus quality, for example, the more clothes the better. They also said, that nowadays they think more of the factors behind the product. Interviewee 13 added “*I also try think for example at Christmas, could I buy something that is not a physical product, so the talk about climate change has influenced me, but there’s a lot in my own buying that could be made better, but it has changed towards something better than before*”.

Interviewee 6 said that five years ago she was under-aged and lived with her parents, so she did not buy her own food for example. She said that in those times she bought a lot of make-up from cheaper brands and she did not do any research of the products. Nowadays she thinks more that will the product be really used when she is about to buy a it. Interviewee 9 had similar thoughts of her being under-aged and she did not have much own money. Then she did not know anything about ethical production or consumption and nowadays she knows about those, but does not do choices that support them. Interviewee 7 said *“well nowadays I buy more organic food and less meat and animal related products, and I also think more of what I buy. Earlier I used to buy make-up from these sales-boxes in stores but nowadays I try to think that ‘if this was regular-priced, would I buy it’ and I want to buy things only when I need them.”*

Interviewee 8 said that it has changed since she has started following fashion blogs and she has more money than five years ago. Then she liked to save money for traveling, but now she buys more clothes since she makes more money and gets to travel also. Nowadays she prefers to buy better quality and better overall, but if she has not got so much money she buys cheaper products and does not pay attention to the ethical factors, but if she had more money, she would like to buy products made from sustainable materials and that are ethically manufactured.

Interviewee 10 said *“five years ago I feel like this world was a completely different place, ethical production or consumption was not a topic like nowadays and I bought a lot of new clothes without thinking so much of their sustainability. Nowadays I try to buy sustainable and clothes and products that may have multiple purpose. In cosmetics my behaviour has been quite same, I have not ever been crazy about it, I’m interested, but still my buying is quite normal”*.

Interviewee 12 said *“well five years ago I did not like make-up as much as now, so I have just recently bought so much and I still buy a lot. My knowledge about the issues about the buying has been growing and I try to buy less new clothes, only when I need them, because five years ago I bought so much and I had a lot of clothes in my closet that had their price tags on for a while, and it is a massive work to get rid of those. So I think my behaviour has changed, even though I still buy much makeup but I consider it being my hobby”*.

## Post-purchase behaviour

Next the interviewees were asked to tell a story about the last time they purchased cosmetic: where they got the idea and how they ended up buying that specific product. Interviewee 1 told *“Well this was an impulsive purchase even though I said I do not do them, well it was Black Friday, so cosmetic products were 30% on sale in this department store, so I bought a bunch of cosmetics, the one that comes first in mind is a setting spray. I have used the same setting spray for years and in the store, I walked across this Christmas tree with small products hanging from it and I saw a travel size of this setting spray I use. I thought that it would be useful to have a mini size of the same product that I have in regular size and I like the product, so I decided to buy it”*. Interviewee 9 mentioned also Black Friday, *“well it was Black Friday and I bought products I wanted to buy, so I planned to buy them when the sales start. I bought also some impulse purchases. I bought one foundation, one primer and two lipsticks”*.

Interviewee 2 told that *“I dress in a quite simple way, so I thought a bright lipstick might be a good accessory for me, so I went to a cosmetics store and said to the sales person that I want to buy a bright red lipstick and she showed me a couple of options and we tried them on me and I picked the one she recommended. If the sales person recommends something to me it really has influence, since if I was there by myself doing the decision, I would have bought only the lipstick, but the sales person said that it is good to have a lipliner with the lipstick, so I bought that as well.”*

Interviewee 3 said *“Last time I bought make-up was before a pre-Christmas party, I bought an eyeliner. I had a need and I had used the same eyeliner earlier, so it was sort of a I will just go to the store and get the product. Often, I go to look in stores for new products even though I do not have a need and then I sometimes get a need and if I see for example products on sale from my favourite brand I might think that what if I had a need and what could I need and then I buy. I also get coupons from buying with a certain price and then I use those sale coupons into other new products.”*

Interviewee 4 told *“The last time I bought cosmetics was in Estonia and all the products I bought, which were loose setting powder, primer and a small contour kit, were like half needed and half wanted, they were all products that I had not tried before and they were a*

*bit more expensive than I usually buy, but I wanted to get the feeling of buying something more luxurious”.*

Interviewee 5 said *“The last time I bought make-up was because I was traveling and forgot my make-up bag at home, so I had to buy everything, so I went to the store and asked if they had those basic things I needed and there was this new eyebrow product or a gel, and I thought it looked good and I asked for help from the sales person and she said the colour fits me well and it seemed that the colour was long-lasting and easy to apply. The other products I bought was the same foundation I already had, but the eyebrow product and mascara were new products which I wanted to test out, they were on sale, so I bought them, so I would not spend so much money.”*

Interviewee 6 said that she had ran out of mascara and she bought the same she had before and said that that kind of buying is very typical to her. Interviewee 10 had a similar story with her foundation ending and she needed a new one, so she bought the same she already had. Interviewee 7 told that winter was coming, and she needed a new skin care range so she talked with her friends how to moisturize skin during winter and based on those recommendations she went to the store and bought the products. Interviewee 8 said she had a recommendation from her friend about a webstore, so she went to see it online and bought the same skin care products she already had, because they were cheaper there, and she also bought as an impulse purchase a gel for eyebrows, because it was so cheap.

Interviewee 11 told *“I bought a bronzer and eyeshadow palette online. I have not purchased anything before from those brands, but I heard good things about those products in YouTube, so I decided to order them”*. Interviewee 12 bought also online *“I saw on Instagram that this brand had free shipping worldwide, so I went to see what new products they might have and I decided to order some lipsticks and an eyeshadow palette”*. Interviewee 13 told she had an idea of buying a new nail polish since the previous ones had expired, and she wanted to get a red nail polish for Christmas. She went to the store and was planning to buy from a premium brand but did end up with a cheaper brand’s nail polish, since she could buy two from the cheaper brand with the same price, she could have bought one from the premium brand. She said the brand did not quite matter, only the price of the nail polish.

Next the interviewees were asked if they were satisfied with the products they had purchased. Each interviewee was satisfied with the purchases they had made. Interviewees 1, 3, 5, 6 and 10 were satisfied because they had previous positive experiences before since they had already used the product earlier. Interviewees 2, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12 were satisfied even though the products were new to them. Interviewee 3 said that she was happy with the eyeliner since she had already had it previously but added *“I was sort of disappointed, that the sales person did not recommend me another option, since it would have been nice to try something new, but they said that this eyeliner is the best”*.

Interviewee 7 said that *“I was happy, I thought it was clever to do an investigation beforehand, and actually I did not buy the whole range of product at once, at first I bought some of them and when I was satisfied with them, I bought the rest of the products in that range”*. Interviewee 11 added that *“my purchases usually end up well, since I watch the videos in YouTube so there should not be any surprises, of course with for example colours can be different, but the performance of the product does not usually disappoint me”*. Interviewees 9 and 13 were a bit confused with the products, interviewee 9 said *“the primer smells a bit funny, but it’s ok and other purchases were really good”* and interviewee 13 said *“well I’m sort of happy, but this nail polish has been leaving my nails really quickly, I do not know if it’s my own fault or is the nail polish just a poor product”*.

Next the interviewees were asked if they recommend products they have bought, and all of them said yes, if the product is good. Interviewee 5 said *“Yes I tend to tell my friends like hey I bought this, and it is super good if we talk about which products I use in my make-up routine”*. Interviewee 6 said she recommends good products but also that if she finds a very bad product, she tells about that as well to her friends. Interviewee 9 had similar thoughts and she added *“I recommend to my mother a lot”*. Interviewee 10 and 13 said they like to recommend products since like that they can help other people to find good products for their skin issues for example. Interviewee 13 added *“I have found so good products that have made my skin so much better, so I really like telling about those products in different channels: social media and in real life”*.

To conclude this consumer decision-making process category, it can be said that the consumers get ideas to buy new products from recommendations, that can be from various sources. Also, it appears that the interviewees take recommendations seriously from

influencers in social media. When the interviewees see advertisements from cosmetic brands, they tend to pay attention to the visual factors or the brand itself, rather than the ingredients or possible ecolabels the products have. Advertisements raise also scepticism against the products, for example mascara commercials. When thinking about the consumer decision-making process and in which step the companies' advertising influences them, the interviewees had various answers. Some of them thought, that the advertising makes them have needs and some of them thought they already have a need and then they pay attention to the advertisements.

The influence of social media as a source of advertisement was seen as more effective than traditional advertisements. When talking about social media, most of the interviewees were not following any beauty related influencers, however they read and look their content sometimes when looking information about a product but do not follow regularly. The packaging of products is seen more as an important factor on the visual side, but only few interviewees read the ingredient lists on the packaging. When talking about the comparison of products, the interviewees do compare, not very much but some of them do, but more the features than the information about the factors of the production process, such as ecolabels.

The interviewees have preferences when buying make up or skin care and they rely on the brands they like and have found good in the past. Some of the interviewees compare the products when buying in store and others online. Most of the interviewees had a specific store in which they shop. The interviewees shop sometimes impulsively and sometimes they compare options and take time, it seems to depend on the product the consumers are about to buy. The interviewees' purchasing behaviour has changed very much in five years and all of them said they try to think more of their buying nowadays than they did before. The interviewees post-purchase behaviour appears to be quite similar: they recommend products to others if they like the products and if the products seem to be bad, they tell about those as well.

## 5.2 Cruelty-Free label

This Cruelty-Free category is divided into two sub-categories: prior knowledge and recent purchases.

### Prior knowledge

The interviewees were asked if they knew what Cruelty-Free label means. Interviewees 1, 2, 3 and 6 were not 100% sure but guessed that it means that the product is not tested on animals. Interviewees 4,5, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 13 were sure about the meaning, that the products that are labelled Cruelty-Free, are not tested on animals. Interviewee 9 said *“it has the bunny logo”*. Interviewees 8 and 10 did not know the meaning and did not have guesses.

Next the interviewees were asked what kind of image they have on Cruelty-Free products and do they seem expensive to them. Interviewee 1 mentioned *“I thought immediately about one brand. I do not really know if they’re expensive I just feel really confused that I can not think of any Cruelty-Free label even though there must be a lot of them, but I guess they have not reached me in any way”*. Interviewee 2 said she does not know, since she does not know which products are Cruelty-Free and which are not. Interviewees 3 and 10 did not have thoughts on Cruelty-Free, but interviewee 3 said *“I do not think the animal testing influences the price”*. Interviewee 9 had similar thoughts.

Interviewee 4 said she did not think they are expensive. Interviewee 5 said she had not really thought in which products the label is, but she thinks the label gives an image of a better quality. Interviewee 6 feels like the Cruelty-Free products are expensive. Interviewee 7 said *“my image is that many luxury brands do test on animals, that’s the first thought. I would imagine it might be the other way around, but... I do not really think Cruelty-Free label influences the price”*. Interviewee 12 had same thoughts that luxury brands might test on animals and cheaper brands do not test. In comparison, interviewee 8 said *“I do not see them being more expensive, but I think some cheaper brands test on animals, because those who do not test, tell about it and clearly points it out in marketing, I know only one brand that has clearly advertised of being Cruelty-Free but I do not really buy those products, I do not know why, sometimes a sales person might mention that ‘this is not tested on animals’ but that’s it”*.

Interviewee 9 said *“I do not think it depends on the price, because I know cheaper brands and more expensive brands that are Cruelty-Free.”* Interviewee 11 and 13 had similar thoughts and interviewee 11 added *“I feel like the Cruelty-Free label is something extra, I feel like the brands that are Cruelty-Free think that being ethical is important”*.

Next the interviewees were asked what kind of role the Cruelty-Free label has on them. Interviewee 1 and 9 said it is a plus, but not a factor that has importance. Interviewee 2 said *“I do not look for the label, but it is definitely a plus. When I was told that the brand I bought recently was vegan, I thought that if the products are good and vegan and better in an ethical way than some products, I am glad to buy those”*. Interviewees 6 and 11 had similar thoughts and interviewee 11 added *“I get a good feeling if I buy ethical products, but I can not say all my purchases go that way, so I buy also products that do not have the label, I do not know if they are Cruelty-Free or not”*. Interviewee 3 and 4 said it does not have any role.

Interviewees 5 and 7 said it is a good thing if there is the label, even though they do not look for it, and if there's no label, they still would buy the product. Interviewee 8 said *“I would like to say it has a big meaning, but it does not go like that in real life”*. Interviewee 10 said *“well I have not thought about it that much, but of course it would be nice if a bunny would not suffer because of my moisturizer”*. Interviewee 12 said *“if I'm honest, it does not really matter to me, because if I want a certain make-up product, I will not leave it on the shelf if it does not have the label on it but of course, I wish that cosmetic products would not be tested on animals, and if I buy a Cruelty-Free product, I feel good about the purchase”*. Interviewee 13 said *“I think it's a good thing that a product is Cruelty-Free, but I do not require it from my products, because there are more important factors to me, for example the ingredients. I feel like I already have a limited selection of skin care products that I can buy, so if I would buy only Cruelty-Free, it would be even more limited.”*

Next the interviewees were asked if they could name any Cruelty-Free brands. Interviewee 1 and 6 named two brands, both the same brands. Interviewee 2, 3, 4 and 8 named one brand. Interviewees 5 and 10 did not know any brand. Interviewee 7 said *“I remember one that is Cruelty-Free, but I think many of the organic cosmetic brands are Cruelty-Free... I could name a lot of brands that are not Cruelty-Free”*. Interviewees 9, 11, 12 and 13 mentioned from three to five brands each.

## Recent purchases

Then the interviewees were asked if they had purchased a product from the brands, they mentioned during the last 6 months. Interviewee 1 said no, interviewee 2 said *“yes, I bought a facial moisturizer, but that was only because my colleague recommended it to me, I was looking for a moisturizer with spf on, and she mentioned this one, so I bought it”*. Interviewee 3 said *“yes, I buy a lot of skin care products from this brand, but that’s not because of the Cruelty-Free label, but because they smell good and the packages are good looking.”* Interviewee 8 had bought from the same brand as interviewee 3 and had similar thoughts on the products. Interviewee 4 said she has purchased a loose powder because it was cheap, and she had had the same product earlier.

Interviewees 5 and 10 were not asked this question since they could not name any Cruelty-Free brands earlier. Interviewee 6 had a story on this *“We have this tradition in midsummer when we buy all kinds of products from this brand, it is our midsummer sauna tradition to buy body masks, hair masks, body scrubs, facial scrubs, face masks and all you can think of. The reason why we buy from the specific brand is that I do not usually buy that kind of products so in midsummer I’m willing to pay a bit more from them, and also the products are natural so it’s not so bad when we use them outside and parts of the products go to the lake. I also think the packages are nice”*. Interviewee 7 said she has bought lip products from the brand she mentioned, and the reason was because of the quality vs price. Interviewee 9 had bought an eyeshadow palette because *“the brand’s eyeshadows are really good, so I wanted to buy it”*.

Interviewee 11 said she bought a bronzer from a Cruelty-Free brand she mentioned, but the purchase was because she had heard so much good about the product, so the Cruelty-Free did not influence her buying decision. Interviewee 12 said she had bought eyeshadows from the brand she mentioned because they are cheap and good quality. Interviewee 13 had a story *“well I bought a facial cleanser and a body moisturizer from this brand, and that was because I was on a cruise boat and I forgot my facial cleanser at home. In the tax free store there were not quite many options so this brand was one of the cheapest ones, so I decided to study the ingredients list and it was ok so decided to buy the product and the body moisturizer was next to it and looked nice and smelled good so I purchased it also”*.

Next the interviewees were asked how much they own Cruelty-Free products. Interviewees 1, 2, 5 and 10 had no idea how much they own Cruelty-Free products. Interviewee 3 said all of her moisturizers were from a Cruelty-Free brand, so multiple products. Interviewee 4 said *“Hard to say because I do not know which are Cruelty-Free, but I guess less than half...”*. Interviewees 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 had similar guesses. Interviewee 11 added *“it’s hard to say because I do not think all brand show it very well”*, and interviewee 12 added *“most of my make-up must be tested on animals.... That’s horrible”*.

Next the interviewees were given a list of 13 brands that are Cruelty-Free and sold in Finland or that are able to order from online to Finland, and they were asked if they had bought a product from those brands and if yes, which product and why. Interviewee 1 had bought from one of the brands, and she said, *“a setting spray, because it is my favourite setting spray, it has great quality”*. Interviewee 1 did not know earlier that this brand was Cruelty-Free. Interviewee 2 had bought moisturizers from one brand, and she did know the brand was Cruelty-Free. Interviewee 3 had bought from one of the brands and said *“I buy this brand because I know the quality is good. Is this brand Cruelty-Free? I’m ecological even though I do not know it!”* so interviewee 3 did not know earlier that brand was Cruelty-Free. Interviewee 4 said she had bought from one brand, a foundation primer, because she wanted a more luxurious product, and she thought it would be good quality. She did not know the brand was Cruelty-Free.

Interviewee 5 had bought from four different brands. She said, *“the brands have been easy to buy for me and those are my favourite brands to buy, and I have purchased the products before also”*. Interviewee 5 did not know any of those brands are Cruelty-Free. Interviewee 6 and 7 had bought the same product, setting spray, from the same brand, because they had heard recommendations about it. They did not know the brand is Cruelty-Free. Interviewee 8 had bought one product because a sales person recommended it, and she did not know the brand was Cruelty-Free.

Interviewee 9 had bought from two brands and the reasons were quality and that they look nice. She did know the other brand was Cruelty-Free but did not know about the other one. Interviewee 10 had bought from one brand and she forgot that the brand was Cruelty-Free, but she bought the body lotion because her friend recommended it earlier and she wanted to try a new scent from the same product line. Interviewee 11 said *“I have bought from one of*

*these brands, I bought a setting spray because it's very popular and I had earlier another setting spray from this brand, so I wanted to try this other one. But I did not know this brand was Cruelty-Free.*" Interviewee 12 told the story earlier about the eyeshadow palette she bought and she added *"I want to get all of the brand's eyeshadow palettes, because they are the best, I collect them"*. Interviewee 13 had also told the story earlier about her being at the cruise ship and buying the facial cleanser.

To conclude this Cruelty-Free category, it can be said that the consumers are not familiar with buying Cruelty-Free, even though most of them new what the label stands for. The interviewees did not know many Cruelty-Free brands, which explains that they could not say how much Cruelty-Free makeup or skin care items they own themselves. The image of Cruelty-Free is not expensive, the products are more seen as qualitative, but still some of the interviewees did not have any image at all. The consumers have difficulties in identifying which labels are Cruelty-Free and which are not.

### **5.3 Ethical consumerism**

This ethical consumerism category is divided into two sub-categories: intention and habit.

#### **Intention**

Next, the interviewees were asked if they think buying Cruelty-Free cosmetics is important in general. Interviewee 1 said *"Well... of course, it is an important issue, but I just think for me the quality is the most important and I have used a lot of money on products that do not work for me and they were not good quality, so I'm stuck with specific brands and products without knowing are Cruelty-Free or not"*. Interviewees 2 and 13 answered that it is important to buy Cruelty-Free, since if a bigger mass of consumers start to avoid brands that are unethical, the business is influenced. Interviewee 3 said *"yes, even though I do not think about it, I think it is morally important and also important for the future"*.

Interviewee 4 did not have a simple answer *"If it would be so straight forward that some brands 100% test on animals and some brands do not, but also do not use the test results of the brands that do test. I think brands have to show somehow that their ingredients can be used by humans, so I think they use the results of the brands that do test on animals, because*

someone has to test them, if a new chemical comes to market, and this is in general in chemicals, not only cosmetics, because humans do not want to do the test on themselves, so they do them animals. And I find it sad, but luckily in EU the tests are being reduced in a bigger scale. So, I think it is important to reduce the animal testing in the bigger picture, but I'm not quite sure on this cosmetic purchasing, because of this issue". Interviewee 5 thought "it is important, but I think many companies already do not test on animals since that issue has got so much attention, so I feel like it does not happen so much anymore, so I do not pay attention to it".

Interviewee 6 said "I think it is important, but I do not know quite much about it. I think that medicines and product for serious skin issues, there needs to be product developed and if it requires animal testing, I really do not know what my opinion is, but I feel like make-up and skin care in general are so unnecessary and investigated and tested already, so I do not think in that testing animals should not be used anymore, because so much is already known, and nobody's skin disease depends on those." Interviewee 7 said "Of course it is important to buy Cruelty-Free, it is mindless that the products are tested on animals, they should be tested on humans, since human is an animal as well, and I think nobody would die".

Interviewees 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 thought it is important. Interviewee 9 said "I think it is wrong that animals are being used to test make-up, there must be some other ways". Interviewee 10 said "I think it would be good if any cosmetic product would not be tested on animals". Interviewee 11 said "the whole world should go there, that animal testing would be illegal. I think it is very weird that so many brands still do it, but if people buy it more and if it would be a topic on magazines and blogs it would probably spread the knowledge, that people would want to buy Cruelty-Free. Or even demand it". Interviewee 12 said that she does not think the topic is so much discussed in Finland. She watches videos on YouTube and there the people mention that the products are Cruelty-Free, and that's why she knows Cruelty-Free brand from the United States, but she does not know about Finnish products.

Next the interviewees were asked if they had seen advertising from Cruelty-Free brands during the last 6 months and if yes, did the label have a role in the advertisement. Interviewees 1, 5 and 7 said they do not remember seeing any advertising. Interviewees 2 and 3 mentioned the same brand, and interviewee 3 added "being Cruelty-Free is their main strategy clearly". Interviewee 4 said she had probably seen advertising in Instagram, but the

label has not had any role in it. Interviewee 6 said she has not seen any advertising, but one brand's store windows point out that the brand is fighting against animal testing, but commercials she has not seen.

Next the interviewees were asked if they think of the ethical production when they buy, and if that is important to them. Interviewee 1 said "*yes, ethical production is important to me, for example, I always buy eggs from free chickens because I feel like the chickens are happier*". Interviewee 2 said "*yes, it is important to me and I have now noticed that it is more important to me in food consumption, rather than other consumption*". Interviewee 10 said similar things about thinking the ethical consumption when buying food. Interviewee 3 said "*yes, it is important. I tend to buy food that is produced close to me if it is possible*". Interviewee 4 said she thinks about the ethical production and that is important to her.

Interviewee 5 said "*You might think that it is important and nice, but when you go to the store you do not think when standing at the shelf that where this is produced. I try to use seasonal vegetables for example when you can get carrots from Finland, I tend to buy those and avoid buying exotic fruits that are shipped here from somewhere far away, but that's it, that's the easiest way to act*". Interviewee 8 had some similar thoughts with saying "*It is and it is not, because I do not think of this when I'm at the store, that if the products have come from bad conditions, I tend to think that the products would not come to our stores if they would have been purchased unethically. In clothing stores, I know that the clothes come from bad conditions, but still I buy them*". Interviewee 6 said "*yes, it is important to me, but I do not know so much so it's hard for me to recognize the products, so I buy and rely on Fair Trade and organic instead of doing my own research*". Interviewee 7 said it is important to her and if she can choose organic products she will.

Interviewee 9 said that she does not think so much, but she knows she should not buy so much and that some clothes are made in bad conditions, but she thinks it is very hard to know what a good purchase would be and what not and "*when I go to the store, I just forget these things*". Interviewee 11 said "*I think it is important and I have watched documents about these issues, but still in the daily life I tend to forget it... it is important, but I forget it.*" Interviewee 12 said "*I do not think so much of it, but it is important, because the Earth will go bad because of our own behaviour but still I buy a lot of products and do not always think so through... In my daily life I tend to give myself permissions to buy things*".

Interviewee 13 said *“It is important to me, and I think about it a lot when I’m for example at the store shelf, I think which product the best option would be. For example, one day I studied which coffee I should buy if I wanted to buy ethically produced coffee, and I found out that it should be UTZ-certified or Fair Trade, but I do not which brands are, I must check at the coffee shelf at the store. But that took me a while to find out, and if I think of how much products I buy when I go to the supermarket, so if I had to check with every product is it ethical or not, it’s just impossible! So it’s important to me, but it’s very difficult to think that every time I buy something”*.

### **Behaviour**

Next the interviewees were asked if they had ever almost bought a Cruelty-Free product and chosen another product instead of it. Interviewee 1 said *“definitely yes, but that has been because I have not taken the label in my thinking process, I have been focusing on the quality vs price relation”*. Interviewee 13 said *“I do not remember, but if yes, it must have been for other reasons than the Cruelty-Free label”*. Rest of the interviewees did not know or remember a case.

Next the interviewees were asked if they would tell about or recommend a Cruelty-Free product to their friends. Interviewee 1 said *“well if it was a very good product, yes, but otherwise no”*. Interviewee 2 said she might mention that she found a good moisturizer and the product is Cruelty-Free as well. Interviewee 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 13 said they would recommend if the product was good and it had good quality, but the Cruelty-Free label would not be mentioned or considered as an important factor or as interviewees 6 and 7 said they *“would not point it out”*. Interviewee 11 mentioned that she did mention to her friend that the bronzer she bought was good and it is Cruelty-Free, since she had noticed that.

Interviewee 9 said *“yes I do recommend products if they are good, but I do not say about the Cruelty-Free, because I do not think it is a reason why my friends should buy the product”*. Interviewee 12 had similar thoughts, but in addition *“but if I would recommend a product to my vegetarian friend, I would probably mention the label”*. Interviewee 10 had similar thoughts of not saying the label, but she added *“it would depend on the situation if I would say it or not”*.

Next the interviewees were asked if they have donated in charity work and if yes, to which company or issue. Interviewee 1 said she has donated years ago in children's sport in Australia. Interviewee 2, 3, 11 and 12 said they have donated sometimes but not regularly. Interviewee 3 said that she has not donated in charity work. Interviewee 4 said she will get a god daughter in Africa when she gets a raise, for now, she has not gotten the raise. Interviewee 5 said she remembers that she given for a nature protecting organization some money and she has took part in different campaigns in Finland. Interviewee 6 said she has given money when there has been fund-raising during a crisis. Interviewee 7 has donated money in animal protecting activities. Interviewee 10 said she donates monthly to a charity organization. Interviewees 9 and 13 said they donated a couple of weeks ago to a charity campaign.

Next the interviewees were asked if they had bought a product or products from which sales a percentage is donated in animal protecting activities. All of the interviewees except 12 and 13 answered that they do not know if they have. Interviewee 12 has bought make-up that some part of the sales goes to an animal shelter in the United States and interviewee 13 said she has bought yarn from which sales goes a percentage to a nature wellbeing organization.

Next, they were asked if they are vegans or vegetarians and if not, how often they eat meat. None of the interviewees were vegetarian or vegan. Interviewee 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 12 and 13 said they eat meat once or twice a day, interviewees 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10 said they eat meat every other day.

Next question was *"do you buy Fair Trade products?"*. Interviewees 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 answered that they do by. When some of the interviewees were asked what and why, interviewee 8 answered *"well.. I do not know, I just buy the Fairtrade bananas"*. Interviewee 9 said she buys tea because she likes that specific tea that is Fairtrade and she thinks the packages are pretty. Interviewee 11 said she buys bananas and tea, because she wants to support the farmers. Interviewee 13 said she buys only tea that is Fairtrade. Interviewee 3, 5 and 7 said they buy sometimes. Interviewee 12 said it is sometimes difficult to know which coffees are and there are not so many options, but she buys tea that is Fairtrade, because *"If someone else can feel better because of my buying behaviour, I should do it"*. Interviewee 4 answered that she does not buy Fair Trade products.

Next, they were asked if they buy organic products. Interviewees 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 said they buy regularly organic products. Interviewee 1, 3, 9 and 11 said they buy sometimes. Interviewees 12 and 13 said they do not really buy and interviewee 13 specified *“I would like to buy, but some organic products are very expensive”*.

Next the interviewees were asked if they think their own consumption supports ethical production. Interviewee 1 answered *“well, I think 50/50, I do not make the poorest choices, because I buy organic food sometimes and the eggs of free chickens and so on, but I think I could live in a more ethical way. If I had more money, I would buy every food item organic, but I know that even if I had a million euros, I would not buy everything Cruelty-Free, because I do not see them being as good as the ones I already have.”* Interviewee 2 said *“partly yes and partly no, I think I am willing to pay if the product is good and ethically produced, but it depends if the product is food or something else, in food I feel like I support ethical consumption, but in other products my only thought is that I buy only when I need something and I buy as long-lasting products I can, even though I do not know how they are produced, but I do not buy constantly new products”*. Interviewees 3, 8 and 12 said only *“no”*.

Interviewee 4 said *“I think I’m trying more that I would not buy anything I do not really need, but I do not think I support ethical production, well, production in Finland might be ethical. I hate to say this, but I guess my consumption is not that much ethical”*. Interviewee 5 thought that her consumption is ethical sometimes, but not so often. Interviewee 6 said *“I guess partly, but everybody has something in which they can try harder, well at least I have. I think in food it comes down to the money issue, I don’ have so much money as I would like, I mean if I had more money, I would use it for doing better choices at the supermarket.”*

Interviewee 7 said her consumption is more ethical on the food section than in cosmetics. Interviewee 9 said *“no it is not, I should buy less and make wiser choices”*. Interviewee 10 said her consumption is a bit ethical, but she should start being more ethical. Interviewee 11 said *“well if I buy sometimes Fairtrade, that does not make me ethical, I think it needs more than that. I’m annoyed that I know a lot of this stuff, but still I have to answer that my consumption is not ethical.”* Interviewee 13 answered *“no, it’s not. I should buy less from cheap clothing stores and support more ethical shops. In make-up, I do not really know about the circumstances where the products are manufactured, I think people talk only about*

*the clothing industry and coffee farming. But I would like to be an ethical consumer, that is where I'm trying to head at."*

To conclude this ethical consumerism category, it can be said that the interviewees think buying Cruelty-Free is important, but with some thoughts of scepticism. They think buying ethically produced products is important, but some of them had troubles when going to the store and actually buying ethically produced products. The interviewees would all recommend Cruelty-Free products, as they would regular products as well, but most of them would not raise the label into speech. Some of the interviewees have donated money in charity, but not the majority. Some interviewees buy FairTrade products and organic products and most of the consumers did not think their own consumption supports ethical consumption.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the empirical part and compare them to the theoretical part of this research. In this chapter the research questions are answered. The discussion starts with answering the sub-questions and then finally the main research question is answered.

### **Research sub-question 1. “*What are the main factors that influence the decision-making process when buying cosmetics?*”**

It appears, that the biggest factor that influences the decision-making process is recommendations. As presented before, consumer decision-making process has five steps in it: need recognition and problem awareness, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 177). It appears, that the recommendations of friends, co-workers or sales persons, companies’ advertising and the consumers’ own habits are the main factors that influence the decision-making process.

First about the recommendations of friends. When the interviewees were asked from where they get their ideas to buy new cosmetic products, 11 interviewees mentioned their friends as a first source of inspiration. That is in line with Kotler & Armstrong’s (2010, 164) statement that comments from friends, editorials in the newspaper or user experiences from family members are all non-commercial sources of information that influence the decision-making. Another finding from Kotler & Armstrong (2010, 164) has to do with the membership groups, which refers to a group that has direct influence or the person belongs to them. The influence of friends in this research seems so strong, since so many interviewees mentioned that their only source, so it can be said that the friends in these cases might be the interviewees’ membership groups. The recommending happens the other way as well, since all of the interviewees mentioned that they do recommend good products to their friends and some said, that if they find bad products, they tell about them as well. So, the interviewees post-purchase behaviour is very active. As Kotler & Armstrong (2010) state, if the consumers are satisfied, they will probably buy the product again or another product from the brand and they also might recommend the product to their friends or at websites online, which happens clearly in this study.

Another influencing factor appeared to be social media and its influencers and their recommendations. Interviewee 3 mentioned that she gets a lot of inspiration through social media, for example Instagram. Five interviewees mentioned, that they get inspiration and ideas to buy new products from blogs and four interviewees mentioned YouTube as a source of inspiration. This leads to another group Kotler & Armstrong (2010, 164) presented: the reference groups. Companies often want to identify the reference groups of the market that they have targeted their business. That is because the reference groups often expose individuals to new behaviours and lifestyles, affect the person's attitudes and self-concept and set pressures to adjust, so the individual's choices of brand and product might be influenced. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 165). That said, the influencers blogging and creating YouTube videos are the interviewees' reference groups, which give them recommendations and ideas to buy new products. As Kotler & Armstrong (2010, 165) stated, these reference groups expose these interviewees to new behaviours and lifestyles.

Another term that might be used about these bloggers and youtubers, is "opinion leader" (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 165) which refers to a people who has social influence on others. Opinion leaders are sometimes made as "brand ambassadors" which are often the case according to the interviewees' statements. But, being a brand ambassador does not automatically give positive influence in the buying behaviour. So, it appears that the consumers do not automatically get influenced towards buying by brands through social media and the brand ambassadors raise some scepticism, which is in line with Shaheen's (2016) statement, that social media makes the decision-making process more complex, but the social contacts have even more influence on the buying behaviour than the online consumer reviews. When the interviewees were asked if they take recommendations from the influencers they follow, they all said that they do.

According to Lindmark (2015), customers prefer online customer reviews being more credible information source than the organizations own information or traditional media channels. According to Kotler & Armstrong (2010) It has been said that "*It's rare that an advertising campaign can be as effective as a neighbour leaning over the fence and saying, 'This is a wonderful product'*". These are in line with the findings of the interviews. Clearly the interviewees value highly other people's recommendations. A statement that goes in line with the Kotler & Armstrong's (2010) neighbour-comparison is that many interviewees think that the sales persons and their recommendations influence their buying behaviour, for

example interviewee 2 said *“Usually I do the comparing in the store and based on what I have been told about the product buy the sales person. Sometimes I ask more profound questions about the product and for example if I go to the pharmacy to buy a moisturizer, I might tell the sales person that I have dry skin and then I remember that the moisturizer needs to go well with make-up on top of it and so on”*. Interviewee 8 mentioned also that sometimes she buys impulsively, because the sales person recommends products for her.

Among recommendations from different parties, one influencing factor is the advertisement of the companies. The interviewees were asked how the companies’ advertisements influence their decision-making process and interviewee 3 said *“Well actually they influence quite a lot, because of the advertisement that is not so straight forward, for example when I see ads in social media accounts, I feel like the influence is big. If I get advertisements home like magazines about sales, those do not influence me that much.”* In her case, the influence creates needs as she said, *“they get me needing something”*. The advertising companies do through these social media accounts, goes back to the reference groups and brand ambassadors.

Another factor that influences the consumer-decision process seems to be the habits the consumers have. According to Schiffman et al. (2012), there are two types of problem awareness among consumers: actual state type and desired state type. According to this research, the consumers can be divided into those two groups by the question *“do you buy impulsively, or do you buy when you actually need the product?”*, since there were interviewees to both these groups. Interviewees who answered that they do impulsive buying, are desired state type consumers and the ones that answered that they buy a new product when the old one has ended, are the actual state type consumers. All of the interviewees answered that they buy when they need something, so they would be actual state type consumers, but some of them mentioned that sometimes they buy impulsively, so the group they would be depends on the situation and the product they’re about to buy.

Another relevant influencer in the decision-making process is the consumers own experiences and purchases. According to Schiffman et al. (2012), the re-recollection of old experiences of the consumer can also be seen as information channel that provides the consumer adequate information to make the present choice. Also, if the consumer does not have any experience before, he or she might need to get into an extensive search of the

outside environment to find useful information on which to make the choice. According to interviewees, they compare with time and investigate the products they are about to buy, which is in line with Schiffman et al.'s (2012) statement. If the consumer does not have experience, she does her research, but often relies on her products that she trusts on, as interviewees said that they tend to rely on the products and brands they have been using before and found them good. All of the interviewees mentioned some preferred brands that they buy from.

According to Solomon et al. (2013) the consumer often seeks his or her memory before starting to seek from external sources of information regarding a given consumption-related need. Many decisions that consumer make are based on the combination of experiences they had before (internal sources) and marketing and non-commercial information sources (external sources). That statement concludes well this response to the first sub-question of this research. The main factors that influence in the consumer decision-making process when buying cosmetics are definitely recommendations, which can be from friends, or social media accounts, or sales persons, and previous experiences they have and those together consists of internal sources and external sources.

**Research sub-question 2. *“Why does the consumer choose to buy a Cruelty-Free product over a regular one?”***

It appears, that the most important factor of the cosmetic products the interviewees purchase is quality, and some interviewees mentioned price versus quality.

According to Kotler & Armstrong's (2010) figure with types of buying decision behaviour and the interviewees responses, it seems that a cosmetic product belongs to the category of complex buying behaviour. In complex buying behaviour the purchase is expensive, risky, purchased infrequently and highly self-expressive. Usually, the consumer needs to learn a lot about the product category. An example of an interviewee's comment which refers to cosmetics being in that sector is interviewee 6's comment *“I compare with time and investigate, especially all moisturizers, I'm very precise with those, I do not buy those without doing my research. I have been using same products a long time and I have carefully studied the product's ingredients. In make-up I'm not so careful, but I'm not ready to buy an expensive product without testing it or hearing a lot of good things about it.”*

That leads to the factors that consumers look for the most when they are buying a product. Most of the interviewees mentioned, that the quality of the product is the most important to them. They had thoughts on the price as well, but the most important was the quality and also what the product is for, that it does its purpose. So, it depends on the product how much the interviewee is willing to pay for it.

But what about Cruelty-Free? The interviewees were asked do they know what Cruelty-Free means, and eleven of them knew what it means but two of them did not know. When the interviewees were asked what kind of image they have on Cruelty-Free, the responses varied a lot, but there was one thing in common, which is, that none of them had fact knowledge about this issue.

One interesting saying was, that interviewee 5 said she had not really thought in which products the label is, but she thinks the label gives an image of a better quality. The interviewees had also very contradictory opinions about the fact related to the question do cheap or expensive cosmetic brands test on animals, which shows that the interviewees did not have any prior knowledge due to that issue. One interviewee thought that luxury brands test on animals and another interviewee thought cheaper brands test on animals. Some interviewees knew cheap and expensive brands that are Cruelty-Free, so they did know the price is not a factor in that issue, since interviewee 9 said *“I do not think it depends on the price, because I know cheaper brands and more expensive brands that are Cruelty-Free.”* Interviewee 11 and 13 had similar thoughts and interviewee 11 added *“I feel like the Cruelty-Free label is something extra, I feel like the brands that are Cruelty-Free thinks that being ethical is important”*.

So, this leads to the question how many Cruelty-Free brands the interviewees knew. Most of the interviewees knew only one or two brands, two interviewees knew none. When the interviewees were asked with a list of Cruelty-Free brands, that have they made purchases from those brands during the last 6 months, and almost all of them said yes. Then, the interviewees were asked why they had purchased from that brand, and that specific product, all of them answered something else than Cruelty-Free. The reasons that appeared were *“I know the brand is good quality”* (interviewee 3) or *“my friend recommended it to me”* (interviewee 8). The Cruelty-Free label appears to be something that the interviewees had not even noticed. When the interviewees were asked how much Cruelty-Free cosmetics they

own, they did not know, because they did not know which brands were Cruelty-Free. They were also asked if they look through the packages they buy, and most of them said no, or that they look only at the ingredients list. Another question that did not give much information was “have you ever almost buy a Cruelty-Free product and chosen another product instead of it?” because all the interviewees responded that they did not know. When the interviewees were asked if they would recommend a Cruelty-Free product, all of them said yes, but based on the product itself and not the Cruelty-Free label.

It could be said that the Cruelty-Free is like a new product to the consumers. Even though it is not a product line or brand, but the idea of being Cruelty-Free is new to these interviewees. That is why in this part is logical to use the model of buyer decision process for new products by Kotler & Armstrong (2010), which's steps are presented below. In this model, new product means “*a good, service or idea that is perceived by some potential customers as new*”.

Awareness → Interest → Evaluation → Trial → Adoption

In the awareness stage, the consumer becomes aware of the new product but does not have information about it. Some interviewees are in this step, since they know what Cruelty-Free is, and they find it meaningful, but they have not advanced further. The second step is interest, in which the consumer searches for information about the new product. It appears, that none of the interviewees have reached this step. The third step is evaluation, in which the consumer considers if the new product is worth trying. In fourth step, trial, the consumer tries the product on a small scale to have a better evaluation of the value. The last step is adoption, in which the consumer makes the decision to make full and regular use of the new product. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010)

It appears, that when the consumers buy a Cruelty-Free product, they buy it by accident, since they do not even know the product is Cruelty-Free. The consumers have not gone further from the “awareness” stage of the buyer decision process for new products. So, the answer to the second sub-question “*Why does the consumer choose to buy a Cruelty-Free product over a regular one?*” seems to be that the consumer chooses the Cruelty-Free product because of the brand. The decision is based on recommendations or previous experiences, but the Cruelty-Free label has no role in the decision.

**Research sub-question 3. *“How do the consumer’s other possible ethical habits affect the purchase decision when buying cosmetics?”***

As presented earlier, there is a clear intention-behavioural gap in ethical consumerism. Like presented before Chatzidakis, Hibbert and Smith (2007), the intentions to purchase of ethical consumers are driven by personal values, moral norms, internal ethics and other similar factors. In this research the interviewees opinions about ethical consumption were asked and next about their possible ethical habits.

When the interviewees were asked if they thought ethical consumption is important to them, everyone answered yes. They had different explanations or thoughts behind the consumption, but everyone thought it is important and that they try with different actions to buy ethically. The interviewees had some critical thoughts on their behaviour as well.

It seems, that purchasing food ethically is easier, but still somewhat challenging, for the interviewees than buying other products ethically. An example of that is interviewee 1’s answer when she was asked to tell how her consumption has changed during the last five years *“Nowadays I’m much more for the quality and I do not want to spend my money so much in things just to try. Nowadays I see the trying being more of a risk, especially in cosmetics, which is quite sad because if I think of Fairtrade products and ethical production in food, the food is much cheaper and you do not need to use that product for the next months like cosmetic products, so I think in food the ethical buying is easier to do, because when you buy cosmetics you can not try the product if it’s good without buying it home”* This comment also refers to the fact that at least interviewee 1 thinks of cosmetics as high involvement products that she needs to be sure to be good quality and suitable for her before buying them.

Few of the interviewees had answers that showed their knowledge about the consumption issues, for example interviewee 11 said *“I think it is important and I have watched documents about these issues, but still in the daily life I tend to forget it... it is important, but I forget it.”* Interviewee 12 said *“I do not think so much of it, but it is important, because the Earth will go bad because of our own behaviour but still I buy a lot of products and do not always think so through... In my daily life I tend to give myself permissions to buy*

*things*". According to Dholakia et al. (2007), the forgetting is relevant to the consumers that are ethically minded, if ethical products are recently adopted in their purchasing selection.

So, it appears that even though there are consumers in increasing amount that have absorbed and are motivated by the values of ethical consumerism, their consumption behaviour has not changed as much. It seems, that ethical intentions do not often translate to the actual buying behaviour. (Auger & Devinney 2007; Belk, Devinney & Eckhardt, 2005; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Follows & Jobber, 2000; Shaw, Shiu, Hassan, Bekin & Hogg, 2007)

The interviewees were asked if they had donated in charity work and if yes, to which company or issue. Almost all of the interviewees had donated somewhere, except interviewee 3, but since they could not clearly remember where, when and what, it seems that that is not something so important to the interviewees. Another quite similar response was on hand when the interviewees were asked if they had purchased products from which's sales profit a percentage were donated to animal protection or something like that. Most of the interviewees said that they do not know or that they do not have, but two interviewees new that they had, and they could point out the purchases they had made and to which company the money went.

The interviewees were all meat-eating, so non-vegetarians. The question was asked to see if there would be a relation between being a vegetarian and buying ethically or buying Cruelty-Free, but that did not give any explanations. When the interviewees were asked if they buy Fairtrade products, they all said yes, except interviewee 4. Some interviewees, such as 11 and 12, said they buy because they want to support the farmers. When interviewee 8 was asked why she buys Fairtrade products, she answered that she did not know.

According to Auger & Devinney (2007), even if consumers might be ethically minded, they rarely purchase ethical products. So, it seems that even though the interviewees think ethical consumption is important and some of the interviewees were very aware of the issues related to overconsumption, still their buying behaviour is not in line with their thoughts. According to Futerra's study (2005), 30% of the consumers said that they would purchase ethically, but only 3% of them actually did, and this research goes hand in hand with that study.

This leads to the third sub-question *“How do the consumer’s other possible ethical habits affect the purchase decision when buying cosmetics?”* and the answer seems to be that they do not affect. If the consumers do ethical choices at the supermarket, for example buys organic food or Fairtrade coffee, it does not influence their buying behaviour when they go to the cosmetics section. However, the thought of buying only what is needed is an ethical thought, and few interviewees did so in cosmetics as well, but it’s not enough to give a positive answer to this question, since the Cruelty-Free is in the focus in this research, and not so much the general buying behaviour.

**Research sub-question 4. *“Is there an intention-behavioural gap in buying Cruelty-Free cosmetics? Why?”***

According to Carrington et al. (2010) figure about the intention-behaviour moderation model of the ethically minded consumer, implementation intention is a plan of if/then that the individual forms when outlining when, where and how the individual’s intention will be realised as actual behaviour (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). That means, that the intention of an ethical consumer goes into behaviour when the individual forms the plan and realises it.

In this study, it could be said that the interviewees do have an intention of being an ethical consumer, since they all said ethical consumption is important to them personally. For example, a consumer that is ethically minded and wants to buy only coffee that is Fairtrade, the consumer will develop an implementation intention: “when I’m at the supermarket and I need more coffee beans, I will purchase only Fairtrade labelled coffee products”. That intention leads to the actual behaviour, if she makes those kind of implementation intentions. According to Ajzen (2002), when an individual makes if/then implementation plans, they also help the individual to change the existing habit he or she has. This study has shown, that some of the interviewees have adopted these if/then implementation plans, since they do some ethical choices at the supermarket, for example, buy Fairtrade products, as reported earlier in the previous sub-question. However, these if/implementation plans have not been made towards buying Cruelty-Free products, or other ethical produced goods, such as clothes. It seems, that there is an intention to buy ethically, since all of the interviewees thought that buying Cruelty-Free in general is important. As presented earlier, the Cruelty-Free label has stayed in the awareness stage of the buying decision process of new products, and also it has remained as an intention in this model of intention and behaviour. The

interviewees have not done implementation intentions towards buying Cruelty-Free products, so the gap is wider than only from the implementation intention, it starts at the intention stage in this case. What causes this, why these interviewees do not make the implementation intentions and then perform the buying behaviour?

Deng's (2015) findings showed that added to the personal factors and ethical consciousness, economic rationality, buying inertia, cynicism, and ethical cognitive efforts all have significant influence on the relationship between ethical intention and action. This is in line with the findings of this study. As presented earlier, when the interviewees were asked if they knew any Cruelty-Free brands, most of the interviewees knew only one or two brands, two interviewees knew none. When the interviewees were asked with a list of 13 different Cruelty-Free brands if they had purchased products from those brands, most of the interviewees were surprised that those brands are Cruelty-Free. When the interviewees were asked if they had seen any advertisements from those brands during the last 6 months and if yes, did the Cruelty-Free label have any role in it, it appeared that if the interviewee had seen a commercial, the Cruelty-Free label was not shown on the advertisement. Another thing is that the interviewees were asked if they study the product packages when they're about to buy them, and most of them said no. That means, that even if the product had a Cruelty-Free label on it, the interviewee would not know about it.

This leads to the answer to this sub-question *“Is there an intention-behavioural gap in buying Cruelty-Free cosmetics? Why?”* and the answer is yes, there clearly is an intention-behavioural gap, but the gap is even wider than in the model presented by Carrington et al. (2010). The gap can be seen as starting from consumer's attention. The gap exists because consumers do not simply know much about the Cruelty-Free label. Most of the interviewees knew what it meant, but they do not look for it in the packages, they do not see advertisements about those, or they do not pay attention, and as interviewee 11 said *“the whole world should go there, that animal testing would be illegal. I think it is very weird that so many brands still do it, but if people buy it more and if it would be a topic on magazines and blogs it would probably spread the knowledge, that people would want to buy Cruelty-Free. Or even demand it”*. Another factor that prevents the consumers from buying Cruelty-Free products is that they value more the ingredients and brand rather than the Cruelty-Free label of the product. The consumers also think the Cruelty-Free labelled products are expensive and they simply do not know about the products or the labels enough.

**Main research question. “How does the Cruelty-Free label influence in the consumer buying process?”**

According to the sub-questions and their answers, the main question can be answered. It has been shown, that the most important factors influencing consumer decision-making process when buying cosmetics are recommendations, which can be from friends, or social media accounts, or sales persons, and previous experiences they have and those together consists of internal sources and external sources. It has also been shown that it appears, that when the consumers buy a Cruelty-Free product, they buy it by accident, since they do not even know the product is Cruelty-Free. That leads to the finding that if the consumers do ethical choices at the supermarket, for example buys organic food or Fairtrade coffee, it does not influence their buying behaviour when they go to the cosmetics section and lastly, there clearly is an intention-behavioural gap when buying Cruelty-Free cosmetics, and the gap is even wider than in the previous studies have shown. To answer this main question, the theoretical framework has been updated according to these findings, and it concludes the discussion.

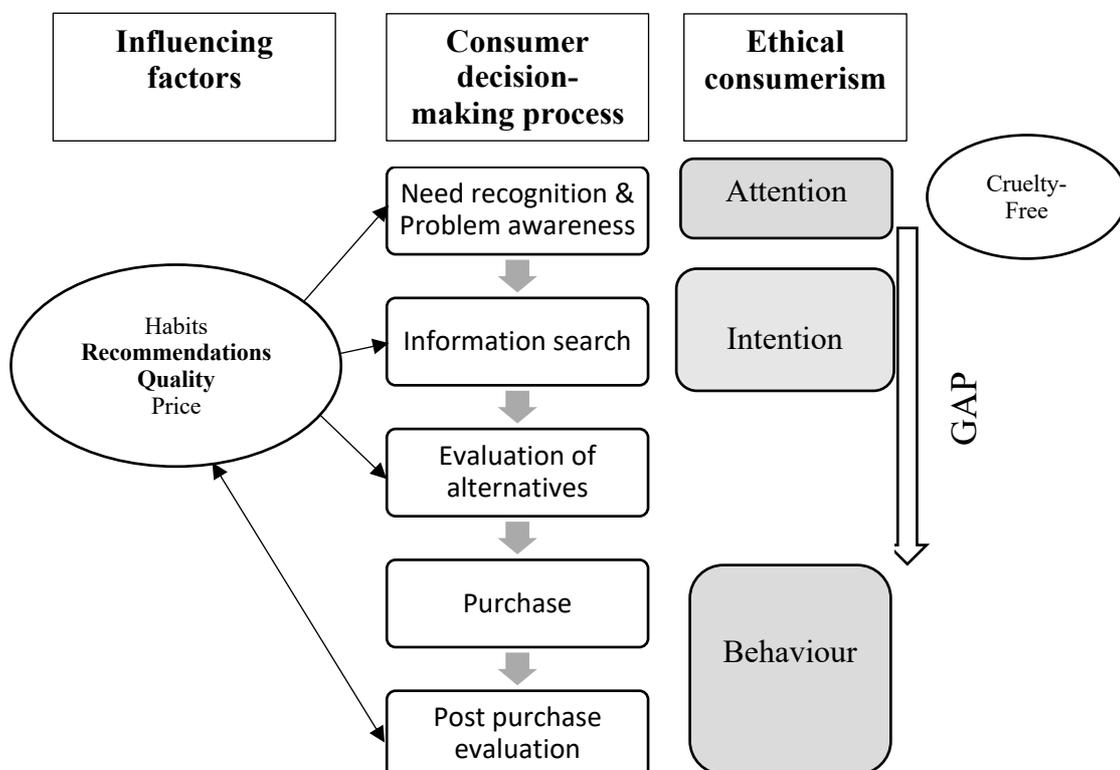


Figure 12. The findings of the research

The answer to the main research question “*How does the Cruelty-Free label influence in the consumer buying process?*” is presented in the framework above. There are very strong drivers that influence the consumer buying behaviour and one of the strongest ones are the recommendations that the consumers get, from their friends, co-workers, social media influencers and sales persons at the stores. Another strong influencer is the quality, and with some interviewees the quality versus the price. The two other influencers are the interviewees own habits and the price alone. The intention-behavioural gap has been widened, and there has been added the phase “attention” since in this study it appeared to be that way.

In the figure, the arrows symbol the influencing. The post-purchase has a two-sided arrow, since the influence goes two ways. The interviewees take recommendations seriously and also recommend themselves to other consumers. The Cruelty-Free label does not have influence in the consumer-decision making process, so it is in the figure next to the attention and intention. It is an intention, to buy Cruelty-Free products, but it is not strong enough to get the consumers attention, so the consumers would do the intention implementations, so they would actually get to know Cruelty-Free products and actually buy them.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to study the consumer decision-making process when buying cosmetic products and how the ecolabel Cruelty-Free, which refers to the fact that the product is not tested on animals, influences the decision-making process. The theoretical background was around consumer decision-making process, influencing factors in the buying behaviour, ethical consumerism and the intention-behavioural gap in ethical consumerism.

The key findings of this study were that the consumer decision-making process when buying cosmetics is strongly influenced by the recommendations of different parties: friends, social media influencers and sales persons. Consumers' own habits and earlier experiences have also a strong role when buying cosmetics. Another key finding was that when the consumers buy Cruelty-Free products, they buy it by accident, since they do not know the product being Cruelty-Free. There is clearly an attention-gap in the process, so the consumers do not even get to the intention phase. Also, if they would know about the label, they would consider it as being a positive factor, but not a factor that they would base their recommendations on. Another key finding was that the consumer can be ethical when she buys food, but the ethical habit does not transfer to the buying behaviour in cosmetics section. This is because the consumers value more the quality, recommendations and the brands they prefer, and they are not willing to take the risk of being unsatisfied.

This study shows, that the Cruelty-Free label does not influence the consumer decision-making process, so even though ethical consumerism is rising and the sales of Cruelty-Free products as well, there does not seem to be a relation according to this study. The study showed that the intention-behavioural gap was even wider than the original framework suggested, so it can be seen starting from the attention phase already. It might be an assumption that if a company is Cruelty-Free, it would be useful to show it to the consumers, advertise about it and print it on the products. However, the attention-behavioural gap shows that even though the consumers know about the products, or that they are existing Cruelty-Free products, they still do not buy them. So, would only advertising raise the sales of Cruelty-Free products? Perhaps not. However, according to this research, the consumers think they do not know about Cruelty-Free products and some of them said that it would be

helpful if there would be more information on magazines and online, but that might not still get them to buy Cruelty-Free products, as the attention-behavioural gap shows.

The findings of this study are from cosmetic users in Finland who belong to a beauty related group. That means, that the consumers might be highly involved with cosmetics and beauty related issues, so their buying behaviour can not be seen as a regular woman's buying behaviour. However, the findings represent the buying behaviour of the highly involved and they are not influenced by the Cruelty-Free label, so it would be interesting to find out, how the regular women think of this issue, which leads to the further studies.

Suggestions for further studies would be to try to understand the attention-behavioural and intention-behavioural gap even more and probably find some solutions how the gap could be eliminated, how the consumers would consume more ethically and get to know the ethical possibilities among products. Another study possibility would be to expand this research into household products and try to understand if there is the similar gap.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: The Interview Questions

1. How often do you buy make-up or skin care products?
2. From where you most of the times buy your make-up or skin care products?
3. Do you prefer certain brands?
4. Which kind of consumer would you describe yourself: do you consider your purchases with time, do you compare a lot of options or do you buy impulsively?
5. When you buy cosmetics, do you buy for a need or just for fun?
6. From where do you get inspiration or ideas to buy new cosmetics?
7. When you compare options, how you do it and where?
8. Tell about the most important factors of a product when you are about to purchase?
9. Tell about the last time you bought cosmetics, where did you get the idea and how did you end up buying that specific product?
10. Were you happy or disappointed with that purchase, why?
11. When you see an advertisement of a new product, to which factors do you pay attention to?
12. How do you think the companies advertising influences your decision-making process?
13. How important do you think the product's packaging is, do you study it thoroughly when you are about to buy the product?
14. When you compare products, do you compare the packages or their information to each other, if yes, which information?
15. Do you tell or recommend to your friends or acquaintance the products you have purchased?
16. Do you know what Cruelty-Free means?
17. What kind of image do you have about Cruelty-Free products, do you think they're expensive?
18. What kind of role the Cruelty-Free label has to you?
19. Can you name any Cruelty-Free brands?
20. Have you bought any products from the brands you mentioned during the last 6 months? Why did you buy that specific product?
21. How much do you own Cruelty-Free cosmetics?

22. Have you purchased anything from these brands during the last 6 months: Anastasia Beverly Hills, nyx, The Body Shop, Wet'n'Wild, Jeffree Star, Joe Blasco, BH Cosmetics, Dermalogica, Burt's Bees, Freeman, Milani, Ofra cosmetics, Urban Decay? If yes, why?
23. Do you think buying Cruelty-Free cosmetics is important or meaningful in general?
24. Do you remember seeing advertisements from Cruelty-Free brands during the last 6 months, if yes, did the Cruelty-Free label have a role in the advertisement?
25. Have you ever almost bought a Cruelty-Free product and then ended up with something else, if yes, why?
26. If you would buy a Cruelty-Free product, would you tell about it to your friends, or would you recommend it?
27. Do you follow any influencers in social media that are cosmetic related, or beauty related, if yes, who and why?
28. Do you take recommendations or "bans" from the influencers you follow?
29. Do you donate in charity or have you, if yes, to which purpose?
30. Have you purchased over the last 6 months products that from which's sales a part is donated to animal wellbeing?
31. Are you a vegetarian or vegan? How often do you eat meat?
32. Do you buy Fairtrade products?
33. Do you buy organic products?
34. Do you think of the ethical factors in the production when you buy, do you think it is important?
35. Do you think your own behaviour supports the ethical consumption?
36. How do you think blogs and magazines influence your buying behaviour?
37. Tell about your buying behaviour five years ago versus now, has something changed?