MAINSTREAM ETHICAL CONSUMPTION
The motivations and level of morality of everyday consumers

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Abstract

Growing issues such as climate crises, social injustice and neglect of basic human rights have created a new type of consumption, namely ethical consumption. Ethical consumption was initially mainly concerned for environmental issues but has in later years starting to include a variety of pressing issues. Ethical consumption was also initially mainly connected to groups of extremists, but with the increasing availability of ethical products in mainstream outlets, ethical consumption has shifted to be a mainstream consumer game.

Mainstream ethical consumption has largely been neglected in previous research where the field is lacking knowledge in form of qualitative behavioral data. Departing from the gap, this study will mainly focus on exploring the motives for ethical consumption in the mainstream consumer segment. We will examine several driving forces in form of altruistic-based motives, egoistic-based motives, and non-value-based motives. However, in order to give this an additional dimension we also want to examine the level of morality of ethical consumption by using five ethical theories. This approach has been overlooked in previous ethical consumption research and it will question the basic assumption that ethical consumption is the morally correct thing to do. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the motivational factors for ethical consumption and through the lens of ethical theories examine the level of morality of this behavior.

In order to fulfill this purpose we have conducted a qualitative study within the context of organic groceries in the Swedish market. Organic groceries is a branch of ethical consumption that few studies has examined before, and that applies especially to the Swedish market. 14 mainstream consumers have been interviewed were all of these were frequent buyers of organic groceries. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured fashion which was then analyzed by the use of thematic analysis. Furthermore, the study was guided by an exploratory inductive approach where subjectivity played a significant part.

The results show that ethical consumption is driven by altruistic-based motives in form of social justice, where consumer want their consumption to benefit other. However, it is far from the only motive because ethical consumers are equally driven by egoistic motives. The result show that consumers are driven strongly by the sense of self-satisfaction created by the force of social norms, health and wellbeing, and product quality. This duality of motives creates a paradoxical tension in form of a win-win situation where the consumers strive for both the benefit of self as well as the benefit of others. Furthermore, ethical consumption is driven by habitual behavior where the consumers rely much on mental shortcuts in their purchases. Consumers are also not well-informed about ethical products and labels and therefore rely heavily on mythical benefits. In addition, when examining the level of morality of ethical consumption we can conclude that it is on level between mediocre to high. From a consequentialist and a non-consequentialist perspective the level of morality is fairly high, but from a character-based perspective the morality stumbles.
Foreword

We want to start by saying thank you to our supervisor Medhanie Gaim for the support and guidance during the thesis process. Your encouragement to walk the extra mile have been very helpful and have contributed positively to our motivation. We also want to say thank you to all the respondents who chose to participate. Without you this study would not have been possible.

Thanks!

2019-05-28

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1. Introduction

*This first chapter begins with a presentation of our choice of subject. Then we continue with the background where we give a brief introduction of our theoretical standpoints and an overview of ethical consumption. Further we describe the research gap, the research question and the purpose of our study. Lastly, we state our delimitations and give a description of key terms.*

1.1 Choice of subject

During our time at the university the issues of sustainability has been apparent many times, where the majority of the courses we have taken has touched upon this issue from different perspective. To some degree, we believe that this has influenced us in our choice of subject. However, the key inspiration for our chosen subject is taken from the course *marketing ethics and sustainability*. In this course we were introduced to the issues of ethical consumption, including motivational theories as well as ethical theories. This course enabled us to form an interest for the subject, but most importantly, it made us realize the importance of ethical consumption in our modern society.

Departing from this, our study will go in depth into the ethical consumption of mainstream consumers. We will examine the motivational factors of ethical consumption ranging from altruistic motives, to egoistic and non-value-based motives. Furthermore, we will examine the level of morality in ethical consumption of mainstream consumers by using well-established ethical theories. Saying that we choose this subject because of personal interest would be true, but it would not be a sufficient argument. The key reason for choosing it was actually due to the research gap. Firstly, the mainstream consumer segment has largely been neglected in previous research. Secondly, we can see that there is some confusion regarding the importance of different motivational factors in ethical consumption Thirdly, no studies has to our knowledge used ethical theories in order to determine the level of morality of mainstream ethical consumption. And finally, few studies have examined organic groceries in ethical consumption research and none of them has studied the Swedish market. These gaps will be handled more in detail in section 1.3.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Ethical consumption and the mainstream ethical consumer

We are constantly faced with news and headline about the climate crisis, social injustice and big companies neglecting basic human rights. Concerns for these issues have created a new type of consumer behavior, namely ethical consumptions (Burke, 2014, p. 2238). Even tough ethical consumption has been discussed in different forms for centuries, what we today consider as the concept of ethical consumption has its starting point in the nineties (Carrigan et al., 2004, p. 401). Initially the concept of ethical consumption was almost entirely focused on concerns for environmental issues (Auger & Devinney, 2007) but over the years the concept has evolved to include animal issues (Padel & Foster, 2005), social issues (Cornish, 2013, p. 337) as well as egoistic reasons (Carrigan et al., 2004, p. 401).
Traditionally the ethical consumer has been described as an extremist with higher income and more knowledge about environmental issues and social injustices (Paul & Rana, 2014, p.414). Today ethical products are becoming more available through mainstream outlets like supermarkets and online grocery stores (Bray, et al., 2011, p. 597). This increased availability of ethical product like organic food, has changed the view on who the ethical consumers is. The act of ethical consumption is no longer an act of an extremist, instead, ethical consumption is a behavior that can be adopted by the mainstream consumer (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 367).

1.2.2 Motivations for ethical consumption

In the existing literature, studies have tried to identify key motivational factors for ethical consumption. From these studies, we have extracted three main themes of motivational factors for ethical consumption, namely: altruistic-based motivations, egoistic-based motivations, and non-value-based motivations. Within these main themes, we have identified nine sub-themes which are social justice, guilt, win-win, self-satisfaction, social norms, well-being and health, product quality, habits, and knowledge/information.

**Altruistic-based motivations**

Traditionally, the ideal ethical consumer is expected to be driven by a desire to make the world a better place, in other words, ethical consumption motivated by altruistic motives like social justice. The characteristics of consumers motivated by social justice is the conviction that their actions make a difference (Shaw et al., 2005, p. 191), by the contribution of greener production, improved terms of labor and better welfare of animals (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1337). Another characteristic is the tendency to overlook personal interest in order to contribute to the welfare of others (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008, p. 461).

Beside social justice, social guilt can be another altruistic motivational factor for ethical consumption. The consumer creates a win-win situation where they chose to buy “ethically correct” products instead of conventional products (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1338). By adapting this behavior, the consumer gets the product he/she needed but at same time contribute to the welfare of others and reduce the feeling of social guilt (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1338).

**Egoistic-based motivations**

*Self-satisfaction* is the first identified egocentric motivational factor for ethical consumption. Previous research has shown that purchasing of “ethically correct” products make the consumer feel good about themselves (Padel & Foster, 618) or even enable a sense of happiness (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1338). Therefore, ethical products can be purchased in strive for self-satisfaction instead of concern for the welfare of others (Yamoah et al., 2016, p. 191-192). In addition, the second egoistic motivational factor for ethical consumption, namely social norms, focuses much on social belonging. According to Cornish (2013, p. 340) we want to “fit in”, therefore, we are inspired by people we identify with or groups we wish to belong to (Goldstein et al., 2008, p. 475). The social pressure that we might experience can come both from our ingroup, for example family and friends (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006, p. 187), as well as external sources like celebrities, politicians and opinion leaders (Yamoah et al., 2016, p. 192).

The third egoistic-based motivation factor is health and well-being. This have proven to be one of the most significant motivational factors in several studies (e.g Burke et al;
This motivational factor has been suggested to be of certain interest when it comes to purchasing of organic food. The main reason for its relevance in this context might be that organic food is perceived to healthier due to lack of pesticides (Padel & Foster, 2005, p. 609). Well-being might also be a motivational factor for ethical consumption. This is a wider concept that includes well-being both in our body as well as in our minds (Lin & Niu, 2018, p. 1681). Finally, we have the fourth egoistic motivational factor for ethical consumption which is product quality. Product quality is a strong motivational factor in organic food purchase since people often perceive organic food to be of better quality (Bray et al., 2011, p. 602) and of better taste (Cornish, 2013, p. 340). One reason why organic food might be perceived to be of higher quality could be due to a perceived relation between price-premium and higher quality (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1336).

Non-value-based motivations
The first non-value-based motivation factor for ethical consumption is habits, where previous studies have found strong correlation between habits and ethical consumption behavior (Davis & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1332; Yamoah et al., 2016, p. 191). Habits is created through semi-automatic actions that are repeated over time (Ghazali et al., 2018, p. 643). A routine behavior requires less cognitive evaluation and it means that consumers will behave in a way that seems natural to them (Hiller & Woodall, 2018, p. 11). Therefore, ethical products like organic food might be purchased out of habit rather than for their ethical attributes (Davies and Gutsche, 2016, p. 1332).

The last sub-themed motivational factor that affect ethical consumption is knowledge and information. The role of knowledge and information is debated in the field of ethical consumption behavior. Some researchers suggest that ethical consumers have no need for detailed information when making every day purchasing decisions, like buying groceries (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1332; Yamoah et al., 2016, p. 191). On the other side of the spectrum, Burke et al. (2014, p. 2251) argues that more information would positively affect ethical purchase intentions. A third perspective is given on this dilemma by Carrigan et al. (2004, p. 409), they argue that it’s not a matter of quantity of information but an issue of framing the information.

1.2.3 Ethical theories
This study is focused on two key aspects. The first one being motivational factors for ethical consumption, and the second being the level of morality of this ethical consumption. By including the second aspect, this study will gain another dimension and a new perspective that is overlooked in the field of ethical consumption. The use of ethical theories will give us a guiding structure in determining how morally correct an action or a behavior really is. Therefore, ethical theories are an essential component of the theoretical framework of this study. We are going to use four categories of ethical theories, namely: consequential, non-consequential, character-based and emotional-based ethical theories. We have chosen these four categories since each ethical theory on its own has flaws and shortcomings (Morrison et al., 2018, p. 908) but together they build a comprehensive tool for evaluating a behavior (Dion, 2012; Gracia-Rosell & Mäkinen, 2012).

There are two main ethical theories within the domain of consequential ethical theories, namely egoism and utilitarianism. The reasoning behind egoism is that the decision maker
cannot know the consequences for everyone affected by his/her decision, therefore the
decision maker must pursue egoistic interest to achieve happiness (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 93). In contrast, form a utilitarian point of view, it is the decision maker’s moral obligation to evaluate how others will be affected by his/her decision and then choose the option that is most beneficial for the greater mass (Dion, 2012, p. 11). While the consequential ethical theories focus on the outcomes of actions the non-consequential ethical theory examine the underlying motives for this action. The most significant theory within this perspective is the ethics of duty. The foundation of ethic of duties is built on three main principles, consistency, human dignity, and universality (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 101). An action is thereby considered as morally correct if others could constantly follow the behavior, if people are treated with dignity, and if all rational people find the behavior acceptable (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 101-102).

A third perspective on ethical theories is ethics of virtues and it goes beyond the motives and outcomes of an action and focus instead on the character of the decision maker. In this theory, the action relates to the characteristics of the decision maker and these characteristics can be considered as either ethically correct or ethically incorrect (Elliot, 1991, p. 178). The most significant aspect of this theory is the aspect of personal development neglected in other ethical theories. This means that a person’s virtues could evolve with new experiences (Garcia-Ruiz & Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2014, p. 512; Morrison et al., 2018, p. 907). The fourth perspective on ethical theory is emotional based consisting of postmodern ethics. According to this theory, morally is highly subjective and based on emotional impulses and gut feelings (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 119).

1.2.4 Organic products: defined and in numbers

There are different contexts where one can study ethical consumption and the majority of previous studies (e.g Andorfer & Liebe, 2012; Davies & Gutche, 2016; Yamoah et al., 2016) have examined it in the context of fairtrade groceries. However, we want to take a different path and our study is therefore focused on the context of organic groceries instead. The reason for this being partially because we think it is a modern way for consumers to show concern for ethical issues, but also because it gives us fruitful access to the mainstream consumer segment. In this section we will start by defining what is meant by organic groceries, and finish with some numbers highlighting the growing impact of organic groceries in modern food and beverage consumption.

Organic products are those that are produced with the environment and animal protections in mind through the whole food chain (European Parliament, 2018). Organic farmers use natural resources in a responsible manner, contributes to animal welfare and biodiversity, as well as ecological stability (European Parliament, 2018). The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, (2016) are also in line with this displaying six key reason for why organic products is beneficial compared with regular products. These six aspects were: lack of pesticides, greater biodiversity, greater climate, better animal welfare, a thriving countryside, and an increased welfare for the farmer. The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (2016, p. 4) argue that ecological products are crucial in order for Sweden to reach a higher level of sustainable development where we can meet the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations. Therefore, organic products is key for reaching sustainable developments as defined by United Nations (1987).

Meeting the needs for today without compromising the needs of future generations is also the key vision for the KRAV-label (Krav, 2019, p. 18). KRAV is the most established
The sales of organic groceries have increased significantly in recent years. In 2008, 6 billion SEK worth of organic groceries was sold on the Swedish market (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 9). Comparing that with the 28 billion SEK worth of organic groceries sold in 2017 we can see an increase of 466% in less than ten years (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 9). Ekoweb (2017, p. 41) has also done a forecast on the sales of organic groceries in Sweden in the coming years, where they believe that we can reach a level of approximately 46 billion SEK by 2025. That would mean an increase of over 2 billion SEK each year.

Looking more on an international level we can see that sales of organic groceries has increasing around the world as well (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 30). US and Northern Europe is leading this development, where Sweden is one of few countries having more than 10% of groceries sold being organic (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 30). Other countries with similar shares are Austria, Switzerland and Denmark (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 30). Sweden is also a leading country in organic development when it comes to percentage of farming land customized for organic production (European Parliament, 2018). Sweden together with Austria has almost fifth of its farming land being customized for organic production, which is far higher than many European countries (European Parliament, 2018).

1.3 Research gap

As we mentioned in section 1.1 the key reason for choosing the subject of mainstream ethical consumption was due to the research gaps. Sandberg and Alvesson (2011, p. 27) argue that the most common way of finding fruitful research areas and formulating rewarding research question is to use gap-spotting. In this study we have been using this method and the results of our gap-spotting will now be presented.

One of the key gaps identify goes in line with what Sandberg and Alvesson (2011, p. 30) calls neglect spotting. According to Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1342) there is a huge gap when it comes to knowledge about mainstream ethical consumption, arguing that there is a substantial potential for future research. Mainstream consumers have a dominant influence on ethical consumption and should therefore not be overlooked (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1343). Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1342) further elaborate by saying that the literature is lacking actual behavioral data from the field and that too much attention has been given to intention-based surveys. (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 127) is also in line with this. Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1342) also state that from a mainstream domain of ethical consumption there is too little research from a qualitative perspective.

Another key gap is the confusion in the literature regarding the importance of different motivational factors, which is line with what Sandberg and Alvesson (2011, p. 29) calls confusion spotting. For example, the findings of Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1342) counterpoints many of the basic motivational assumptions in the literature of ethical consumption, which ads some ambiguity to the field. We can especially see that there is a confusion regarding the importance of social norms, habits, and consumer knowledge
and information. Some have argued for a strong importance for these motivational factors in ethical consumptions, whilst others have shown the opposite. This will be further elaborated on in the theoretical framework.

Furthermore, in previous research on ethical consumption the use of ethical theories in order to determine the level of morality of ethical behavior has been overlooked. Research in other areas such as tourism (Garcia-Rosell & Mäkinen, 2012) and leadership and organization (Dion, 2012) has used ethical theories in this way, but there is a clear gap in the field of ethical consumption. We have determined this gap by an extensive literature review through several databases such as Scopus, EBSCO Business Source Premier and Google Scholar. The only article that comes close to examining ethical consumption in relation to ethical theories is Barnett et al. (2005). However, they are not using ethical theories as a tool to evaluate the level of morality of ethical consumption. They are solely discussing ethical theories in relation to ethical consumption. Therefore, we see an opportunity to really add some originality by incorporate philosophical dimensions to mainstream ethical consumption.

In addition, the vast majority of studies on ethical consumption has been conducted in the context of fairtrade. For example, Andorfer and Liebe (2012) display a review of ethical consumption research conducted in the context of fairtrade and they found a total of 51 articles. We embrace this research, but we choose a different path in our specific research context, namely organic groceries. Some previous studies have taken this approach, for example Padel and Foster (2005) and Testa et al. (2018), but non to our knowledge has done it in the Swedish market. This is surprising due to Sweden's strong position in organic consumption (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 30) as we described in section 1.2.4.

We believe that by aiming at filling these gaps our study could be classified as good theoretical works as described by Crane et al. (2016, p. 788). According to Crane et al. (2016, p. 788-789) for a scientific contribution to be valuable it needs to have a sense of originality and be of good utility for both the research community and practitioners. Due to our interesting and well-defined position in regard to previous research we believe that these criterium can be met.

Adding these gaps together and we have the ingredients needed to create a rewarding research question. In order to do so, we summarize the gaps in figure 1. The blue oval to the left represents the gap of lacking behavioral data from mainstream ethical consumers as well as the confusion of the importance of different motivational factors. This creates the first part of our research question: What are the motives for mainstream ethical consumption... Then we have the orange oval to the right which represent the gap of ethical theories being overlooked in application to ethical consumption. This creates the second part of our research question: ...and how morally correct is this ethical behavior? Supporting this combined research question is the remaining two ovals: These two represents being in the context of organic groceries as well as being conducted using qualitative methods. The combined research question can be seen in its full form in the next section.
1.4 Research question
(1) What are the motives for mainstream ethical consumption, and (2) how morally correct is this ethical behavior?

1.5 Purpose
Looking at the first part of our research question we want to explore, using qualitative methods, the motivational factors influencing mainstream consumers in their choice of ethical products, and in our case organic groceries. We are aiming at contributing to the overlooked area of mainstream ethical consumption as well as exploring and add clarity to the confusion of motivational theories. In the second part of our research question we are aiming at analyzing the behavior of mainstream ethical consumers with the help of ethical theories. By this, we are hoping to determine the level of morality in this ethical behavior and therefore adding a philosophical dimension to ethical consumption.

1.6 Delimitations
We have chosen to approach ethical consumption in the context of organic groceries, including both food and beverages. This is because it enable us to reach the mainstream ethical consumer segment, since everyone needs to buy food and beverages. We have defined the mainstream ethical consumer as someone who frequently buy organic groceries from a mainstream outlet. With frequently we mean that you buy no less than 10% organic groceries, which is the current market share of organic groceries in Sweden. With mainstream outlets, we mean supermarkets, online grocery stores, and Systembolaget. Supermarkets since it is the most common outlet for grocery shopping, online grocery stores because the percentage of organic groceries purchased is higher online compared to physical supermarkets (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 6), and Systembolaget since it is the second biggest outlet for organic products in Sweden (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 7).
The study will be conducted in Sweden. The reason why we chose Sweden is due to the proximity and accessibility to potential respondents but also because Sweden is at the forefront regarding purchasing and manufacturing of organic products. For example, Sweden is just one out of four countries in the world to have more than 10 percent of sold groceries to be organic (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 30). Sweden is also the country in Europe with the second highest share of farming land adapted to produce organic products (European Parliament, 2018).

Theoretically when it comes to ethical consumption, we have chosen to limit our framework to motivational theories. We have also done some limitation when it comes to ethical theories choosing those theories best suitable for our study. Methodologically, we are limiting our study to a qualitative approach instead of a mixed method or quantitative approach. We are also choosing to be more subjective in our research paradigm and we choose to lean more towards an inductive approach.

1.7 Description of terms

**Ethical consumption** - The desire to make decisions based on moral beliefs and personal values.

**Organic groceries** - Groceries sold in Swedish grocery outlets, labeled with either KRAV labeling, EU-organic labeling or both. Organic products are those that are produced with the environment and animal protections in mind through the whole food chain.

**EU-organic labeling** - A label that is attached to all organic products. The label indicates that the product meets all the standards set by the EU.

**KRAV-labeling** - The most established eco-label in Sweden for food and beverage and has especially strict rules for animal welfare, health, social responsibility and the environment. KRAV fulfills the European organic legislation but are in some regards stricter and more comprehensive.

**Mainstream ethical consumer** - A consumer that frequently purchase organic groceries from mainstream grocery outlets. With frequently we mean at least 10% of all consumption being organic. We have chosen 10% since it is the average percentage in Swedish organic consumption.

**Mainstream outlet** - Supermarkets (e.g ICA, COOP, Willys and Lidl), Online grocery stores (e.g Mathem.se, Mat.se, Ica.se and Coop.se) and Systembolaget (The only place to buy alcohol above 3.5% in Sweden).
2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter we present the theories from which we lay the foundation to answer our research question. The chapter starts in a general manner with a description of ethical consumption. Then we move on to present motivation theories for ethical consumption. Finally we outline ethical theories needed to evaluate the level of morality of ethical consumption.

2.1 Ethical consumption and the ideal ethical consumer

The demand for organic food and ecological products has increased dramatically over the last couple of decades (Bezencon & Blili, 2010, p. 1306; Pieniak et al., 2010, p. 581). For example, in Sweden the sale of organic groceries has increased with more than 4.5 times during the last ten years (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 9). This new movement has affected everyone from the producers to the supermarkets and the policy makers. The organic agriculture sector is continuously taking shares from the conventional agriculture sector and the increasing numbers of organic groceries sold in supermarkets is undoubtable (Pieniak et al., 2010, p. 581). Alongside this increased interest from producers and consumers, the policy makers are also trying to accelerate this trend. For example, the European Commission in 2004, decided on an action plan to bolster and improve the organic agriculture sector (Pieniak et al., 2010, p. 581). In addition to this action plan, the European Commission in 2007 also presented a new regulation which set new standards for the process of producing organic products (Pieniak et al., 2010, p. 581). The increased demand for organic products can be related to a new type of consumption, namely ethical consumption.

Ethical consumption is a term that has evolved over the years. Initially the term implied a consumer behavior where purchasing decisions were affected by green issues and environmental awareness (Auger & Devinney, 2007, p. 362). According to Carrigan et al. (2004, p. 140) the term ethical consumption has today expanded to include a wider spectrum of activities which makes ethical consumption harder to define. Alongside environmental issues, the ethical consumer can also have concerns regarding social issues like animal welfare, human rights and terms of employment (Auger & Devinney, 2007, p. 362). Cornish (2013, p. 337) use a vaguer definition of ethical consumption and describe it as a consumption behavior where decisions are based or affected by the consumer’s feeling of social responsibility. Caren and Matten (2016, p. 367) further adds to the complexity of ethical consumption when they add boycotting to the activities covered by the concept. When adding all the activities and concerns of ethical consumption together, Crane and Matten (2017, p. 367) describe it as “the conscious and deliberate choice to base consumption choices on personal moral beliefs and values”. This abstract yet including definition of ethical consumption is the one that we adhere to.

Several studies have tried to define the consumer who engage in ethical consumption (Cornish, 2013, p. 337; Padel & Foster, 2005 p. 611; Paul & Rana, 2014, p.414). According to these authors, the typical ethical consumer has traditionally been described as above average educated, higher income and with much knowledge and awareness of environmental and social issues. However, it is a generally accepted fact that ethical consumption is a growing phenomenon (Bray et al., 2011, p. 597). This phenomenon can largely be described by the increased availability of ethical products in mainstream outlets like supermarkets and online grocery stores (Burke et al., 2014, p. 2241; Doran, 2009, p.
Due to this development, ethical consumption can no longer be described as a behavior exclusively adopted by ethical extremists but rather something that the mainstream consumer can adopt (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 367). Therefore making our aim of mainstream consumers relevant in ethical consumption.

What is clear, is the fact that the ideal ethical consumers make consumption decisions based on other factors than self-interest, in other words, they evaluate how their decision will affect others (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 367). The ethical consumer is also willing to sacrifice some personal comfort to perform an ethical behavior (Lin & Niu, 2018, p. 1681). For example, they might sacrifice time and money compared to other less ethical options (Ganglmair-Wooliscroft & Wooliscroft, 2019, p. 145). According to Burke et al. (2014, p. 2246), the ethical consumer adopts an ethical behavior because they genuinely believe they can make a difference. This due to the fact that the ethical consumer believe that their choices make a difference, not matter how small their contribution is (Carrigan et al., 2004, p. 411). Existing research also show that the ethical consumer identifies with their ethical decisions and they consider the ethical behavior as a salient part of their identity (Shaw & Shiu, 2002, p. 110). In other words, the ethical consumer makes decisions that are based on economic, environmental and social concerns (Shaw et al., 2005, p. 196).

One critical question that arises when reading the existing research on the ethical consumer is how ethical their actual behavior and underlying motives really is? For example, Pieniak et al. (2010) describe that consumers might have both egocentric and altruistic reasons for purchasing and consuming organic groceries. Furthermore, Davies and Gutsche (2016) show that non-value-based motivations also can have an effect on ethical consumption. In the next section of this theoretical framework will we outline different motivational factors influencing ethical consumption that has been found in previous research.

2.2 Motivational factors affecting ethical consumption

In figure 2 below, we display key motivational factors discussed in existing literature regarding ethical consumption. We have identified three main themes (presented in the top of the figure in blue), namely: altruistic value-based motivations, egoistic value-based motivations, and non-value-based motivations. In total, nine sub-themes are identified being social justice, win-win, guilt, self-satisfaction, social norms, well-being and health, product quality, habits, and knowledge/information. In the next sections each sub-theme will be presented in relation to the respective main-theme.
2.3 Altruistic value-based motivations

2.3.1 Social justice, guilt and win-win

The ideal ethical consumer is driven by altruistic motivation in their strive for social justice, which can be described as the desire to make a difference for others (Yamoah et al., 2016, p. 184). By engaging in an ethical consumption behavior, the consumer wants to contribute to equality, improved production processes and enhanced standards, which give them a sense of social justice (Davies and Gutsche, 2016, p. 1337). Characteristics for ethical consumption driven by social justice is the consumers’ perception that their actions make a difference (Carrigan et al., 2004, p. 411; Shaw et al., 2005, p. 191). In their contribution, the ethical consumer motivated by social justice, believe they are part of a bigger movement of ethical consumption (Burke et al., 2014, p. 2240). By having knowledge and awareness about environmental and social issues, the ethical consumers try to solve these issues by engaging in ethical behaviors like buying organic food (Shin et al., 2019, p. 110; Stern et al., 1999, p. 91; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). In contrast, the unethical consumer rationalizes their decision not to buy ethical products with the argument that their purchases make no difference (Bray et al., 2011, p. 603). Another characteristic for the desire for social justice is the willingness to sacrifice personal interest in order to contribute to a bigger cause (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008, p. 461). This is could for example be to the sacrifice of personal interest in order to benefit animal welfare (Carrigan et al., 2004, p.406).

Beside the feeling of moral obligation there is a second motive for engaging in ethical behavior in the strive for social justice, namely reduction of the feeling of social guilt. By
purchasing “ethically correct” products, the consumer gets the product they needed, but at the same time they alleviate the feeling of social guilt, creating a win-win situation (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1338). Bray et al. (2011, p. 602) explain that their findings suggest that although their respondents claimed that altruistic reasons were the main motivation for ethical consumption, their actions showed that alleviation of social guilt was more significant.

It seems to be desirable for consumers to look for win-win situations to facilitate ethical consumption. Ferran and Grunert (2005, p. 226) explains that just like regular consumers, the ethical consumer wants to fulfill their personal needs, but with the difference that they also want their purchasing behavior to be beneficial for others. This is often the case in purchasing of organic groceries (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). This win-win can be seen as a situation of conflicting interest with the potential of creating paradoxical tension. Paradoxical tension occurs when there is contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneous over time (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 387). Each element is logical when considered on their own but are seen as irrational and inconsistent when combined (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 387). Paradoxes can be seen as the Taoist symbol of yin yang, where elements are oppositional yet also synergetic (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 386). The paradox perspective is suitable when there is a constant pressure to engage in the demands of both elements (Gaim & Wåhlin, 2016, p. 35), as when there is a pressure to engage in both altruistic and egoistic demands in ethical consumption. Gaim and Wåhlin (2018, p. 42) further argue that the paradoxical tension could be managed by finding a middle path between the elements. Instead of choosing either A or B, one could instead choose the path of C, which represent a synthesis of paradoxical tension that enables the best of both worlds (Gaim & Wåhlin, 2018, p. 42). Departing from this win-win situation, four egoistic-based motives will now be presented.

2.4 Egoistic value-based motivations

2.4.1 Self-satisfaction

Even though ethical consumption seems to increase, and sales of organic food is growing, the motivations for ethical purchase decisions is debatable. Pieniak et al. (2010, p. 581), describe that especially in purchasing of organic products, consumers can have self-satisfactory reasons for buying. Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000, p. 359) has shown similar results that indicates that consumption of “ethical correct” products such as organic food is driven by egocentric reasons rather than concern for others. Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1338) discovered in their study that the strive for self-satisfaction was one of the most significant motives among ethical consumers. In other words, the urge to maximize their own utility is a stronger motivator than helping others (David & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1338).

Furthermore, the findings of Padel and Foster (2005, p. 618) suggests that consumers partly buy ethical products because it makes them feel good about themselves. This can be explained by the fact that consumers wish to be personally affected before they will engage in ethical consumption (Carrigan et al. 2004, p. 406). This strengthen the correlation found by Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1338) that suggests a link between the purchase of ethical products and the feeling of happiness. In line with this, Yamoah et al. (2016, p. 191-192) observes that ethical consumers purchase ethical products for self-satisfactory reasons. These reasons include sufficiency and self-reliance, curiosity and
interest in identifying new products (Yamoah, 2016, p. 184). This shows that consumers who join the ethical consumption movement do so in search for excitement and self-fulfillment (Hoffman & Hutter, 2012, p. 231).

Although it might be the strive for self-satisfaction that drives consumers to engage in ethical consumption, it does not have to mean that their motives are immoral. Varul (2010, p. 183) states that the ethical obligation is a salient aspect of the consumer’s self-identity and therefore there is no conflict between morally correct behavior and the strive for self-satisfaction. In fact, the study by Ferran and Grunert (2005, p. 226) suggests that all consumers search for self-satisfaction but at the same time the outcome of their behavior will benefit others if they choose ethical products.

2.4.2 Social norms

Social norms are an influential factor for human behavior, and it is defined as a set of guidelines set by society in order to maintain societal control and stability, enabling people to co-exist (Lin et al., 2018, p. 1691). According to social norm theory people tend to follow the behavior of others that they can identify with, as well as people that they see as a reference group (Goldstein et al., 2008, p. 475). People identify with others at different levels, ranging from specific social groups such as family and friends, to broader groups such as gender and society (Goldstein et al., 2008, p. 475). Aligning with these groups can make individuals feel that they are a part of something great and important (Hoffman & Hutter, 2012, p. 231). Previous research has discussed upon the impact of social norms regarding ethical consumption, and as with other motivational factors two different groups are created. On the one hand we have studies arguing for a notable impact of social norm adherence, while on the other hand we have studies arguing for the opposite.

The former, arguing for the notable impact of social norm adherence in ethical consumption, seems to have the strongest support in previous research. Cornish (2013, p. 340) highlights that social relationship is a strong predictor for ethical consumption and that people tend to buy ethical products in order to meet expectation from different social groups. The aspects of “fitting in” is key (Cornish, 2013, p. 340). The reason for this could be that social norms have positive effect on ethical behavior (Stern et al., 1999, p. 91), intention (Shin et al., 2019, p. 117-118), as well as attitudes (Lin et al., 2018, p. 1686). Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1341) stress similar aspects saying that mainstream ethical consumers wish to belong to a better, more ethical group of people in order to benefit the self. In this way people enable a space for social interaction which can result in beneficial utility (Papaoikonomou et al., 2012, p. 21). Vermeir and Verbeke (2006, p. 187) stresses the importance of social norms to an even greater extent saying that socially desirable benefits are the key reason for ethical consumption. Vermeir and Verbeke (2006, p. 187) highlights friends and family as important pressure groups, but Yamoah et al. (2016, p. 192) argues for the social pressure of external actors such as politicians, celebrities and opinion leaders.

However, there are some authors who argue that social norms might not have that much of an impact on ethical consumption. The result by Burke et al. (2014, p. 2252) show that social aspects such as fitting in with peers and social status concern was not as important compared to other motivational factors in ethical consumption. Testa et al. (2018, p. 334) stresses similar concern saying that social pressure is not an influencing factor on ethical
consumption attitude. Carrigan et al. (2004, p. 412), which examined ethical consumption behavior of older consumers, also found a low level of social norm influence on ethical consumption.

2.4.3 Health and well-being

Several studies have found that concerns for health and well-being are key motives for ethical consumption (e.g. Burke et al, 2014, p. 2240; Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1335; Lin et al, 2018, p. 1686; Paul & Rana, 2012, p. 414). This egoistic motive is especially significant in purchase of ethical food products (Shin et al., 2019, p. 111; Shaw et al., 2005, p. 192). Cornish (2013, p.338) state that organic food is perceived to be healthier and therefore bought for health reasons rather than ethical reasons. Especially the use of “organic” in product labeling of food products means that consumers perceive the product as healthier, since the general opinion is that organic products are free from pesticides (Padel & Foster, 2005, p. 609). The purchase of ethical products can also be driven by fear of harmful substances, such as chemicals (Cornish, 2013, p. 338). Cornish (2013, p. 338) findings also suggests that although consumers that buy ethical product out of fear recognize ethical credentials on the product, they admit they would still buy the product without them. This further strengthen the argumentation by Burke et al. (2014, p. 2252) that ethical consumption can be motivated by egocentric factors rather than altruistic. Even in the case of families with children, the care for the individual health rather than family health seem to be a bigger motivator for ethical consumption (Padel & Foster, 2005, p. 619).

However, the role of health and well-being as a key motivational factor for ethical consumption behavior are ambiguous. Several studies have investigated how health consciousness affect the attitude toward organic food and the results are inconclusive (Cornish, 2013, p.338; Testa et al., 2018, p.330). Another debatable question regarding health as a motivational factor for ethical consumption is; how much healthier is organic food compared to conventional food? Some studies confirm that organic food is healthier and contain higher levels of nutrition, while others found no differences between organic food and conventional food in terms of nutritional value (Palupi et al., 2011, p. 2774). Testa et al. (2018, p. 330) for example explains that consumers of organic food buy these products because they perceive it to be a healthier choice. It has been proven that the organic agriculture is healthier for those who work in the agriculture (The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, n.d.). However, there are no clear evidence that organic food is healthier for those who consume the products (The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, n.d.). It is nearly impossible to prove the positive effects of eating organic food since humans are exposed to problematic chemicals from several sources simultaneously (The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation n.d.).

In several studies, they use the term well-being instead of health as a motivator for ethical consumption (e.g. This is interesting since well-being is a term that has a wider meaning beyond health and includes everything from poverty to social standards (Lin & Niu, 2018, p. 1682). The Greeks defined well-being as eudemonic, which means the happiness and the satisfaction that we experience both in our body as well as in our minds (Lin & Niu, 2018, p. 1681). To achieve a high level of eudemonic well-being we need to improve our social standard in terms of health, knowledge, material life as well as contribution to others well-being (Ganglmair-Wooliscroft & Wooliscroft, 2019, p.144; Lin & Niu, 2018, p. 1681). Ganglmair-Wooliscroft and Wooliscroft (2019, p.156) found that the strive for eudemonic well-being correlates positively with ethical consumption behavior.
Another interesting aspect of health and well-being are its strong correlation with perceived product quality (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1335). Therefore product quality will be handled in the next section.

2.4.4 Product quality

Product quality is for many consumers a crucial purchasing criteria and previous studies has shown the importance of ethical products being at least equal in quality level compared to normal products. Ferran and Grunert (2005, p. 226) state that consumer does not only buy ethical products for its ethical benefits, but also for its overall quality. Cornish (2013, p. 340) are also in line with this saying that consumer is often willing to try ethical products if it does not mean settling for worse quality. This means that ethical attributes cannot alone create ethical consumption (Auger & Devinney, 2007, p. 363). Quality also extends to product design aspects where ethical consumers wants ethical products to be of equal appeal to ordinary products (Shaw et al., 2005, p. 194). In the study by Strong et al. (1996, p. 11) 45% of their respondent stated that ethical products were perceived to be of equal quality as regular products, and 35% stated that they were perceived to be of higher quality. The aspects of perceived higher quality have also been shown in many other studies.

According to Cornish (2013, p. 340) perceived better quality is a strong motivational force for ethical consumption, and people tend to buy organic food because they think they are of better quality and are tastier. Bray et al. (2011, p. 602) has found similar result showing that quality conscious consumers tend to go for ethical products due to their quality attributes. Taste seem to be an important attribute in food consumption, where organic food purchasing often relates to the perception of better taste (Padel & Foster, 2005, p. 618) and better nutritional value (Papaoikonomou et al., 2012, p. 21). This could be due to a perception of better ingredients and better standards (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1336). Palupi et al. (2011, p. 2779) provides some evidence for this showing that organic dairy products have a better nutritional quality than non-organic. However, even though ethical products might be of better quality compared to regular products, it could be hard sometimes for consumer to spot the difference (Carrigan et al., 2004, p. 409).

Another interesting aspect in the quality perception of ethical products is the relation between price premium and quality. Ethical products are often more expensive and Davies & Gutsche (2016, p. 1336) argue that there is a strong link between people paying premium prices and their perception of higher quality. Cornish (2013, p. 340) also touch upon the fact that premium prices can have a significant impact of consumers perception of quality. Davies et al. (2012, p. 45) however display findings that the higher price of ethical products was not related to a higher quality perception.

2.5 Non value-based motivations

2.5.1 Habit

In their article, Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) found several values-based factors motivating consumers in ethical consumption, but they also found an important non-value-based motivational factor, namely habits. Habits is a type of behavior that tends to happen semi-automatic, gaining strength when an action is performed several times
It is developed through continuous learning and minimize the need for cognitive evaluation (Hiller & Woodall, 2018, p. 10). This means that habits demand little thought and is guided by what consumers feels comes natural to them (Hiller & Woodall, 2018, p. 11). Carrigan and Attalla (2001, p. 573) argues that consumers choose to rely on the mental shortcuts of habits mainly because of time constraints. The modern consumer does not have the time to make thorough evaluations in their food purchasing decisions and therefore choose the path of least resistance (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001, p. 573).

Many of the respondents in Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) express that they bought ethical products not because of ethical product attributes, but because of habits. For example, some of their respondents expressed that their ethical consumption just happened without them even think much about it (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1332). According to Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) much of the ethical habits was created through availability in stores where the brands consumer usually bought converted to ethical products. Yamoah et al. (2016, p. 191) also supports this view saying that consumer tend to buy from existing brands which starts to carry ethical labels. This meant that existing habits, often created through brand loyalty, is encroached by ethical products (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1332). The relation between habits and brand loyalty is an interesting and in their article, Carrigan et al. (2014, p. 409-410) show that brand loyalty has a notable impact on ethical consumption.

Other studies have also shown the effects of habits on ethical consumption. For example, Ghazali et al. (2018, p. 649) showed that green habits have a positive effect on green purchase intentions and behaviors. Furthermore, Ghazali et al. (2018, p. 649) also showed that green habits moderate the positive relationship between green purchase attitudes and green purchase intention. However, some research has argued for the lack of habitual behavior of ethical consumer. For example, Shrum et al. (1995, p. 80) stresses that ethical consumers are careful in their shopping habits and that they are always looking for products that in a better way meets their needs and preferences. Hiller and Woodall (2018, p. 14) is partly in line with this saying that habits are likely to change when new advantages arise. Shrum et al. (1995, p. 81) also contradicts the fact that ethical consumers are brand loyal, and that is especially when it comes to being loyal to existing well-established brands. Therefore, even though habit seems to be an important factor for ethical consumption there is some confusion that needs to be further explored.

2.5.2 Knowledge and information

The role of knowledge and information in ethical consumption is a highly debatable subject. One of the key aspects of the debate is whether customer knowledge about ethical concepts is of high importance or not for ethical consumption. According to Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) ethical consumers are not interested in searching for detailed information to build decisions on. Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) further argue that ethical consumers strongly believes in mythical benefits of ethical products and that by providing detailed and rich information this halo effect would be dismantled. Marketing communication therefore benefits from ambiguity and vagueness (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1342). Yamoah et al. (2016, p. 191) are also in line with this and stresses that knowledge might not be relevant for low involvement ethical products such as groceries. Pieniak et al. (2010, p. 583) also acknowledge that some studies have found this negative relationship between ethical consumption and consumer knowledge but argues that many studies have proven the opposite. Pieniak et al. (2010, p. 583) further elaborates on this.
by showing result indicating that knowledge of ethical concepts (e.g. organic) positively affect ethical food consumption.

This level of ambiguity of the importance of knowledge raises the question about the amount of information that should be provided to consumers? Some authors argue that less information is beneficial, whilst others argue for the opposite. For example, Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000, p. 363) found in their study that more information would have little or none effect on consumers purchasing behavior. Carrigan et al. (2004, p. 406) stresses similar concerns saying that consumers have sensory limitations preventing them to process high amount of information. However, many authors are arguing the opposite. Bray et al. (2011, p. 602), Burke et al. (2014, p. 2251), Davies et al. (2012, p. 45), Padel and Foster (2005, p. 621), Carrigan and Attalla (2001, p. 574) and Shrum et al. (1995, p. 80) all argue for the importance of more information in order to foster ethical consumption. Also, to give a more recent example, Testa et al. (2018, p. 334) showed that knowledge about organic products is positively related to the intention to buy organic.

Another perspective on the issue is to put less emphasis on the amount of information and instead focus on the way the information is framed. According to Carrigan et al. (2004, p. 409) it is not a case of more information but more of the right information containing aspects of credibility, accessibility and reliability. The information needs to be easy to understand as well as being well-targeted in order to overcome information processing limitations (Shaw et al., 2005, p. 189). In this way companies enable consumers to make easier and more effective ethical decisions (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001, p. 574).
2.6 Ethical theories

In order to evaluate the level of morality of ethical consumption, ethical theories can be used. In the following section we will present consequential, non-consequential, character-based and emotional-based ethical theories, which can be seen in figure 3 below. All these theories have their benefits and shortcomings, and therefore several ethical theories can be used to shine lights on ethical dilemmas from different perspectives (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 124). This is also supported by Morrison et al. (2018, p. 908) who argues that ethical theories on their own are not sufficient enough to explain levels of morality in actions. In addition Barnet et al. (2005, p. 1) argue for the relevance of multiple ethical theories in the field of ethical consumption.

In the figure, a graphic demonstration of how the ethical theories are interrelated to each other are displayed, as well as how they relate to the action of ethical consumption. The consequential and non-consequential theories act as a guiding framework on a concrete and rational level, while the character- and emotional-based theories are more abstract and subjective in nature. In the next sections each ethical theory will be outlined.

![Diagram of ethical theories]

Figure 3: A graphic demonstration of ethical theories being used. The figure is created by the authors.

2.6.1 Consequentialist theories

Consequentialist ethics is the dominant framework in philosophical ethics (Elliot, 1991, p. 181). It bases the moral judgement on the outcomes of certain actions, and the fundamental logic is that an action can be considered to be morally right if the outcome is desirable (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 92). There are two main ethical theories that goes under the branch of consequentialist ethics, namely: egoism and utilitarianism (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 92; Dion, 2012, p. 9). These two theories are useful in this study because they enable us to evaluate the level of morality in ethical consumption from the perspective of outcomes. That is because the outcomes of actions are of interest for both theories, but egoism is focusing on the outcomes of the decision maker, whilst utilitarianism focus more on the outcomes for a larger set of people (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 93).
Egoism

Many of the motivational theories for ethical consumption that we have displayed is based on egoistic values. Therefore, it is of use to include an ethical theory that evaluates egoistic behaviors. Egoism dates back to ancient Greek and has in the last three centuries gained traction in modern economics (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 93). According to egoism, an action can be considered to be morally right if decision-makers freely can decide to follow either their short-term desires or long-term interest (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 93). The underlying logic is that people have limited insight into the consequences of their action and that the only way a person can achieve happiness and a good life is by pursuing egoistic objectives (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 93). The logic also extends by saying that the pursuit of self-interest will also benefit the utility of others (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 94). Thus, egoism creates spillover effects resulting in utilitarian advantages (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 94).

Egoism has received a lot of criticism and according to Burgess and Jackson (2013, p. 530) many textbook about ethics display egoism as a false theory. Also, some refer egoism as being a wicked and preposterous view (Burgess & Jackson, 2013, p. 530). However, according to Bouville (2008, p. 114) egoism is simple and natural and it contains the attributes (consistent, systematic, comprehensive, and helpful) of a sound ethical theory. Burgess and Jackson (2013, p. 541) further elaborates saying that egoism is vigor and sophisticated and therefore should be treated with respect. We therefore feel comfortable in using the ethical theory of egoism when analyzing the actions of ethical consumers.

Utilitarianism

In the mind of a utilitarian, the egoistic perspective is far too limited and self-centered (Garcia-Rosell & Mäkinen, 2013, p. 400). The egoist only values the satisfaction of individual interests while the utilitarian strives to maximize the utility for the many (Gustafson, 2013, p. 351). Due to the fact that previous research in ethical consumption has identified altruistic motivation as important, utilitarianism is a viable ethical theory to evaluate ethical consumption.

Utilitarianism dates to the antiquity and is argued to be one of the most established ethical theory and moral philosophy (Robertson et al., 2007, p. 403). The theory was modernized during the nineteenth century by British economists and philosophers, especially Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 98). The utilitarian tries to increase pleasure and reduce pain to maximize the utility of everyone affected by an action (Dion, 2012, p. 10). Pleasure represent the positive outcome of an action while pain represent the negative outcome (Dion, 2012, p.10). In its purest form, utilitarianism seek to create the greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest amount of people (Dion, 2012, p. 11). It would mean that a utilitarian consumer would evaluate every purchasing decision and always choose the alternative that would give the most pleasure to everyone affected by the decision (Garcia-Ruiz & Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2014, p. 511).

Those who criticize utilitarianism says that this is an impossible approach to everyday decisions. If you buy a product, it could affect individuals in many different countries and how will one estimate how much pleasure or pain the decision inflicts on them (Dion, 2012, p. 11). Also it could be difficult to quantify pleasure and pain (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 100). However, utilitarianism can despite criticism be used a useful evaluative framework to guide the decision processes toward more ethically correct decisions.
(Gustafson, 2013, p. 325; Witzum & Young, 2013, p. 576). One way is to use a utilitarian analysis where the decision maker compares two possible options and evaluate how much utility each option will create for each stakeholder (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 98). The option with the highest level of combined utility will be the most ethically correct option (Crane & Matten, 2016 p. 98). This utilitarian analysis will be used in the discussion chapter (see section 6.7.2).

2.6.2 Non-consequentialist theory

Examining the outcomes of an action is a good way of determining the level of morality, but it does not give the complete picture. It is also useful to analyze the underlying motivations for the actions, and therefore we want to include the non-consequentialist theory of ethics of duties in the study. From this view, an action is considered to be morally correct if the underlying motives and principles are considered to be correct (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 92; García-Ruiz & Rodríguez-Lluesma, 2014, p. 511). It is all about doing the right thing for the right reasons (Dion, 2012, p. 13; Robertson et al., 2007, p. 406), making it the ethics of principle (Elliot, 1991, p. 184).

Ethics of duties mostly derive from the work of Immanuel Kant and the developed framework called categorical imperative (Robertson et al., 2007, p. 406), which could be a useful tool for analyzing the underlying motives of ethical consumption. The framework consists of what he believed was the essence of morality and it was designed to give a set of rules that can be applied to any given situation (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 101; Morrison et al., 2018, p. 906). In total, as described by Crane and Matten (2016, p. 101), the framework consists of three main principles: consistency, human dignity, and universality. According to the first principle of consistency an action can be regarded as right if other people in a consistent manner should follow the behavior. The second principle refers to aspects of human dignity saying that you should always treat people as ends and never as means only. In this way respect is created and human dignity is not ignored. The last principle, and maybe the most important one (Robertson et al., 2007, p. 406), is the aspect of universality which asks the question whether the action is acceptable to every rational human being.

2.6.3 Character-based theory

Lately, there has been a shift in focus in research regarding ethical theories and a lot of attention has been drawn to the character of the decision maker, namely virtues ethics (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 114). What makes virtue ethics different from consequential theories of ethics, is the integration of the decision makers character (Garcia-Ruiz & Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2014, p. 512). This would imply that a specific action could be linked to a certain type of characteristics that can be either ethically correct or ethically incorrect (Elliot, 1991, p. 178). This would also imply that action cannot simply be judged based on their outcomes or underlying motivations (Elliot, 1991, p. 178). Therefore, virtue ethics is included in the study in order to enable an examination of the character of mainstream ethical consumers.

In basic terms, one could say that ethically correct actions are made by ethically correct individuals, and the definition of an ethically correct individual is based on that person’s virtuous traits (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 114). Song and Kim (2018, p. 1161) explains that virtuous traits are characteristics that are commonly seen as positive and that forms an individual into a morally correct person. Furthermore, virtuous traits can be acquired
through new experiences and personal development (Song & Kim, 2018, p. 1161) as well as habits (Crane & Matten 2016, p. 114). Virtuous traits can be divided into two categories; 1) Self-Regarding traits like courage, self-efficacy, self-control and wisdom, 2) Other-regarding traits like altruism, empathy and fairness (Song & Kim, 2018, p. 1161-1163).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of ethics of virtues is the element of development that is neglected in consequential and non-consequential theories (Garcia-Ruiz & Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2014, p. 512; Morrison et al., 2018, p. 907). The element of development is interesting in our study since it would mean that consumers of ethical products could develop their virtues or character to become more ethically correct in their consumption behavior. This is especially interesting because of the correlation between non-value-based motivations like habit and knowledge and the development of virtues.

2.6.4 Emotional-based theory

Until this point we have been looking at ethical theories that examines the consequences of an action (egoism and utilitarianism), the underlying principles and motivation of an action (ethics of duties), as well as the character of the individual conducting the action (virtue ethics). Adding to this and expanding the base for analysis of ethical consumption is the emotional-based theory of postmodern ethics. This ethical theory does not give us a framework to work from, but it gives us a change to evaluate the morality of ethical consumption based on our gut feeling.

Postmodern ethics question the link between rationality and morality which is advocated by egoism, utilitarianism and ethics of duties (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 119). According to postmodern ethics, morality is rooted in emotional moral impulses and therefore rationality is seen as a hindering force (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 119). Morality is highly subjective, and people base their judgement on emotions, experiences and instincts which all adds up to a gut feeling of right and wrong (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 119). Therefore, postmodern ethics encourage people to question everyday issues based on their gut feelings and what their inner emotions tells them is right and wrong (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 119).
3. Research Methodology

In this chapter we discuss our research methodology, starting with our pre-understanding of the research topic. Then we continue with an overview of our research paradigm before we move on to our research approach and research strategy. To conclude this chapter we describe our literature review and our criticism of sources.

3.1 Pre-understanding

Pre-understanding put a sense of direction for the study (Gilje & Grimmen, 2007, p. 179) and it helps researcher understand and interpret actions of humans (Hartman, 2004, p. 191). In other words you could say that pre-understanding is the knowledge-base guiding the researcher. Our theoretical pre-understanding is quite similar due to our involvement in the same business administration program. Through the five years studying together we have been taking the majority of classes together, but with one difference, Oskar is majoring in management whilst Nicklas is majoring in marketing. However, we see this small difference as strength in our collaboration because it enables us to bring different perspectives into certain matters. However, the key mutual knowledge that we possess is about sustainability issues. As we mentioned in section 1.1 regarding choice of subject, sustainability has been a part of the majority of courses at the university and it has therefore created a strong foothold in our minds. Even though sustainability is not a key term in this paper, sustainability is a crucial part of ethical consumption and especially organic food consumption. Therefore, we believe that our common knowledge-base of sustainability will be advantageous in this study.

According to Gilje and Grimmen (2007, p. 183) personal experience is also an important part of the researchers pre-understanding. None of us has any working-experience from any of the outlets of interest in this study, such as physical or online supermarkets. However, we have a good amount of experience when it comes to organic food consumption. We would actually classify ourselves as mainstream ethical consumers who frequently buy a portion of our groceries organic. We think that this experience is useful in this study because it enables us to put ourselves in the position of the respondents, enabling us to in a good way interpret and create an understanding of their actions and motives.

It should be noted though that our pre-understanding can also shape our values (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 60). The impact of values in research is debatable where some argue that values has no place in science, whilst some argue that they are a natural part of it (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 60). The last argument is based on the fact that it is impossible to fully control one’s values (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 60). Due to the more subjective nature of this study, which will be further elaborated on in the next section, we choose to embrace our values. However, we are choosing to move along in a careful manner because we do not want them to have too much impact on the research process. This in line with Bryman and Bell (2017, p. 61) saying that values should be controlled to a certain degree. Our strategy to do this is to frequently review each other in regard of our values along the process and in this way minimizing our potential biases.
3.2 Research paradigm

One of the key issues of research paradigm is the dichotomy of subjectivity and objectivity. According to Morgan (2007, p. 71) in teaching purpose it is often common to view these two as extremes where research is seen as either completely objective or completely subjective. However in practice, it is hard to imagine any researcher being on either extreme because they often tend to work in duality where they go back and forth between the two (Morgan, 2007, p. 71). Therefore, Morgan (2007, p. 72) argues for an intersubjective approach due to its ability of capturing this duality. Long et al. (2000, p. 192) adds another dimension to this by displaying several metaphorical assumptions handling the middle ground between objectivity and subjectivity. One of these metaphorical assumptions are in good line with our research context, namely: *the social world as culture and theater*. That is because we do not only want to study the behavior of ethical consumption per se but also the social meaning of the behavior. This is in line with what Long et al. (2000, p. 193) calls the social world as culture and theater. This leans more towards subjectivism and is a common approach in marketing research and especially consumer behavior (Long et al., 2000, p. 193).

With these aspects in regard we are embracing an intersubjective approach leaning more towards subjectivity, but what does this imply when it comes to ontology and epistemology? Ontology touches upon questions regarding reality and how the world functions (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 130). Due to our more subjective approach constructionism is best suited in our case. We believe that our respondents, through their own subjectivity, can interpret ethical consumption in different ways making each individual's perception of reality relatival. According to Saunders et al. (2012, p. 132) constructivism can capture this subjective perception of reality, which might not be possible from a more objective approach like objectivism.

Furthermore, epistemology touches upon the debate of what should be seen as acceptable knowledge (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 47). We are adapting an interpretivist approach due to our more subjective stance. This study aims at forming an understanding of ethical consumption rather than in a strict manner explaining it, which Patel and Davidson (2011, p. 28-29) argues is in line with interpretivism. Furthermore, our pre-understandings and values as researchers is difficult to fully exclude from the equation (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 60). However, in interpretivism this is not an issue because the researchers own values and beliefs is seen as an important part of the research process (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 141).

3.3 Research approach

The relation between theory and data is critical and a common question is whether research is theory-driven, or data driven. A common way of describing this relation is to view it from the perspective of extremes where research is either driven by theory (deductive) or data (inductive) (Morgan, 2007, p. 70). However, that rarely reflects the actual research process where it is impossible to operate exclusively in a data- or theory-driven fashion (Morgan, 2007, p. 71). Saunders et al. (2016, p. 149) are also in line with this saying that you should not see induction and deduction as rigid separate divisions. In fact, Saunders et al. (2016, p. 149) argue that it is possible to combine the two and that it actually could be advantageous. However, it should be noted that one of the two is often more dominant (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 149).
The dominant approach in this study is inductive, which is due to its exploratory and theory building nature (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 145). One of the goals with induction is to use collected data to explore and identify themes in order to create a new conceptual framework (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 145). This is also the key aim of this study where we want to explore the motivational factors for mainstream ethical consumption and with the adoption of ethical theories create a new conceptual model. Furthermore, induction is putting emphasis on going from the specific to the general (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 145). This is also the case with our study where we are examining organic grocery consumption in order to create a general theory in the area of ethical consumption. In addition, we are aiming at generating claims and propositions which future studies with a more deductive approach can test. This is also in line with an inductive approach (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 145). It should however be noted there is some glints of deduction in our study, but only to a limited degree. The deductive part of our is found in the theory part where we have developed a substantial theoretical framework guiding our research. This framework operates as a source of inspiration and reference, guiding our exploration in mainstream ethical consumption.

3.4 Research strategy

As described in our research gap, the mainstream consumers segment has largely been neglected in the research field of ethical consumption. Davies and Gutsche (2016, p.1342) argue that mainstream consumers have a major impact on ethical consumption and that existing research have overlooked the need for actual behavioral data from this segment. Furthermore, they argue that the lack of research on the mainstream segment is especially significant from a qualitative perspective (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1342). Instead, the use of quantitative data collected through surveys have been the dominant research strategy in the field of ethical consumption (Andorfer & Liebe, 2012, p. 421). Therefore, we wish to examine the actual behavior from a qualitative perspective.

By conducting a qualitative study with mainstream consumers our aim is to create a deeper understanding for the underlying motives of ethical consumption. This is in line with the benefits of qualitative studies described by Andorfer and Liebe (2012, p. 420). Andorfer and Liebe (2012, p. 420 further argue that a qualitative strategy is beneficial when researchers wishes to understand different aspects of every day decisions in ethical consumption. In the same line, Bjereld et al. (2009, p. 118) explains that the qualitative strategy is the most viable when the researcher tries to understand the traits of an observed phenomenon. Also, Olsson and Sörensen (2011, p. 19) describes that the qualitative research strategy is suitable when the aim is to achieve a deeper perspective of the research topic.

The choice of qualitative research strategy is also reasonable in relation to our choice of research paradigm and our research approach. We argue for constructivism, interpretivism and an inclination towards an inductive approach. These choices are all in line with the traditional use of qualitative research strategy according to Bryman and Bell (2017, p. 58).
3.5 Literature review

According to Wilson (2009, p. 430) it is important to be transparent when it comes to the literature review, and therefore this section will be assigned to that. However, we will not go into specific details in every part of the process, which Finfgeld-Connett and Johnson (2012, p. 200) argues is suitable due to the literature review process often being complex and unstructured.

The first step in our process, before engaging in the actual literature review, was to formulate a clear purpose. According to Patel and Davidsson (2011, p. 44) this is a good first step because it delimits the search area and enables the foundation of fruitful search words. We put a lot of time in this first step because we realized its importance for the whole study. In the second step we chose suitable search tools. According to Wilson (2009, p. 430) the most common search tool is through university databases. The database from Umeå University became our key tool, but we also used Scopus, as well as Business Source Premier, due to their sometime more advanced filtering functions. Google Scholar was occasionally also used, but only when a source was not available from the other databases.

In the third step, we took the first substantial leap into our literature review by searching for literature which could give us a good overview of the subject. Finfgeld-Connett and Johnson (2012, p. 197) highlights that it is good to start with a wide overview which then in later steps could be narrowed down. Furthermore, Patel and Davidsson (2011, p. 44-45) argues that books can be a good start in creating this overview. Some books were used initially in our case, but even here the majority of sources were taken from peer-review articles (e.g Davies & Gutsche, 2016).

In the fourth step, we started to dig deeper into the literature and started to narrow down our search to more specific subjects. In this part of the literature review the choice of search words is crucial (Ejvegård, 2009, s. 90). In step two we used search words such as ethical consumption and ethical theories to capture the overview. However in step four we used more specific search words within ethical consumptions such as social justice, social guilt, self-satisfaction, social norms, habit, and knowledge. The same was done within ethical theories were we for example searched for utilitarianism, egoism, ethics of duties, virtue ethics, and postmodern ethics. However, the main search was done through reference lists from other articles, which Wilson (2009, p. 430) highlights the benefit of.

The last step in our literature review was to control if we had the right amount and the right type of sources. Finfgeld-Connett and Johnson (2012, p. 197) stresses that it is important to have sources that contributes to the study where more sources is not always better. We have embraced this advice and have therefore excluded sources that does not contribute with further value to the study. It also important in this last step to embrace the fact that the literature review process should not be seen as linear. We have several times gone back and forth in the process when new opportunities have risen looking for complementary literature. We have also, when necessary, removed sources which we felt were redundant.
3.6 Source criticism

Source criticism is crucial in research and we have used four main principles in order to evaluate our sources, namely: authenticity, independency, time frame, and freedom of tendency (Thurén, 2013, p. 7-8). **Authenticity** refers to the degree a source is what it claims to be and that it is not a falsification (Thurén, 2013, p. 17). In order to secure the authenticity of our sources we have to a high degree used peer-reviewed articles, and that apply especially to our theoretical framework. In addition, books have been used and that especially applies to chapter 3 and 4 handling theoretical and practical methodology (e.g Saunders et al., 2016). We feel comfortable in using these books partly because they are published by well-established publication corporations, but also because they are being referenced in peer-review articles. Furthermore, we have in the introduction used some non-scientific sources in order to define organic groceries. These sources were chosen with care which lead us to use documents from established actors such as the European Parliament and The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation.

Regarding **independency**, a researcher should know the origin of their sources (Ejvegård, 2009, p. 71) and here question about primary and secondary sources becomes relevant. Thurén (2013, p. 45) and Johansson Lindfors (1993, p. 89) argue that primary sources are more reliable and therefore should be used. We have followed this advice and has always gone to the original source. All the sources we wanted to use were available for free through the databases and therefore it was never reasonable to use secondary sources. Furthermore, all the primary sources were in English and therefore it was not a language barrier hindering us either.

Furthermore, we have the **time frame** of sources. According to Ejvegård (2009, p. 72) recent literature is more beneficial due to a higher level of actuality. However, what can be seen as recent is of course a subjective matter, but the majority of sources used in this study is published after the turn of the century which we believe qualifies as recent. Especially our key sources, for example Davies and Gutsche (2016), Burke et al. (2014), and Cornish (2013), is of a recent character. However, in our search for primary sources some older literature has also been used, for example United Nations (1987). Thurén and Strachal (2011, s. 14) argue though that older sources could be strong as well due to the validation of time.

Finally, **freedom of tendency** refers to the degree a source can be regarded free from biases (Thurén, 2013, s. 63). According to Thurén and Strachal (2011, p. 18) different kinds of personal interest can make a source biased and that should be taken into account by those using the source. Thurén and Strachal (2011, p. 18) further elaborates though by saying that these biases can be handled by comparing different sources on the same matter. It is difficult to say for sure how biased a source really is, but we have constantly tried to use many different sources in order to avoid presenting a biased picture. I many cases the sources presented a conflicting reality, but this is something that we embraced in order not to frame the study into a faulty direction.
4. Research Method

In this chapter we handle our research method and our practical conduction of the study. Firstly, we present our research design before we outline our sampling strategy. Secondly, we describe the data collection process with interview structure, interview guide and the conduction of interviews. Finally, we conclude this chapter with a description of our method of analysis.

4.1 Research design: purpose and strategy

There are several kinds of research purposes a researcher can be involved in and controlling this is the research question (Saunders et al, 2016, p. 174). Going back to our research question we can see that it contains two parts, (1) What are the motives for mainstream ethical consumption, and (2) how morally correct is this ethical behavior? The first part asks the question what, and the second part asks the question how. According to Saunders et al. (2016, p. 174) this is line with an exploratory research purpose which has research questions likely to begin with either ‘what’ or ‘how’. An exploratory study is useful in order to create a deep understanding of an issue or phenomena that lacks precise knowledge (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 174). This is in good line with our purpose due to our aim of generating deeper knowledge into mainstream ethical consumption, which has been lacking in previous research. Furthermore, a common approach in exploratory studies is in-depth interviews with a fairly unstructured approach (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 175). This is also in good line with our study where we are gathering qualitative data from semi-structured in-depth interviews. The data-collection will be handled more in detailed in section 4.3.

In addition, an exploratory purpose is often linked to the research strategy of case studies. A case study is an in-depth inquiry that helps in identifying what is happening and why it is happening (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 185), therefore aligning well with our research question. Furthermore, as we mentioned in section 3.3 regarding research approach we are leaning more towards an inductive approach where we are aiming at generating theory suitable for hypothesis building and testing. According to Saunders et al. (2016, p. 185) case studies is often linked to inductive studies with an exploratory purpose. The unit of analysis in our case study is the mainstream consumer segment in ethical consumption. From this unit we have through a non-probability sample selected 14 respondents which functions as our units of observation.

4.2 Sampling strategy

In the perfect world you would be able to collect data from the entire population but that is rarely possible. Therefore, the use of sampling becomes useful. According to Saunders et al. (2016, p. 274) sampling is valid when it would be impractical to survey the entire population, as well as when there is not enough funds or time available. Due to our focus of mainstream consumers in the Swedish market all of these things are fulfilled because it would not be reasonable in case of time, money and effort to collect data from millions of people. Therefore, a sample selection is necessary.

The sample selection is highly dependent on the research question (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 275). Our research question is broad regarding the populations of interest where we are examining the motivational factors of mainstream consumers. The delimitation is the
mainstream consumer segment, but we are not making any further delimitations within that segment. According to Saunders et al. (2016, p. 275) this needs to be reflected in the sample selection. In order to catch the diversity within our broad population we wanted to include people differing in their demographics. Our aim was to have a fairly even distribution of the demographic variables of age (20-90 years old), gender (men and women), occupation (student, worker, pensioner), and number of people in the household, and education level (elementary, gymnasium, university).

Taken this into account and that we have made our own judgement of whom to include in the study, we have made a non-probability sample (Johansson Lindfors, 1993, s. 95). Non-probability samples contain the element of subjectivity and is often used in case study research (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 295). On a deeper level, we can say that we have used a purposive sampling technique with a heterogeneous variation as described by Saunders et al. (2016, p. 301). In this technique, researchers use their own judgement in order to collect a diversity of respondent having different key characteristics relevant for the research question (Bryman, 2012, p. 418; Saunders et al., 2016, p. 301). This type of sample can be seen as a strength even in small samples because it enables researchers to document uniqueness (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 301). Due to this, we feel comfortable in having a sample containing diverse characteristics. We will not be able to generalize, but we will be able to provide unique and fruitful findings in relation to our research question.

In order to access these people we went to one of the biggest supermarkets in Umeå, Ica Maxi. While there, we stood after the checkouts asking people if the wanted to be a part of our study. Getting access to respondents is not an easy thing but there are some strategies that can be applied. A good way of getting access to respondents according to Johansson Lindfors (1993, p. 136) is to put a lot of effort into the initial contact. This contact should be planned thoroughly in advance with a script describing the purpose, the use of the results, publication, and anonymity (Johansson Lindfors, 1993, p. 136). We followed this advice and did our best in being as professional and informative as possible in order attract potential respondents. However, in some case this might not be enough and therefore it is also beneficial to describe the value in participating in the study (Johansson Lindfors, 1993, p. 137). We carefully explained to our potential respondents that by participating in the study they would get a better insight into their own organic consumption, as well as increased knowledge into organic groceries. Even with these strategies it was demanding getting people to participate, but eventually we reached a sufficient number of 14 respondents.

In regard of deciding on a suitable sample size the most commonly accepted approach is data saturation, meaning that no more data is needed when additional data provides little or no new information (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 297). Morgan (2008, p. 798) are also in line with this saying that saturation and abundance are keywords in qualitative studies deciding upon suitable sample sizes. However, Saunders et al. (2016, p. 297) argue that even though data saturation is a helpful it does not give an answer to how many respondents you are likely to need in your sample. Saunders et al. (2016, p. 297) argues that studies using semi-structured in-depth interviews should have sample size of 5-25 people. We have taken both data saturation and the suggested sample size into consideration when deciding upon the suitable sample size in our case. After finalizing 14 in-depth interviews we could clearly see patterns and felt that we had achieved a saturation. Additional interviews would not have contributed with information generating new themes.
14 interviews were done and reported in this study, but there were also additional respondents that wanted to participate but unfortunately was not allowed. The reason for this being that we set a key criterion saying that in order to participate you need to frequently buy organic groceries, with frequently meaning no less than 10% being organic. Three people said that their organic grocery consumption was lower than that and could therefore not be included. According to Saunders et al. (2012, p. 267) sample error can also happen if the respondent does not want to answer all the questions. Fortunately, none of our respondents refused to answer any questions.

4.3 Data collection

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are a viable method for data collection in qualitative studies, but there are several different ways to conduct interviews. The most common way to describe interviews are based on their level of structure, ranging from unstructured to semi-structured and structured (Fontana & Frey, 1994, s. 361). In our research paradigm, we have argued for an inclination towards subjectivity, this because we believe that we need to understand the subjective nature of respondents’ ethical consumption on a deep level. In line with this subjective approach we suggest that the flexible method of semi-structured interviews is the most suitable to capture the motives of this behavior.

Therefore, we have chosen to conduct semi-structured interviews. Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 415) describe the semi-structured interview as an adjustable data collection tool where the interviewer can ask the respondents thematically divided question from a prewritten interview guide. In addition, Holme and Solvang (1997, p. 100-101) emphasize that the interview guide should only be used to steer the interview in the right direction and not as a structured questionnaire. The interview guide should be outlined as a funnel, starting with broad and general question and as the interview moves forward the questions will become more specific. With that said, it is still important that all questions are asked as general and open as possible (Bryman & Bell, 2017, s. 454). This will allow the interviewer to ask supplementary questions outside of the interview guide and gather additional information (Bryman, 2011, s. 206). This will be further elaborated on in the next section 4.3.2.

We have chosen semi-structured interviews for the flexibility and because we believe it to be the most suitable way of gathering as much useful information as possible. We have also chosen not to use structured and unstructured interviews because we see some flaws and shortcomings that would hinder our ability to collect fruitful data. The structured interview is less flexible and more suitable when the aim is to collect measurable data (Bryman & Bell, 2017, s. 213), therefore making structured interviews more viable in quantitative studies (Patel & Davidson, 2011, s. 81). On the other side of the spectrum, the unstructured interview is more flexible than the semi-structured and the interview should not be guided by any framework (Patel & Davidson, 2011, s. 82). Since the first part of our research question is (1) What are the motives for mainstream ethical consumption, we believe that we need some structure to guide the respondents to think about motivational factors for ethical consumption, making semi-structured interviews the most suitable data collection tool for our study.
4.3.2 Construction of interview guide

The foundation of all semi-structured interviews is a thorough interview guide (Dalen, 2015, p. 35; Jacobsen, 2010, p. 148). We have written our interview guide with support from our theoretical framework and divided the questions into three main themes, namely; initial questions, altruistic-, egoistic and non-value-based motives for ethical consumption. This is in line with the suggestions made by Kvale (2007, p. 57) and Jacobsen (2010, p. 101) for a successful interview guide. Further, the questions are arranged like a funnel, starting with questions that makes the respondent feel comfortable, then we continue with broader general questions and finely we move on to more specific questions (Dalen. 2015, p. 35). One benefit with semi-structured interviews is that we can change in which order we ask the questions, making the flow of the interview more natural (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 102). In addition, during the outlining of the interview guide one aspect was of extra significant, does this question help us answer our research questions? According to Dalen (2015, p. 35) that mindset will ensure that the interview guide will help the researcher get important and fruitful information from the respondents.

During the construction of each question we followed four basic principles stated by Bryman and Bell (2017, p. 460): (1) even though the questions are divided thematically, there has to be a mutual order among the questions within each team, (2) avoid making the questions too narrow but at the same time make sure they contribute to answering the research question, (3) make the questions understandable, and (4) avoid making leading questions. It is better to write a more general question and follow up with sequential question if the response is too vague (Patel & Davidson, 2011, p. 78). Following these four principles and the guidelines described above we have constructed an interview guide (see Appendix 1). It should be noted though that we had to translate the interview guide into Swedish due to the fact that the interviews were going to be conducted in Swedish. We were careful and thorough in this translation in order for the questions to refer to the exact same thing as the English ones.

4.3.3 Conducting the interviews

As we briefly mentioned in section 4.2, in our attempt to find suitable respondents for our study we went to ICA Maxi in Umeå. We chose this store because of its constant high flow of customers as well as the seating opportunities in their café, which together could increase our chances of catching potential respondents. At the store, we gently approached potential respondents after the checkouts and when we got a positive response we offered them the chance to conduct the interview right away in the cafeteria. In exchange for their time and participation we offered them a cup of coffee. 8 out of our 14 respondents accepted to do an on-site interview while the remaining 6 accepted to participate by phone in a later stage. We decided to use phone interviews as well because we wanted to enable respondents to participate even if they did not have time right then. We went to ICA Maxi three times and spent approximately 4-6 hours on each visit. The phone-interviews were also conducted during the same week but during the evenings.

When we approached respondents, we followed the recommendations by Dalen (2015, p. 45) that every interview should start with a presentation of the researchers and a declaration of why they are conducting the study and how the collected data is going to be used. Therefore, we started by introducing ourselves, explaining that we are writing our master thesis at Umeå University and clarify that their answers will be the foundation
from where we build the result of the study. When the respondent agreed to participate, we explained this more in detail.

When we started the actual interview, we started with open questions about the respondents. Our aim was to make the respondent feel comfortable with the situation. Then we continued with open questions about the subject of the study. Before we went to ICA Maxi, we discussed how we would act during the interviews. Especially during the physical on-site interviews, we tried to have an open and calming body language, like no crossed arms. This is important since it shows the respondent that you are interested in their answers (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 110). During the phone-interviews, the focus was rather on the tone of our voices and that we spoke calmly and with confidence to show interest and to make the respondent feel comfortable (Saunders, 2012, p. 393). We also discussed the importance of carefully listening to the respondents and make sure we understood what they meant with their answers. Therefore, we continuously repeated and summarized what the respondent said to avoid misunderstandings (Saunders, 2012, p. 393). All respondents also agreed to a recording of the interviews. We wanted to have all interviews on tape to facilitate the transcription. We also decided to use two recorders to make sure we had a back-up version if one of the recorders would malfunction during the interview.

4.4 Processing and analysis of data

4.4.1 Transcription

Transcription has a crucial role in qualitative research (Oliver et al., 2015, p. 1273) due to its importance in understanding the collected data (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 88). In our study we took a denaturalistic approach to transcription as described by (Oliver et al., 2015, p. 1276). In the denaturalistic approach according to Oliver et al. (2015, p. 1276) focus is on understanding the gist of what is being said in the interview where the idiosyncratic aspects are being removed. The counterpart is the naturalistic approach where every detail and idiosyncratic factor such as silence, stuttering and inhalation is noted in the transcription material (Oliver et al., 2015, p. 1273). The denaturalistic approach was chosen partly because of the risk of losing the gist of what is being said with too much focus on the surrounding details. It was also because of our chosen method for analysis of data, being thematic analysis (see section 4.4.2), does not demand detailed transcription material (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 88).

The most important thing is that the transcription material is truthful and actual reflects reality (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 88) and this has been our key focus in processing the data. This also refers to the translation part of the transcription material. Due to the fact that the interviews were done in Swedish the transcription material was also written in that language, which then had to be translated into in English in the empirical chapter. We are aware of the potential risk of distortion in this translation, but we have been careful in order to present truthful material in the empirical chapter. We have done this by working closely together in the translation phase and in this way tried to minimize individual biases.

In addition, the typing of the transcription material was done manually. There is some transcription program that can be used in order to transcribe automatically (e.g InQScribe) but we chose not to use such programs. The key reason for this was to secure the quality
of the transcription material but also because the manual method enabled us to listen to
the interviews several times over. This allowed us to create an even better understanding
of the material collected which would then in a better way facilitate our analysis.

4.4.2 Thematic analysis
After transcribing all the conducted interviews, we started analyzing the qualitative data.
We have chosen to use a thematic analysis for this study. During the thematic analysis,
we tried to identify themes and patterns. This is considered to be one of the most
comprehensive method to tackle large sets of qualitative data (Saunders et al., 2016, p.
579). The first step of the thematic analysis is to get familiar with the data set (Braun &
Clarke, 2006, p. 87) and the thematic analysis is a viable technique to get an overview of
a large set of data (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 579). We argue that the transcription phase is
a good start to get familiar with the collected data. During the transcription, we listen to
all the interviews several times in order to get familiarized with the data set.

When we felt comfortable with the data set we initiated the second and the third step of
the thematic analysis, namely: generating codes and finding themes (Braun & Clarke,
2006, p. 87). By integrating related answers from different respondents (Saunders et al.,
2016, p. 579), several themes were identified. Since our interview guide were based on
themes supported by our theoretical framework we had a good understanding of themes
that could arise from the data set. Once we identified the themes we gave each of them a
specific color code, and answers within the same theme were colored with the same color.
This made the data set more graspable and facilitated the next step of the process, namely
the analysis of themes. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 91) emphasize the importance of
testing each identify theme in relation to the purpose and the research question of the
study. Once we identified a theme, we asked ourselves one question, will the data within
this theme help us answer our research question and fulfill the purpose?

Once we had accepted each theme, we started to cross examine and analyze the answers
within the same theme. We also compared the themes in relation to each other to see if
new patterns could be identified. The findings from this analysis process will be the
foundation of the empirical section of this study.

4.5 Research ethics
Social science research needs to take count for ethical principles (Denscombe, 2014, p.
424) because eventually the researcher will encounter ethical problems (Wiles, 2013, s.
9). In order to guide the researcher in the correct direction regarding the aspects of right
and wrong an ethical framework can be used (Wiles, 2013, s. 2). In this study we have
been using a framework consisting of three main aspects: informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, and risk and harm. These will be handled below. Also, in
appendix 2 we display how the ethical framework have been utilized in the interviews.

4.5.1 Informed consent
Informed consent is a key ethical principle (Bell & Bryman, 2007, p. 71) and handles the
fact that respondent should be given a sufficient amount of information which they can
form a decision on regarding participation (Saunders et al., 2012, s. 231; Wiles, 2013, s.
25). It is important however to not give too much information in the initial contact because
it can become too much for the potential respondent to process (Wiles, 2013, p. 27).
Therefore, it is better to give reasonable amount of information in the initial contact, which can then be further elaborated on if the potential respondent show interest for the study (Wiles, 2013, p. 27-28). We embraced this strategy and tried to be short and concise in our initial contact with potential respondent. If the respondent showed an interest for the study we gave them more information regarding what it meant being involved in the study.

Also in line with informed consent is the aspect of drop-outs, where respondent should be able to drop-out of the study at any time (Denscombe, 2014, s. 437). We have been thorough in this regard and we have made it clear that the respondents could drop out of the study at any time if they liked. Fortunately however, none of our respondents decided to do so.

In addition, as we mentioned briefly in section 4.4.1 regarding transcription, we wanted to record the interviews to be able to transcribe them. However, in order to do so it is important to have an informed consent from the respondents (Wiles, 2013, p. 34). Before doing the interview we asked the respondent if we had permission to record the interview, as well as explaining that it was in the purpose of transcription. We elaborated further by saying that we wanted to capture exactly what had been said in the interview and therefore minimizing the risk of misinterpretation.

4.5.2 Confidentiality and anonymity
Confidentiality and anonymity are often treated as overlapping concepts, but it is in fact a clear difference between them (Bell & Bryman, 2007, p. 69). Confidentiality refers to the protection of information provided by the respondent, while anonymity refers to the protection of the identity of the respondent by concealing their name and other personal information (Bell & Bryman, 2007, p. 69). Even though they have a clear distinction between them, they are both key principles in business research ethics (Bell & Bryman, 2007, p. 71). Therefore, both of them was handled with equal care in this study. Firstly, we made it clear with the respondents how their information would be handled, where we emphasized that the information would only be used in this study. Secondly, we made it clear that we would not disclose any names in the study in order for the respondents to be able to be anonymous. However, we asked the respondents if we were allowed to display their age, gender, occupation, number of people in the household, and level of education. We argued that this type of information is on an aggregate level and therefore would not cause any harm to the anonymity.

In addition, sometimes it can be necessary to allow the respondent to do “off the record comments” (Wiles, 2013, p. 50). In this case the recording stops for short while and then the respondent can talk freely without being recorded (Wiles, 2013, p. 50). Before the interview we made it clear that they were allowed to make off the record comments, in order to make respondents feel safe and relaxed. None of the respondent choose to do so though.

4.5.3 Risk and harm
Participation in a research study should include as little risk and harm as possible and it is the researcher’s responsibility to minimize it (Bryman & Bell, 2017, s. 141; Denscombe, 2014, s. 428). The researcher should identify potential causes of risk and harm through the research process in order to ensure the physical and the psychological
well-being of participants (Bell & Bryman, 2007, p. 71). Regarding psychological harm, this can be minimized by protecting the dignity of participants and not causing them any discomfort or anxiety (Bell & Bryman, 2007, p. 71). It can also be done by protecting the privacy of the respondents (Bell & Bryman, 2007, p. 71). Due to the context of our study we do not see any risk of physical harm. However, we can see some emotional risk such as dignity and privacy concerns. We have tried to minimize these risks by not framing the questions in a way that could make the respondents feel uncomfortable, or that could make them feel any anxiety. Furthermore, we avoided asking to many personal questions in order to not intrude on the respondent’s privacy. We also made it clear how their information would be handled, as we mentioned in the previous section, in order to protect their privacy.
5. Empirical findings

This chapter describes the empirical data collected during the study. First, an overview of the respondents is presented. Then the actual data is presented following the categorization of the motivational factors. The chapter is summarized in the last section with a table over the key findings of each motivational factor and a characteristic quote.

5.1 Overview of respondents

In table 1 below, an overview of the respondents is shown. The key reason for displaying this table is for us to be transparent about the type of respondents participating in the study. As we mentioned in section 4.2 regarding our sampling strategy, we are adapting a purposive sampling technique with a heterogeneous variation in order to catch the diversity of the mainstream consumer segment. This was in order to best be able to answer our research question.

By looking at the overview of respondents we think that we have caught the sought-after diversity in a good way. We can see that the age-span ranged from 22 years to 79 years with a reasonable distribution between them, leading to an average age of 42 years. This is well in line with the average age in Sweden, which in 2018 was 41.3 years (SVT, 2018). The distribution of gender was also fairly equal with 8 females and 6 males. The majority of the respondents were workers (eight people), where the additional six respondents were either students or pensioners. Furthermore, we had households ranging from 1 person to 5 people, with an average of 2.07 persons per household. This captures well the average in Sweden 2018 which was 2.17 people per household (SCB, 2018a). A University degree was the most common level of education where approximately 75% respondent had such a degree. This is unfortunately a bit higher than the national average which sit just under 50% (SCB, 2018b).

Other types of information can be seen by looking to the left of the table where we have a total of 14 respondents with individual fictitious names. The letter R stands for respondent, and the number stands for the order they were interviewed. Eight of the interviews were made through physical face-to-face encounters while six interviews were made through telephone. The length of the interview ranged from 21 minutes to 50 minutes, with an average time of 33 minutes. Also, to the far right we can see the percentage of organic bought by each respondent ranging from 10% to 50%, with a combined average of 26%. This meant that all the respondent fulfilled our minimum demand of 10%. These numbers should be taken with some caution though because they are based on the rough estimation from our respondents. Therefore, there is a risk of the numbers being both over- and under estimated. The important thing being though is that the numbers at least supports the fact the respondents frequently buy organic groceries.
Table 1: Overview of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Type of interview</th>
<th>Length of interview</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>People in household</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Percentage organic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>50 min</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>21 min</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>35 min</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>27 min</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>45 min</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Pensioner</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>29 min</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>26 min</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Pensioner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R8</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>35 min</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R9</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>46 min</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R10</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>32 min</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R11</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>28 min</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R12</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R13</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>28 min</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R14</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>25 min</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33 minutes</td>
<td>42 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 people</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Altruistic-based motives

5.2.1 Social justice

When examining the data collected from the respondents it becomes clear that altruistic-based motives are important. This can especially be seen in regard of the amount of information that can be classified into the sub-theme of social justice, where it was one of the most common themes appearing in the data. This section we will go deeper into the findings in regard of social justice.

Putting it into general terms with all the respondent’s answers combined we can see that the main altruistic motives for organic consumption was due to benefits for the environment, farmers, and animals. The benefit of the environment was the most common factor where a vast majority emphasized that this was an influential factor in their consumption. For example, respondent 4 argued that she wanted to buy the best alternative for the environment and that is was one of her key reason for buying organic. Respondent 5 was also very much in line with this and said that ecological groceries for her is more environmentally friendly and that we need to take our responsibility for a sustainable future. Respondent 9 also emphasized the sustainability factor of organic groceries. Some respondents also did the link between organic groceries and a better society with the environment being included. For example, respondent 13 said the following:

“I am thinking that if someone is producing better groceries it will lead to less pollution, and therefore by making ecological choices I can contribute to a better society and a better environment.” - Respondent 13

Also in line with the environment and society is the benefit for the Swedish countryside, which two out of our respondent (R1 and R2) emphasized. Respondent 1 said that she wanted to support the Swedish countryside, which respondent 2 was in line with.
Respondent 2 argued for the importance of preserving and foster the countryside due to our agricultural heritage but also due to Sweden's ability to be self-supporting.

In addition to this, a majority of respondents emphasized farmers welfare. For example, according to respondent 11 the benefits for the farmer is one of the key reasons for her buying organic groceries. She argues that by buying organic, farmer gets more support and monetary contribution meaning that they can grow more. Respondent 4 is also in line with this saying that it is important to benefit farmers in order to allow them to continue producing organic groceries. Respondent 2 argue for the prerequisites of farmers and the importance of a viable Swedish agriculture:

“For me the prerequisites of farmers are very important, due to the importance of Sweden having a viable agriculture sector” - Respondent 2

Furthermore, the welfare of animals seemed to be an important factor where many respondents highlighted it as an influential factor. For example, Respondent 8 argue that animal welfare is one of the key factors of organic grocery consumption due to its contribution to a better life for the animals involved. Animal welfare is also one of the key reasons for respondent 10 who argue for the animal benefits of organic groceries. Respondent 9 did a comparison between organic and non-organic groceries in regard of animals where she highlighted that animals in non-organic production are treated with less care and are fed with worse food. Respondent 1 stressed the following regarding animal welfare in organic groceries:

“Regarding the products that we buy organically, for example meat, I will gladly see that the cow has lived a better life and that it has been fed with good and nutritious food.” - Respondent 1

As can be seen in our interview guide we asked the respondents about their willingness to sacrifice personal interest in organic grocery consumption. The key factor arising from this was the respondent’s willingness to sacrifice economic benefits in the shape of higher prices. Respondents said that they were willing to sacrifice a higher price in order to buy organic groceries. For example, respondent 11 argued that the higher price is worth due to it being a better product, which also respondent 3, 9 and 12 was in line with. One respondent stood out little more than the others in this regard, that one being respondent 13. This respondent stressed that she was willing to pass on other groceries with less importance, such as water and chocolate bars, in order to afford the higher price of organic groceries.

5.3 Egoistic-based motives

5.3.1 Self-satisfaction

In our data-set we can clearly see that a vast majority of our respondents experience self-satisfaction when choosing organic groceries instead of non-organic options. The most significant pattern that we can identify within this sub-theme is a positive internal feeling that the respondent experience when making conscious choices. Our data also show that a majority of our respondents also consider this positive feeling to be a key influencer for organic purchasing decisions. Many respondents used the words “positive feeling” in relation to choosing organic groceries. For example, respondent 5 said that she felt a
positive internal feeling when choosing organic groceries, and this was also supported by respondent 12. Other respondents used the words “good gut feeling” in relation to organic consumption. In addition, some respondents also emphasized the word “satisfaction” in relation to organic grocery consumption. For example, respondent 1 felt satisfaction when buying what she believed to be a better product and respondent 4 said:

“\textit{I think it is important to buy organic groceries and therefore, I feel satisfaction when choosing an organic grocery}” - Respondent 4

Our collected data clearly shows that self-satisfaction and a positive internal feeling is something that almost all of our respondents experience when making organic purchasing decisions. But how does this internal positive feeling arise? The data shows that this positive feeling can partly arise from altruistic reasons. Respondent 3 state that the positive feeling appears when he can see how his decision is beneficial for someone else. Several respondents explained that their positive feeling originate from the fact that they have made a conscious choice that contributes to the wellbeing of others and a better society. Respondent 8 also mention contribution but in addition he said:

“\textit{I think environmental issues are important and therefore I want to act in benefit of the environment. I get a positive feeling when my actions are in line with my personal values}” - Respondent 8

However, we can also find more egocentric reason for these positive feelings having strong support within our collected data. For example, respondent 10 mentioned that he believes that he experiences a positive internal feeling because he has purchased a fresher product with higher quality. This is in line with the answer of respondent 12. She claims that the positive feeling appears when she is choosing a product that she perceives to be purer. Also respondent 11 mention product quality as the source of the positive feeling but she also adds the perspective of health and wellbeing. She states that she experiences a positive internal feeling when she is choosing a healthier option.

5.3.2 Social norms
One sub-theme that was clearly outlined in our collected data was the importance of social norms and belongingness. All of our respondents mentioned that they are influenced by what they believe to be norms and expectations set by their inner circle or by society as a whole. What differs among the respondents is the source of this influential power. Some expressed that external channels like news, politicians and commercials are more influential while others emphasized the role of family and friends. Also, some respondents experienced a combination. It is also clear that our respondents experience this influence in different ways. Some respondents said that they are inspired by these influential forces while other experience it as a pressure to change their behavior. Also, some respondents felt a combination of inspiration and pressure.

External influences seemed to be a crucial factor for our respondents. For example respondent 2 was convinced that external influences affected his attitude towards organic groceries and that the organic lobby is making the greater mass more aware about environmental and social issues. This was supported by several respondents who believed that news, TV-shows and article was a substantial influencer on their organic consumption. Respondent 1 explained external influences like this:
“I believe that external influences are stronger for me. When I see somethings on the news, when politicians talk about organic food, commercials and articles, those types of influences make me believe that organic choices are better” - Respondent 1

However, some respondents filed criticism towards external influences and claimed that they had a hard time trusting them. For example, respondent 5 mentioned the issue of trusting external influences and respondent 12 elaborated further on this matter. She mentioned social media influencers and said that she questioned their motives for promoting organic products. In addition, respondent 14 argued that external influences almost make him create a negative attitude towards organic groceries due to the social pressure they contribute with.

The other perspective on social norms are influences from the inner circle, such as friends and family. This seemed to be a less important factor than external influences, but where still emphasized by some respondents. Respondent 4 said that she has friends with a lot of knowledge about environmental and social issues that she often discusses organic consumption with these friends. She also emphasized that their opinions were a strong influencer on her behavior. In the same line respondent 5 expressed that she seeks information from her children since she believes that they have more knowledge about these issues. Respondent 11 also stressed the importance of discussions among friends. In addition she also addressed the benefits of exchanging tips and information about organic products with friends. Respondent 12 felt a strong influence from her family and said:

“I absolutely get influenced by my family. At home we only bought organic products and therefore I have continued to do so. If my sister visits me and notice that I don’t have an organic cucumber she will question me why?” - Respondent 12

The citation by respondent 12 is interesting because it shows how she experience the influences from social norms. Within our collected data we could find two separate experiences related to social norms, namely pressure and inspiration. Many respondents experiences pressure from social norms and expectations. For example, respondents 3 and 13 claimed that they felt a pressure to contribute more but at the same time they expressed that this pressure could be positive. In the same line, respondent 1 and 10 also felt a pressure to be more aware but also stressed that this pressure could be positive since it forced them to look for more information and become more aware. Respondent 2 said that the pressure that he felt lead to guilt, and this guilt in turn made him buy more organic products.

In addition, the majority of our respondents expressed that they felt inspired by social norms and expectations. Several respondents said that the influences of social norms lead to an inspiring feeling and that they want to contribute more thanks to these norms. Respondent 6 said that when there is a lot of discussion about a topic it is easier to embrace it, and therefore he felt inspired by social influences regarding organic groceries. Also respondent 5 addressed the benefits of social norms when she said:

“I feel no pressure, just inspiration. It is a positive force” - Respondent 5
5.3.3 Health and wellbeing

As can be seen in our interview guide we asked the respondent about how they related health and wellbeing to organic products. The data shows that the vast majority of respondents sees a clear correlation between health and wellbeing with organic groceries. A number of keywords rose in the data in line with this theme, and the most reoccurring one was pesticides. The majority of respondents said that they believed organic products to be healthier due to the lessen use of pesticides. For example, respondent 3 emphasize this by saying that he wanted to protect his health by avoiding unhealthy pesticides. Respondent 10 elaborated on this further by saying that the lack of pesticides was one of the key reasons for buy organic products. The reason for that being that he felt a direct negative health effects by buying non-organic products in form of a tickling symptom in his throat. This was avoided when he ate organic groceries. In line with pesticides, words like “poison” and “chemicals” were used by respondents. For example, respondent 11 highlighted the lessen use of poison and chemicals in organic production. In relation to this respondent 12 stated:

“It is important to know what I am putting in my body, I think that pesticides and other chemicals are scary. - Respondent 12

Another word that was frequently used by respondents was the word “better”. For example, respondent 9 argued that she perceives organic groceries to be better products. Respondent 1 was also in line with this, but she also stressed the word cleaner, which many other respondents did as well. Her idea was that organic products are cleaner and therefore she contributes to a better wellbeing for her body by consuming them. Respondent 5 was also in line with this but also emphasized that the whole food chain becomes cleaner. In addition, words like “natural” and “freshers” were also used by for example respondent 7 and 12. In addition, the word “nutrition” was also mentioned by some respondents. For example, respondent 6 believes that organic food has a higher nutritional value and the same goes with respondent 11:

“Organic products feel healthier and more nutritious, therefore from a health perspective it feels like a good choice.” - Respondent 11

It is not only that many respondents perceive organic products to be healthier, they also see it as an important factor influencing their purchase decision. The vast majority of respondent who think organic products to be healthier also sees it as an important factor in their decision to buy organic. However, a couple of respondents were skeptical about its impact on their decisions. Respondent 8 argued that the health factor is most significant in fruit and vegetables and therefore it has an influence on his decision in those types of groceries. In other types of groceries he does not see it as an equal important factor. Respondent 13 believes that organic products are healthier but does not account for it that much in the decision to buy organic.

Furthermore, in contrast to the majority only two respondents filed criticism towards the relation between organic groceries and health and wellbeing. Respondent 2 argued that he has not seen any proof of that organic products are in fact healthier. Respondent 14 were also in line with this and said:
“Regular groceries are so heavily controlled which means that they are not exactly poisonous, so I do not know if it is possible to prove a difference between organic and non-organic groceries.” - Respondent 14

5.3.4 Product quality

Another significant sub-theme that rose within the theme of egoistic-based motives for ethical consumption was product quality. All respondents answered that they believed organic groceries to be of higher quality in general. It was also clear that the term quality could be interpreted in many different ways. Several respondents related higher quality to a cleaner and healthier product. However, it was also clear that our respondents related some product attributes such as better taste and texture to organic groceries. Taste was the most frequently used quality aspect where the respondents believed organic groceries to be of better taste. For example, respondent 9 said that she bought organic oranges and organic pepper because they taste better. Respondent 7 supported this and said that better taste was a key reason for buying organic groceries. Also respondent 8 mention better taste as a key reason for choosing organic groceries:

“I think organic groceries contain more flavors, it is a higher quality of taste” - Respondent 8

Texture was another product attribute that was mentioned by some respondents. Respondent 11 expressed that organic carrots for example are crisper while non-organic options have a more fibrous feeling to them. Respondent 12 was in line with this and stated that organic tomatoes are less flourish in texture compared to non-organic options.

However, there was also some quality critique towards organic products where some respondents mentioned the less aesthetic appeal of organic groceries. Some saw this as a negative thing, whilst others saw it as a proof of less pesticides and therefore as a positive thing. In addition, a majority of the respondents also believed that organic groceries have a shorter expiration date. However, none of them sees this as an issue. For example respondent 13 said that she thought organic groceries to be of lower quality in terms of expiration date but she did not consider this a problem, just an issue of better planning. Respondent 7 answered in the same manner and said that she compensates for shorter expiration date by buying a smaller quantity. Respondent 3 took it one step further and claimed that a shorter expiration data was something positive for him:

“I have noticed a huge difference in expiration date between organic and non-organic options, especially when it comes to fruits and vegetables. For me it’s just positive with a shorter expiration date since it is a proof that the product is not sprayed with pesticides” - Respondent 3

Furthermore, our collected data shows that a majority of our respondents are willing to compromise on the quality aspect of expiration date in order to buy an organic grocery instead of a non-organic option. However, almost all of our respondents said that they would not compromise on quality aspects like taste and texture. For example, Respondent 1 expressed that she believed that she would choose the non-organic option if she knew it was of better taste. In the same line respondent 5 said that she would not choose an organic grocery if she believed the taste was worse. This might be related to the fact that many of our respondents relates the higher price of organic groceries to an expected higher quality. Respondent 8 said that he thinks it is in human nature to expect to get
better quality when paying a higher price. Also respondent 2 and 3 answered in the same manner and claimed that they expected to get something extra when the price is higher.

5.4 Altruistic and egoistic-base motives

5.4.1 Win-win and guilt
A substantial factor emerging from the data was the aspect of win-win. Win-win in this case is defined as getting both personal benefits together with benefits of other while buying organic products. All respondents expressed such a relationship and therefore showing strong support for win-win situation in organic consumption. The respondents expressed that by buying organic groceries they would get personal benefits like for example better health and better product quality, while at the same time contributing to altruistic benefits. For example, respondent 1 highlighted that she bought organic groceries because it felt like cleaner and better products, but also because she wanted to support the production of sustainable groceries. Respondent 7 emphasized similar aspects saying that she bought organic groceries due to health aspects, but also because of environmental benefits. Respondent 8 and 10 expressed the same relation between the win-win factors of their own improved health and a better environment. Respondent 11 answered in the following fashion regarding the reason for buying organic groceries:

“*It is due to a will of doing something good, but at the same time in enables us to have a diet of higher quality. Both are good, you could say that it is a win-win situation.*”  
- Respondent 11

Another emerging theme in line with win-win was the factor of guilt. Many respondents raised the aspect of guilt in relation to organic grocery consumption and emphasized that it was a way of minimizing it. For example, according to respondent 4 she minimizes her level of guilt by consuming organic groceries, which was also emphasized by respondent 6. Respondent 7 saw guilt as an influential factor and viewed it as a positive force because it gives people incitements to buy organic groceries. In addition, respondent 8 felt the need to compensate for being a regular flyer as well being a heavy user of cars, and in this way putting less pressure on his guilt by buying organic. For respondent 2, guilt was a key factor in organic consumption:

“*When I think about it, I would say that guilt is a quite substantial factor in me purchasing organic groceries.*” - Respondent 2

5.5 Non value-based motives

5.5.1 Habits
When exploring the habitual behavior of respondent we got interesting results from the data. The vast majority of respondent expressed that habits are an influential part of their organic grocery consumption. The same respondents also said that they put little or no effort into evaluating the organic groceries that they lay in their shopping basket. For example, Respondent 7 stressed that organic groceries have for her become a habit and that she picks these products by the go, without putting much effort into evaluating them. Respondent 9 stressed similar aspects by saying that she has created an understanding for the location of the products in the store and therefore enabling her in a habitual fashion
to pick these products effortlessly. In addition, respondent 14 argued that he takes the organic products that he usually goes for without making any reflection or evaluation of that choice. Respondent 1 said the following in this regard:

“For me it is natural to take the organic product. It is not like a do an evaluation if I should take the organic product or the non-organic product, it just happens due to my routines.” - Respondent 1

Even though there was a strong consensus among the respondent in regard of habits, some respondents expressed limitations to their habitual behavior. Firstly, respondent 5 said that her habitual behavior was dynamic and not fixed. She said that the first time she picks a product she does a certain amount of evaluation and then after that it just continue in an automatic fashion in later purchases. However, this automatic habitual process does not continue forever and is in her case broken when a better product arises. Then she does a new evaluation and if she is satisfied with the product a new habit is created. In addition, some respondents expressed that only some parts of their organic grocery consumption were due to habits. For example, respondent 2 and 11 said that certain groceries such as olives and wheat was chosen strictly due to habits, while other groceries were not as much dependent on it. Respondent 13 expressed similar concerns but in her case she did the majority of her habitual decisions in the dairy section of the store. Furthermore, respondent 8 raised an interest point in this regard:

“In basic groceries I do not conduct much evaluation and therefore habits play a significant part. However, in the case of buying more expensive groceries, such as parmesan cheese or wine, I can put more time on doing an evaluation. Then it is not as much habit” - Respondent 8

Another theme that emerged within habits where brand loyalty. A vast majority of our respondents mentioned that they were to a certain degree brand loyal when it comes to grocery shopping. These respondents also highlighted that this loyalty had an effect on their choice of organic groceries. For example, respondent 3 was clear about this saying that his brand loyalty affected him in a way that he bought the same brand in organic groceries as he did with non-organic groceries. Respondent 6 stressed similar aspect by saying that it is a smoother transition from non-organic to organic by sticking to the same brand. Respondent 12 was also in line with this by giving an example of the transition from non-organic milk to organic milk within the same brand. It should be noted though that loyalty aspect was limited to certain products for some respondents. The most reoccurring one was brand loyalty towards dairy products which was mentioned by for example respondent 2, 7 and 13. Also, loyalty towards brands within fruit, vegetables and coffee was mentioned.

5.5.2 Knowledge and information

As can been seen in the interview guide in appendix 1, we asked the respondents how knowledgeable they perceived themselves to be regarding organic products and organic labeling. Even though they all valued the role of knowledge in organic consumption, only 1 out of 14 respondents said that she was comfortable with the amount of knowledge she possesses. For example, respondent 6 said that he does not have that much knowledge and he can only hope that products with an organic label is a better product. Respondent 7 answered in the same manner and added that she wishes she had more knowledge. Also
respondent 5 questioned her own level of knowledge but mentioned an important label when she said:

“I don’t believe I have much knowledge at all in this area. I look for a label that say organic and the green leaf. I know that the leaf is an organic label” - Respondent 5

During our interviews we asked our respondents about their knowledge about organic labels like the KRAV-label and the EU-Leaf. All of our respondents claimed that they recognize the labels but none of them possess any knowledge about what the label actually means. Respondent 1 said that she knew both the EU-Leaf and the KRAV-label but that she knew nothing about their meaning, just that she believes that they represent something good and better. Respondent 4 answered in the same line and said that she only looks for a label that says organic. In addition, some of our respondents mentioned other labels that are not directly connected to organic products. For example respondent 3, 5 and 14 all mentioned Nyckelhålet [Swedish national food agency’s labeling for healthier food] and Svanenmärkning [The Nordic label for environmentally friendly products].

Furthermore, what is clear from our collected data is the fact that knowledge and information are important influencers on organic consumption. It is also clear that our respondents believed that more information would increase their organic consumption. For example respondent 13 said that she believed that more information would have a huge impact on her organic purchases, especially information about the production process and the difference between organic and non-organic. Respondent 5 also thought that the more information and knowledge she gets, the more she is choosing organic. Respondent 8 believed that more information would increase his organic consumption and he described it like this:

“I believe that more information would have a positive effect on my organic consumption, in fact I think it is a really important factor. The more information and knowledge you have the more you can think about it and imagine the effects from it” - Respondent 8

Even though almost all of our respondents believed that more information would have a positive impact on their organic consumption, all 14 respondents emphasized that framing of the information is more important than quantity. Respondent 2 said that he believes that quantity of information is important but he also mentioned that people are showered with information and therefore the information need to be concise and factually correct to be penetrant. Respondent 8 also said that framing is crucial and when information is short and clear it is easier for him to take in the information. Respondent 7 further emphasize the importance of framing and she said:

“Framing is definitely important, we are overwhelmed with all sort of information and therefore I believe that information need to be short and easy to understand, otherwise we cannot process the information” - Respondent 7
5.5 Summary of empirical findings

In the table 2 below, a summary of the empirical findings is presented. In the left column the motives for ethical consumption can be seen. Then further to the right, the key findings of each motivational factor together with a quotation is displayed.

**Table 2: Summary of empirical findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivational factor</th>
<th>Key findings</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Social justice**        | • Strong tendency for altruistic-based motives such as benefits for the environment, farmers and animals.  
• Strong willingness to sacrifice price. | “I am thinking that if someone is purchasing better groceries it will lead to less pollution, and therefore by making ecological choices I can contribute to a better society and a better environment.” - Respondent 13  |
| **Guilt**                 | • Some tendency for the aspects of minimizing guilt by organic consumption. | “When I think about it, I would say that guilt is a quite substantial factor in me purchasing organic groceries.” - Respondent 2 |
| **Win-win**               | • Strong tendency for a win-win situation where respondents get both personal and altruistic gains from organic consumption. | “It is due to a will of doing something good, but at the same time in enables us to have a diet of higher quality. Both are good, you could say that it is a win-win situation.” - Respondent 11 |
| **Self-satisfaction**     | • Strong tendency for the experience of a positive feeling in organic consumption.  
• This positive feeling often correlates with a win-win situation. | “I think environmental issues are important and therefore I want to act in benefit of the environment. I get a positive feeling when my actions are in line with my personal values” - Respondent 8 |
| **Social norms**          | • Strong tendency for exernal influence  
• Weaker support for internal influence  
• Fairly equal distribution of respondent feeling pressure or inspiration from these influences. | “I believe that external influences are stronger for me. When I see somethings on the news, when politicians talk about organic food, commercials and articles, those types of influences make me believe that organic choices are better” - Respondent 1 |
| **Health and wellbeing**  | • Strong tendency for the perceived relation between health and organic products. | “It is important to know what I am putting in my body, I think that pesticides and other chemicals are scary.” - Respondent 12 |
| **Product quality**       | • Strong tendency for the perceived relation between product quality and organic products.  
• Some tendency of the relation between price premium and higher quality. | “I think organic groceries contain more flavors, it is a higher quality of taste.” - Respondent 8 |
| **Habits**                | • Strong tendency for the impact of habits in organic consumption.  
• Some tendency for impact of brand loyalty in organic consumption. | “For me it is natural to take the organic product. It is not like a do an evaluation if I should take the organic product or the non-organic product, it just happens due to my routines.” - Respondent 1 |
| **Knowledge and information** | • Strong tendency for lack of knowledge  
• Strong tendency for the importance of framing of information  
• Strong belief that more information and knowledge would have a positive effect on organic consumption. | “I don’t believe I have much knowledge at all in this area. I look for a label that say organic and the green leaf, I know that the leaf is an organic label” - Respondent 5 |
6. Discussion

In this chapter we are going to discuss and analyze the empirical data in relation to our theoretical framework. First of all we present a conceptual model over the motivational factors for ethical consumption. Then each motivational factor is further elaborated. After that, we introduce the second part of our conceptual model that include ethical theories. From these theories we evaluate the level of morality of ethical consumption.

6.1 Motivations for ethical consumption: a conceptual model

In figure 4, our conceptual model of the motivational factors for mainstream ethical consumption is presented. The model is created through the empirical data and in following sections a discussion around the model will be presented.

![Figure 4: Conceptual model of the motivations for ethical consumption. The figure is created by the authors.](image)

6.2 Social justice

As we stated in section 5.2.1 in the empirical chapter, altruistic reasons of social justice were an important factor for the respondents. The most reoccurring factor in the data in regard of social justice was the benefit of the environment. In combination to the environmental factor respondents also mentioned the benefits for the Swedish society and the Swedish countryside. Furthermore, many respondents also mentioned the benefits for farmers and animals, with the farmer aspect being a bit more reoccurring. This result is in good line with social justice which is described as the desire to make a difference for others (Yamoah et al., 2016, p. 184). It also shows that the consumer believe that they can make a difference for others, which Carrigan et al. (2004, p. 411) argues is an important factor of ethical consumption. It is also in line with Burke et al. (2014, p. 2240) who stresses that ethical consumer believe that they are a part of a bigger movement where they genuinely can make a difference.
With this in hand, one could argue that the result is in good line with what Crane and Matten (2016, p. 367) calls the ideal ethical consumer. According to Crane and Matten (2016, p. 367) the ideal ethical consumers make consumption decisions based on other factors than self-interest, where they focus on how their decision will affect others (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 367). However, that would be a faulty conclusion in our case. The removal of self-interest in ethical consumption is just not possible and altruistic motives is not only reason for ethical consumption. This shows partly in the consumers’ willingness to sacrifice personal interest in their ethical consumption. According to Lin and Niu (2018, p. 1681) the ethical consumer is willing to sacrifice personal comfort to perform an ethical behavior. This is because they want to contribute to a bigger cause (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008, p. 461). The respondents argued that they were willing to sacrifice a higher price, but they were not willing to sacrifice quality aspects such as taste or texture. Many respondents also saw a relation between a higher price and higher quality and therefore we have reasons to question their price motives. Of course, the scarification of price could still be connected to the contribution of others, but it is most likely not the only reason.

In general terms, altruistic reasons are an important factor for ethical consumption, but it is not the only reason. Egoistic reason in the shape of self-satisfaction, created through social norms, health concerns, and products quality aspiration always have a part in the equation. This will be handled in the next section.

6.3 Self-satisfaction

In our theoretical framework we mention that ethical consumption might have egocentric motives rather than a strive for social justice. Pieniak et al. (2010, p. 581) described that consumers of organic food might feel self-satisfaction when choosing organic products instead of non-organic options. This was supported by our data where a vast majority of our respondents claimed that they experienced self-satisfaction when purchasing organic groceries. This self-satisfaction was described as a positive internal feeling by our respondents. These findings are in line with previous findings by Padel and Foster (2005, p. 618) who said that organic consumption is partly driven by an urge to feel good about oneself, and Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1338) who correlated a feeling of happiness to ethical consumption.

As can be seen in the conceptual model the aspect of self-satisfaction is key in egoism. The reason for this being that self-satisfaction is the end product of the other egocentric motivational factors. We can see a clear tendency of the importance of social norms, health and wellbeing, and product quality, and the common ground of these three is that they all benefit the self. With this self-providing benefit the consumers get a sense of satisfaction which connects to a positive internal feeling. In the following section we will go deeper into these egocentric motivational factors and show the importance of them in ethical consumption.

6.3.1 Social norms

Social norms are societal guidelines that enable people to co-exist and know what to expect from each other (Lin et al., 2018, p. 1691). As human beings we tend to adapt to the behavior of our in-group (family and friends) as well as bigger groups like society in general (Goldstein et al., 2008, p. 475). However there are ambiguous findings whether
these social norms influence our ethical consumption. Cornish (2013, p. 340) argues that the desire of “fitting in” is crucial to our ethical consumption, while Burke et al. (2014, p. 2252) suggest that social norms have no or little influences on ethical consumption. From our interviews we can see a tendency towards this ambiguity. First of all, the influence from family and friends was not that frequently mentioned, but some of our respondents highlighted the influential effect from this group. In the case of influences from family and friends, the aspect of “fitting in” was not emphasized, instead exchange of knowledge and tips seemed to be more significant.

In the case of external influences the patterns from our interviews were clearer. External influences like news, articles, politicians and TV-shows were frequently mentioned as influential forces. Our respondents highlighted increased awareness through these outlets as a key motivational factor for organic consumption. This is in line with Hoffman and Hutter (2012, p. 231) who argues that an adaption to a general behavior gives the individual a sense of belongingness to a greater movement. However, in our collected data, some interesting critique was also stressed in regard to external influences. This criticism concerned the credibility of external influences, where respondents questioned the underlying motives for the promotion of organic products.

Another interesting aspect of social norms are how these norms and expectations are experienced by the individual. From our interviews we can see that both inspiration and pressure are mentioned as consequences from social norms. In terms of pressure, Testa et al. (2018, p. 334) raised concerns regarding how big influential factor social pressure really is. Our interviews contradict this concern and our respondents who experienced pressure all believed that this pressure was influential for their organic consumption. What is interesting is the fact that our respondents didn’t experience this pressure as something negative. Just like in the case of an inspiring feeling, the pressure lead to an increased organic consumption, which inflicted the respondents with a positive internal feeling.

As described in our conceptual model, social norms influence our respondents to choose organic options. This in turn give them a sense of belongingness and that especially applies to the bigger group of aware citizens. The sense of belongingness then increases the feeling of self-satisfaction.

6.3.2 Health and wellbeing

As we stated in the theoretical framework, several studies have found that concerns for health and well-being are key individualistic motivations for ethical consumption (e.g Burke et al, 2014, p. 2240, and Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1335), which especially applies to ethical food consumption (Shin et al., 2019, p. 111; Shaw et al., 2005, p. 192). The reason for this being that organic food is perceived to be healthier (Cornish, 2013, p. 338). Our findings are well in line with this previous research where the vast majority of our respondents saw a clear correlation between health and wellbeing and organic groceries.

The word pesticides were highlighted by many respondents where they argued that organic groceries are healthier due to the lessen use of pesticides. This is well in line with Padel and Foster (2005, p. 609) who stresses that consumers perceive the product as healthier since the general opinion is that organic products are free from pesticides. Respondents also emphasized that organic products were less infested with harmful
chemicals and poison. This is in line with Cornish (2013, p. 338) who highlights that consumption of ethical products can be driven by fear of harmful substances such as chemicals. Additional dimension to the health aspect of ethical consumptions is the fact that respondents perceived to them to be cleaner, fresher, more natural, and more nutritious compared to non-organic products. Therefore, the relation between ethical consumption and health and wellbeing consist of multiple dimension. These dimensions contribute to the eudemonic dimensions of wellbeing in form of happiness and satisfaction as described by Lin & Niu (2018, p. 1681). Therefore, health and wellbeing are a sub-factor of the egoistic-based motive of self-satisfaction, as can be seen in the conceptual model.

Furthermore, it is interesting to see that health and wellbeing is such an influential factor in organic consumption, even though there is no clear evidence that organic products in fact is healthier (The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, n.d.). Some studies confirm that organic food is healthier and contain higher levels of nutrition, while others found no differences between organic food and conventional food in terms of nutritional value (Palupi et al., 2011, p. 2774). This means that ethical consumers perceive organic groceries to be healthier without having any concrete support for it. The word “perceive” is something that Testa et al. (2018, p. 330) highlights in relation to the health aspects of ethical consumption. It is an important word because it gives some insights into the mythical aspects of ethical consumption as described by Davies and Gutsc (2016, p. 1341). It highlights the fact the ethical consumer is maybe not that rational and bases their decision more on mythical abstract dimensions without any real fact supporting it.

In addition, no one of our respondents highlighted the health benefits of farmers. Even though the health benefit of the person consuming the organic products is difficult to prove, the health benefit of the people working in organic agriculture has been proven with stable results (The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, n.d.). The reason for respondents disregarding this matter could be two-folded. One reason could be that they do not care that much of the health aspect of farmers in their purchasing decision, but it could also be that they do not know how organic agriculture affects farmers. However, as the reason stands today, health and wellbeing are related more to egoism than altruism.

In summary, our findings show that ethical consumer are driven by health and wellbeing dimensions and that it is an influential factor in ethical consumption. Cornish (2013, p. 338) and Testa et al. (2018, p. 330) argue that studies has been inclusive in regard of the impact of health and wellbeing, but our findings adds some clarity to the field.

6.3.3 Product quality

In a purchasing decision, the consumer evaluates the product based on several aspects. One of these aspects is the product quality and Ferran and Grunert (2005, p. 226) claims that purchase decisions regarding ethical products are no exception. From our data collection we can see that our respondents perceive organic products to be of higher quality and that they consider this as an important motivational factor for organic consumption. In line with the findings of Padel and Foster (2005, p. 618) taste was the most frequently used aspect of quality. Taste also seemed to be the most important quality aspect since none of our respondents were willing to compromise on taste when choosing between an organic and non-organic option.
Another aspect of quality is the aesthetics of the product. According to Shaw et al. (2005, p. 194) consumers want the appeal and design of ethical products to be of at least the same standards as ordinary products. In this case we saw some ambiguity among our respondents. Some said that they believed organic groceries to be less appealing and therefore they choose non-organic option. Others said that the less appealing look was a proof of less pesticides which increased their positive attitude towards organic groceries.

Previous studies show that consumers are not willing to compromise on quality just to get an ethical product (Cornish, 2013, p. 340). We can see that our respondents are in line with this statement when it comes to taste and texture, but in terms of expiration date they contradict it. Several respondents stated that they believed organic groceries to have shorter expiration date compared to non-organic options. However they did not consider this a problem, instead they just saw it as a matter of planning their consumption. Even though our respondents are willing to choose a product with shorter expiration date, the tendency is that they would not compromise on the general quality of the product. This might be due to fact that there is a cognitive correlation between higher price and higher quality. Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1336) argue that since ethical products often are more expensive, consumers also expect to get a product of higher quality. This was significant among our respondents where several of them expected to get a premium product when paying a premium price.

As described in our conceptual model, product quality is one of the egocentric motivational factors for ethical consumption. Product quality is also strongly linked with the feeling of self-satisfaction. We argue that consumers choose to buy products they believe to be of higher and better quality. Through higher quality products the consumer benefits the self which inflicts the individual with a positive internal feeling. Hence, an increased self-satisfaction.

6.4 Win-win

As has been disclosed in the previous section both altruistic motives in form of social justice, as well as egoistic motives in form of self-satisfaction created through social norms, health and wellbeing, and product quality, are important motivational factors for ethical consumption. The interesting aspects here is that all of our respondents expressed such a duality in benefits where they saw both personal benefits as well as altruistic benefits by consuming organic products. These findings are in line with previous research where for example Ferran and Grunert (2005, p. 226) argue that the ethical consumer wants to fulfill their personal needs, but at the same time they also want to benefit others.

Therefore, all of our respondents expressed a win-win situation. The aspect of win-win is the key theme emerging from our empirical data and this can also be seen in our conceptual model as it is centrally placed. In the model the altruistic oval overarches with the egoistic oval making a visual presentation of the duality of ethical consumption. We can also see in the model that the arrows from social justice and self-satisfaction goes through the box of win-win before making its way to ethical consumption. The reason for this being that none of our respondents stood completely on one leg, meaning that none of them where totally altruistic-driven nor totally egoistic-driven. There was always a combination of them involved. Therefore, the arrow cannot go directly to ethical consumption but has to stop at the intersection of win-win, meeting its opposite counterpart.
In the theoretical framework we raised the potential paradoxical tension that could be created through this win-win situation. With the result in hand we argue that ethical consumption is a matter of paradoxical tension, and in the figure below a visualization of this is presented. According to Smith and Lewis (2011, p. 387) paradoxical tension occurs when there are contradictory yet interrelated elements, and where each element is logical when considered on their own but are seen as irrational and inconsistent when combined. As can be seen in the figure altruistic motives and egoistic motives are represented on different axel where each of them is going in separate direction. This split of direction represents the contradictory nature of doing something for yourself compared to doing something for other. Both of them makes sense in isolation but combining them might seem inconsistent and irrational. However, they are interrelated due to their dual influence of ethical consumption. Gaim and Wåhlin (2016, p. 35) argue that the paradox perspective is suitable when there is a constant pressure to engage in the demands of both elements (Gaim & Wåhlin, 2016, p. 35). Our result clearly shows that ethical consumers are driven by the engagement of both elements where they want to contribute to others while at the same benefit themselves. This creates a tension, but with this paradoxical perspective the tension does not have to be eliminated, it can be sustained. That is because in paradoxes, there is no attempt to resolve or get rid of the tension (Gaim & Wåhlin, 2016, p. 35).

Gaim and Wåhlin (2018, p. 42) further argue that the paradoxical tension could be managed by finding a middle path between the elements. Instead of choosing either A or B, one could instead choose the path of C, which represent a synthesis of paradoxical tension that enables the best of both worlds (Gaim & Wåhlin, 2018, p. 42). This is presented in figure 5 where A is the path of altruism, B is the path of egoism, and C is the win-win situation created by combining them. None of our respondents were found on any of the isolated paths of A or B, they were all found within the blue circle, between the orange lines, towards the path of C. In this way they receive the best of both worlds and maximizes their utility. Therefore, it is crucial to not view competing demands as “either or” in ethical consumption. Altruism and egoism are contradictory but they are yet interrelated to a degree in ethical consumption where the only reasonable path is the middle ground of win-win. With this in hand, and as Gaim and Wåhlin (2018, p. 42) state: Why choose A or B when you can choose C?
In addition and referring back to the conceptual model (see figure 4), we can see that there is a relationship between the factor of guilt and win-win. Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1338) argue that by purchasing “ethically correct” products the consumer fulfills personal needs while at the same time alleviating the feeling of social guilt, creating a win-win situation. Bray et al. (2011, p. 602) has also shown in their study that the alleviation of guilt was an influential factor of ethical consumption. Our results are in line with these previous findings where many respondents raised the aspect of guilt in relation to organic grocery consumption. The reason for guilt being connected to win-win is because it contains elements of both altruism and egoism. The consumer conducts the ethical behavior in order to gain self-satisfaction in form of an alleviation of guilt, but in order to achieve this the purchase needs to contain altruistic benefits.

6.5 Habits

So far we have focused on the value-based motivational factors for ethical consumption. Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) also suggested that there are non-value-based motivational factors such as habits. Our results are in line with the findings by Davies and Gutsche (2016) where the vast majority of respondent, expressed that habits are an influential part of their organic grocery consumption. The same respondents also said that they put little or no effort into evaluating the organic groceries that they lay in their shopping basket. This aligns well to the theory of habits meaning that the decisions demand little thought and is guided by what consumers feels comes natural to them (Hiller & Woodall, 2018, p. 11). In other words, it minimizes the need for cognitive evaluation (Hiller & Woodall, 2018, p. 10).

However, it is worth mentioning that even though there was a strong consensus among the respondent in regard of habits, some respondents expressed limitations to their habitual behavior. Especially one respondent highlighted an interesting limitation to her
habitual behavior by stating that it was a dynamic process. In her case, the habitual behavior was not fixed and when a better product rose she realigned her habit to match that new opportunity. This is line with Hiller and Woodall (2018, p. 14) who argue that habits are likely to change when new advantages arise. This gives some light to the fact that habits do not have to be black or white and that there can be some gray-zone somewhere in between.

In addition, Carrigan et al. (2014, p. 409-410) argue that brand loyalty has a notable impact on ethical consumption behavior. Our result is in line with this statement as many of our respondent describe that their brand loyalty in grocery shopping had an effect on their choice of organic groceries. Furthermore, Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) and Yamoah et al. (2016, p. 191) stresses that consumer tend to buy from existing brands which converts to organic. Several respondents express this where they stated that it was a smooth transition going from a non-organic to an organic alternative within the same brand.

In summary, habits have a substantial role in ethical consumption and that is the reason for its central placement in the conceptual model. In the model, habits function as the final gatekeeper towards ethical consumption as the consumers motivation of win-win is imbedded into habits. There could of course be some limitations within the habitual behavior creating a sort of grey-zone, but regardless, we argue that it plays a crucial part in ethical consumption.

6.6 Knowledge and information

Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) argue that consumers of ethical products do not have detailed information to base every day decision on. Instead they are drawn by the mythical and beneficial shimmer that ethical products are surrounded by (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1332). This statement is in line with our data. A vast majority of our respondents believe that they lack information and knowledge about organic groceries. Among our respondents only one said that she felt comfortable with her level of knowledge while the rest believed they did not have enough knowledge. Still, all of them buy organic groceries due to several perceived benefits. In addition, from our dataset it is also clear that our respondents recognize organic labels, but that they have now knowledge about their meaning. This further strengthen the statement by Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1332) that consumers have no actual knowledge about the ethical products they buy, instead they choose ethical products due to their mythical benefits.

An aspect of information where previous findings are contradictory is the quantity of information. For example, Boultridge and Carrigan (2000, p. 363) suggest that more information would have no significant positive effect on ethical purchasing behavior. In contrast, Bray et al. (2011, p. 602), Burke et al. (2014, p. 2251) all show the importance of more information to promote ethical consumption. In this matter our respondents had a strong and clear opinion; more information would have a positive effect and increase their consumption of organic groceries. Our respondents also stated that they were interested in getting more information.

Although our respondents emphasized the importance of more information they believed another aspect to be of more important namely, the framing of information. Our respondents were homogeneous in their opinion that the framing is even more important
than the quantity of information. Their thoughts are in line with Carrigan et al. (2004, p. 406) who explained that consumers have problems processing information if they get smothered. Our respondents argued that the information should be short and concise and placed in convenient places in the supermarket. Shaw et al. (2005, p. 189) stresses similar thoughts when they argue that information need to be easy and well-targeted to be effective.

In our conceptual model, knowledge and information is placed at the bottom of the figure, acting as the foundation for ethical consumption. The reason for this is that our respondents explicitly expressed a wish for more knowledge in organic products and labels. This increased awareness would give them more insight into both altruistic and egoistic matters and enable them to make better and more informed decisions. The win-win situation will probably still hold but the consumers will not rely as much on the mythical benefits.

6.7 Level of morality in ethical consumption: a conceptual model

In section 6.1 we presented a conceptual model over the underlying motivational factors driving ethical consumption (see figure 4). In that model we argue that consumers mainly look for win-win situation before they engage in ethical consumption. In this section, we build on our initial conceptual model and add the dimension of ethical theories. From the perspective of five ethical theories namely, Egoism, Utilitarianism, Ethics of duties, Virtue ethics and Postmodern ethics we will subjectively try to determine the level of morality of this ethical consumption driven by win-win. This is shown in figure 6. From the ethical consumption box, the behavior is beamed through a prism of ethical theories, the behavior is then reflected on a scale of morality. On the right side of the scale we have the ethical theories that rate the level of morality as high. As we move to the left on the scale, the level of morality is descending. The theory of postmodern ethics is used as an overarching theory to examine the result from the other four ethical theories by using our own gut feelings and emotions. In the coming sections we will further elaborate on the level of morality from the perspective of each ethical theory.
6.7.1 Egoism

As we stated in the theoretical framework, the ethical theory of egoism is a part of the consequentialist theory. In the consequentialist theory the outcome of an action is of interest, were an action is considered to be morally correct if the outcome is desirable (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 92). In this study, a lot of attention has been focused on the underlying motivations of ethical consumption. We now add another dimension to it by looking at the outcome of ethical consumption as well. This approach will be taken in this section, as well as in the next section where we handle utilitarianism.

According to egoism, an action can be considered to be morally right if decision-makers freely can decide to follow either their short-term desires or long-term interest (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 93). Departing from our findings our respondents could freely follow both their short-term desires as well as long-term interest, which they also strived to do. For example, our respondents strived for fulfilling the short-term desire of a better tasting product while at the same time achieving a better health and a better social belonging in the long-term. These combined benefits enable the consumer to achieve both short- and long-term satisfaction and therefore making the outcome desirable.

In addition, according to egoism the pursuit of self-interest will also benefit the utility of others (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 94). Thus, egoism creates spillover effects resulting in utilitarian advantages (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 94). This is applying well in the case of organic consumption because even though the motives of buying organic products might be heavily egoistic-based, the outcome still contain altruistic benefits. Therefore, egoism creates spillover effects which benefits others and can for that reason be seen as morally correct.

In summary, the ethical theory of egoism is simple and natural to use (Bouville, 2008, p. 114) and it enable us to bring specific light to the egoistic behavior of ethical consumption. From an egoistic ethical perspective the action of ethical consumption is to a high degree morally correct because it enables consumer to embrace their short-term desires and their long-term interest. Also, due to the fact the outcome provides altruistic benefits through spillover effects, egoism can be seen as morally correct. For these reasons, egoism is placed to the far right in the conceptual model.

6.7.2 Utilitarianism

Just like in the case of egoism, the utilitarian approach does not emphasize these motivational factors as long as the outcome of an action is correct. From a utilitarian perspective an outcome is considered to be correct if it maximizes the pleasure and reduce the pain inflicted on everyone affected by the action (Garcia-Ruiz & Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2014, p. 511). Crane and Matten (2016, p. 98) says that one way to evaluate a decision is to do a utilitarian analysis and then choose the option with the highest utility. In our study we have interviewed mainstream consumers that frequently buy organic groceries and therefore the decision that needs to be evaluated is the choice between organic and non-organic options. After the evaluation, the consumer should choose the option that brings the most utility for stakeholders like farmers, animals, the environment, the society and the family. By choosing this option, an action is considered to be morally correct, no
matter the underlying motives. However, the most common criticism of a utilitarian approach is the unreasonableness of evaluating each purchase decision one makes (Dion, 2012, p. 11), and that it is difficult to know the consequences of a decision (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 100). Therefore, we argue that the utilitarian analysis should be used as a general guiding framework, which we have strived to do by combining it with other ethical theories. This is in line with recommendations made by Gustafson (2013, p. 325) and Witzum & Young (2013, p. 576). Below in table 3, we present a general utilitarian analysis of decision between an organic and non-organic option.

**Table 3: Utilitarian analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Action 1: Buying an organic option</th>
<th>Action 2: Buying an non-organic option</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>Pleasure: Healthier production</td>
<td>Pain: A more uncertain harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>Pleasure: Better general animal welfare</td>
<td>Pain: Worse general animal welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Pleasure: Less commercial fertilization, pesticides and pollutants</td>
<td>Pain: More commercial fertilization, pesticides and pollutants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Pleasure: Possibly healthier and more nutritious diet for the population; A thriving countryside</td>
<td>Pain: Higher cost for subsidies to support farmers; Less expensive diet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Pleasure: Possibly healthier and more nutritious diet for the family.</td>
<td>Pain: More expensive diet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this utilitarian analysis, we evaluate the choice between action 1; buying an organic option and action 2; buying a non-organic option. These actions are evaluated in relation to the pleasure and pain the actions inflict on several stakeholders namely; Farmers, Animals, Environment, Society and Family. From this analysis, we can see that action 1 have several pleasure creating effects for all of the stakeholders while the pleasure generated from action 2 are not as extensive. From the pain perspective we can see that the result is the opposite. Action 2 inflicts pain to all of the stakeholders while the pain inflicted to stakeholders by action 1 are not as significant. All together it is clear that action 1 is inflicting more pleasure and reducing more pain compared to action 2. Therefore, from a utilitarian approach, it is morally correct to choose action 1 over action 2. This means that utilitarianism is placed to the far right in our conceptual model.

6.7.3 Ethics of duties

To this point we have handled two consequentialist theories in form of egoism and utilitarianism which both supports a high level of morality in ethical consumption. However, no we are going to examine ethical consumption from another perspective, namely from a non-consequentialist perspective in form of ethics of duties. According to ethics of duties an action is considered to be morally correct if the underlying motives and principles are considered to be correct (García-Ruiz & Rodríguez-Lluesma, 2014, p. 511). Therefore, less emphasis is put on the outcome of the action. In order to evaluate the level of morality in ethical consumption from this perspective we have used the
categorical imperative framework, consisting of three main principles: consistency, human dignity and universality (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 101).

According to the first principle of consistency an action can be regarded right if other people in a consistent manner should follow the behavior (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 101). The key motivational factor for ethical consumption as discussed in section 6.4 is win-win were consumers get both altruistic and egoistic benefits from their consumption. Consumers experience paradoxical tension where they choose the win-win path which contains the best of both altruism and egoism. We argue that this behavior should be followed in a consistent manner by others because it maximizes the amount of utility for all parties involved. Why take an isolated path of either altruism or egoism when you can take an incorporated path of both of them. Therefore, the rational decision is to follow the behavior of win-win, making the first principle morally correct in ethical consumption.

The second principle refers to aspects of human dignity saying that you should always treat people as ends and never as means only (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 101). We believe that the win-win motive of ethical consumption fulfills this principle due to the duality of benefits. By caring for others such as farmers and animals, consumers treat these individuals as ends where their dignity is respected. At the same time, consumer use these individuals as means to achieve their egoistic motives. Therefore, ethical consumption is morally correct from this second principle as well.

Finally, we have the aspect of universality which asks the question whether the action is acceptable to every rational human being. In this principle though, we encounter some problems in regard of morality. As we stated in section 6.6 regarding knowledge and information, ethical consumer relies heavily on mythical benefits of ethical products where they do not really know what the products or labels actually stands for. This means that their decisions are more based on emotions rather than facts, which from a rational perspective does not make sense. In addition, ethical consumer relies heavily on habits which from a rational perspective does not make sense either. Consciousness and knowledge are key in rational decision and here the ethical consumer stumbles. Therefore, ethical consumption for what it is today would not be acceptable to every rational human and can therefore not be seen as morally correct from this principle. For that reason, ethics of duties is placed a notch the left compared to the two consequentialist theories in the conceptual model.

6.7.4 Virtue ethics

The previously mentioned ethical theories have touched up on the outcomes and the underlying principles of an action. However there is an additional perspective that can be used to evaluate the level of morality of an action, namely virtue ethics. This perspective focuses on the decision makers character or virtues (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 114). From this perspective and action can be evaluated by the character of the person performing the action, hence good actions are performed by good persons (Elliot, 1991, p. 178). With this in mind we could argue that our respondents are morally correct persons who makes morally correct decisions by choosing organic groceries. What further strengthen this argument is the fact that our respondents look for win-win situations in their ethical consumption. This is in line with the character-based ethical theory since it describes a person's virtues as two-folded (Song & Kim, 2018, p. 1161). There is both self-regarding virtues as well as other-regarding virtues like altruism (Song & Kim, 2018, p. 1161-1163).
However, our conclusion is that our respondents are not that morally correct from the perspective of virtue ethics. Our reason for this can be found in a dimension of virtue ethics that has been neglected in other ethical theories, namely personal development. In character-based theory, a person can through new experiences develop his or hers virtues to become more ethically correct over time (Song and Kim, 2018, p. 1161). From our data we can see that our respondents are not knowledgeable about the organic groceries that they buy or the consequences of their decisions. Instead they make their decisions based on perceived mythical benefits and notions. Therefore, we argue that our respondents haven’t developed their virtues enough to be considered as completely morally correct consumers from a virtue ethics perspective. Due to this we have ranked the level of morality from a virtue ethics perspective in the middle of the scale in our conceptual model. At the same time though, we see a willingness to learn and a belief that more information would encourage them to make more rational decisions. Therefore we believe that the level of morality from this perspective will increase as the consumers gets more informed and more knowledgeable about ethical products and labels.

6.7.5 Postmodern ethics

We have concluded that the action of ethical consumption contains a high level of morality from the perspectives of egoism, utilitarianism and ethics of duties. We have also concluded that morality from a virtue perspective is not as high but will rise as the consumer gets more informed and knowledgeable about ethical products. In this last perspective we examine the act of ethical consumption from an emotional perspective through postmodern ethics. As can be seen in the conceptual model postmodern ethics overarch the other four ethical theories. The reason for this being that we use postmodern ethics in order to examine the result from the other four ethical theories by using our own gut feelings and emotions. This is possible in postmodern ethics because it encourages people to question everyday issues based on their gut feelings and what their inner emotions tells them is right and wrong (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 119). Therefore, morality is seen as highly subjective (Crane & Matten, 2016, p. 119).

As can be seen in the conceptual model, the level of morality in ethical consumption is somewhere between the spectrum of mediocre to high. We think that this is reasonable due to the diversified nature of it. For starters, the outcomes of ethical consumption will always be morally correct regardless of the underlying motive. This can for example be seen in the utilitarian analysis where the action of buying organic products inflicts far greater pleasure and far less pain for stakeholder involved compared to the action of buying non-organic. It is also interesting to see that the act of ethical consumption is morally correct from an egoistic perspective as well. It spreads some light on the fact that egoism does not have to be a negative thing in ethical consumption, which is much due to its altruistic spillover effects. We also think that the win-win motive of ethical consumption should be seen as morally corrects due to its maximization of utility for all stakeholders involved. For us, it feels like an action that should be followed by others because why choose an isolated path of either altruism or egoism when ethical consumption contains dualities of benefits. Also, this win-win situation also enables the securing of dignity of individual being involved in the production the products. Therefore, these individuals are treated both as ends and as means, which we think correlates well with high morality.

There is however a couple of aspects which impairs the level of morality in ethical consumption, which is especially due to lack of knowledge and strong reliance of habits.
The implications of these is reflected in the principle of universality in ethics of duties, as well as in virtue ethics. The lack of knowledge and habitual behavior makes people rely of mythical benefits in an unconscious manner. Therefore making their ethical decision questionable from a rational perspective. The positive thing here though is the consumer's willingness to learn which will develop their character and enable them to make better more informed decisions in the future. This could in turn enable a higher score on the scale of morality.
7. Conclusion and implications

In this chapter we present the conclusion and implication of this study. First, we draw conclusions from our analysis and discussion in relation to our purpose and research question. Then we discuss theoretical as well as practical implication. Finally we argue for limitations of our study and conclude with proposals for future research.

7.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was two-folded. Firstly, we wanted to explore the motivational factors for ethical consumption in the overlooked area of the mainstream consumer segment. Secondly, we wanted to use ethical theories to evaluate the level of morality of this ethical consumption. To achieve this purpose we used a qualitative research strategy where we conducted semi-structured interviews with respondents from the mainstream consumer segment. Through this process we believe that we have been able to answer our research question:

(1) What are the motives for mainstream ethical consumption, and (2) how morally correct is this ethical behavior?

The major part of this study has focused on the motivational factors of ethical consumption, hence the first part of the research question. We have divided these factors into three categories, altruistic-, egoistic- and non-value-based factors. In the category of altruistic motives we have the strive for social justice. We found that the strive for social justice is a strong driver for ethical consumption as consumers of ethical products showed concerns for the environment, farmers, animals and the society. However, altruistic motive is not the sole driver of ethical consumption because ethical consumers also look for self-interests in their consumption.

This gives us the second category of motivational factors, namely egocentric motives. In their pursuit for self-interests, consumers choose ethical products because they perceived them to be healthier and of better quality. They also get inspired by social norms and a wish to belong to a group of aware consumers. These egocentric motives have one thing in common, they create a positive internal feeling for the consumer, which increase the level of self-satisfaction. However, just like social justice, the strive for self-satisfaction is not powerful enough on its own to create ethical consumption. Instead the consumer of ethical products searches for a win-win situation, making it the key driver of ethical consumption.

The search for a win-win situation creates a paradoxical tension where the consumer has to balance personal benefits with the benefits of others. By taking this win-win path the consumer gets the best of both altruistic benefits as well as egoistic benefits and therefore maximizes the utility of consumption. Due to the contradictory nature of altruism and egoism tension will always be presents, but from a paradoxical perspective this tension is seen as fruitful. Another significant aspect of the win-win situation is the reduction of guilt. By choosing an ethically correct product, the consumer gets the product he or she needs but at the same time reducing the feeling of guilt.

Beside the altruistic and the egoistic motives, ethical consumption is also affected by non-value-based motivational factors, namely habits, and information and knowledge.
Habits are an influential part of ethical consumption where consumers to a high degree put little or no effort into evaluating the products that they purchase. Habits are also influenced by brand loyalty which affects consumers choice of ethical products. Because of this, habits function as the final gatekeeper towards ethical consumption as the consumers key motivation of win-win is imbedded into habitual routines. Furthermore, our result showed that ethical consumers rely heavily on mythical benefits of ethical products. This is due to their lack of knowledge about the meaning of ethical products and labels. However we see a willingness to learn and a belief that more and better framed information will positively affect their consumption of ethical products in the future.

The second part of our research question is focused on the level of morality of ethical consumption. This morality has been evaluated through the lenses of five ethical theories and from these perspectives we can see that the level of morality of ethical consumption is between mediocre to high. We see a high level of morality, especially from the perspective of consequentialist theories, where the outcome of ethical consumption is desirable, both from a utilitarian and an egoistic perspective. We also see fairly high level of morality from the non-consequentialist theory of ethics of duty. This is because the motives are in line with the principles of consistency and human dignity but lacks in universality. Form a virtue of ethics perspective the level of morality is however mediocre due to consumers strong reliance on mythical benefits of ethical products. Finally, from a postmodern perspective, our emotions and gut-feelings tells us that the level of morality stated by previous four ethical theories is reasonable. Win-win is a rational and moral motive, but the lack of knowledge and the presences of habitual behavior makes the morality of ethical consumption stumble to some degree.

7.2 Theoretical implications

One aspect that has been neglected in previous research of ethical consumption is the mainstream consumer segment (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1342). Our study has taken much inspiration from this where we have aimed at exploring the motivational factors of mainstream ethical consumption. Another thing that has been missing in previous literature is actual behavioral data, where too much attention has been given to intention-based surveys (Davies & Gutsche, 2016, p. 1342; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 127). The respondents in our study all possessed the behavior of ethical consumption by being frequent buyers of organic groceries, which enabled us to study the actual behavior of these consumers instead of their intentions. This was further enabled by taking a qualitative approach, which Davies and Gutsche (2016, p. 1342) argues has been missing in previous research. Therefore, our results contributes to a better understanding of the behavior of this important segment.

Another key gap in the literature is the confusion regarding the importance of different motivational factors. From our literature review, we could especially see that there was a confusion regarding the importance of social norms, habits, and consumer knowledge and information. Through our empirical findings we were able to add some clarity to this confusion. We were able to show that social norms works as an important influence and is together with other motivational factors guided by habitual behaviors. Also, we were able to show that knowledge and information of ethical products is highly valued by consumers, even though their current level of knowledge is in general below optimum.
In addition, the use of ethical theories in ethical consumption has been overlooked in previous research. As we stated in section 1.3 where we discussed the research gaps, ethical theories have been used in similarity in other research areas such as tourism (García-Rosell & Mäkinen, 2012) and leadership and organization (Dion, 2012). However, we were not able to find any studies in the area of ethical consumption that has taken this approach. By using the ethical theories of egoism, utilitarianism, ethics of duties, virtue ethics, and postmodern ethics we were able, on a subjective level, to determine the level of morality of ethical consumption. This novel approach contributes to a level of originality by incorporating philosophical dimensions to mainstream ethical consumption.

Furthermore, the majority of studies in ethical consumption has been conducted in context of Fairtrade products, but our study our study has taken another approach by focusing on organic groceries. We therefore contribute with greater knowledge of the organic branch of ethical consumption which few studies in comparison has done before. We also contribute with greater knowledge of the Swedish market, which is one of the leading countries in the world when it comes to both production (European Parliament, 2018) and consumption (Ekoweb, 2018, p. 30) of organic groceries.

In summary, we argue that the theoretical implications of this study enables it to be good theoretical works as described by Crane et al. (2016, p. 788). However, in order for it to fulfill the criterium of good theoretical works it also has to contribute with fruitful practical implications. This will be handled in the next section.

7.3 Practical implications

As this study have explored the underlying motives of ethical consumption, the most significant practical implication is a better understanding how to market ethical products to trigger these motivational factors. First of all, information and knowledge plays an essential role of product marketing. We have shown that the level of knowledge regarding ethical products and their labels are to be considered as low. We have also shown that consumers of ethical products are willing to learn and that they believe that more information would increase their ethical consumption. However, consumers of ethical products emphasize that framing of the information is important as well. The information should be short and concise, based on facts and conveniently placed inside the supermarket. In the case of organic groceries, consumers asks for more information about the differences between organic and non-organic option. They also ask for information regarding the benefits of the organic option. This holds true for both altruistic benefits as well as egocentric benefits.

Since our conceptual model emphasize the importance of win-win situations to promote ethical consumption, we recommend bullet points in a close proximity to the product that for example could state:

- 9 out of 10 consumers prefer the taste of this organic product
- Higher nutritious value compared to non-organic options
- By choosing this product you contribute to less pesticides and better animal welfare.
By framing the information like this, the information highlights important motivational factors for ethical consumption. The first bullet point deals with social norms and belongingness, as well as product quality. The second point includes the health aspect and the third bullet point shows the altruistic benefits. All together this piece of information shows the win-win situation that is desirable for ethical consumers.

In addition, habits act as a final gatekeeper to ethical consumption. Because of this, the supermarkets have to be aware and know how to handle habitual patterns of their consumers. Through a well-planned store layout and a tactical displaying, stores can affect habitual behavior and draw attention towards ethical products. Once the consumer has tried an ethical option, it is a great chance it will be included in the habitual behavior.

7.4 Societal implications

A key societal implication of this study is its potential for nudging. Nudging is a tool that policy makers can use in order to change individual behavior in society (Lehner et al., 2016, p. 168). This is done by making changes to the environment which will enable the individual, and in our case the consumer, to make better long-term decisions that will benefit both the individual and society (Lehner et al., 2016, p. 168). One of the key implications with nudging is that it can be used to promote certain desirable behaviors (Lehner et al., 2016, p. 168), which in our case is ethical consumption. Two aspects of nudging is of particular interest for the results of this study and that is simplification and framing of information, and the use of social norms.

According to the nudging perspective, a simplified message framed in an effective manner is key in promoting desirable behavior (Lehner et al., 2016, p. 168). Our result showed that the framing of information is really important for ethical consumers where the information should be short and concise and placed in convenient places. This creates beneficial implications for policy makers who wants to use nudging in promoting more ethical consumption.

Furthermore, due to the fact that humans are greatly affected by their social surrounding, social norms are a strong force in influencing behavior (Lehner et al., 2016, p. 169). Therefore, making it key for nudging (Lehner et al., 2016, p. 169). Our result show that ethical consumers are highly affected by social norms and that applies especially to social norms created by external influences. Strictly speaking, ethical consumers wish to belong to a better group of aware consumers. For policy makers this result is fruitful, where social norm nudging could really be an effective way of influencing consumers to make more ethical decisions. By the use of these two nudging tools policymakers can influence consumers to make more ethical choices. With this increase of ethical consumption many stakeholders within the society will experience positive effects, which for example can be seen in our utilitarian analysis in section 6.7.2.

7.5 Limitations and future research

The key limitation in this study was available time and financial means. This study was conducted during a period of approximately two months and with no external funding, which had an affected on the comprehension of the study. Firstly, we had to focus exclusively on collecting the data from respondents in Umeå. With more time and money we would have been able to collect data from other locations in Sweden which would
have enabled a better representation of the Swedish population. Secondly, we had to limited ourselves to only one store in Umeå. With the limited time in hand of collecting the data we saw it as ineffective to travel around different stores in Umeå. Ica Maxi in Umeå has a high continuous flow of people during most of the day with places to sit when doing the interviews, making it a strategic point to catch respondents. However, a diversity of different stores in Umeå, and in other places in Sweden, could have been beneficial for the study. Thirdly, due to our focus on catching respondents in a physical store, online consumers can have been neglected. And fourthly, due to our limited time only 14 respondents was included in the study. We do not think that more respondents would have taken the study in another direction, but I could have provided even stronger support for our findings.

In regard of future research, we have several fruitful suggestions in the area. Firstly, we think that there are much more to explore in many of the motivational factors for mainstream ethical consumption. For starters, we think that the influence of social norms needs to be further explored because much of the existing literature handled this matter as a broad term. In this study however, we have shown that social norms consists of multiple dimension, such as both inner-circle influence and external influences. This, together with social norms being a pressure and/or inspiration, needs to be further explored. The factor of habits also needs to be further inspected. We have shown that habits are an influential factor in ethical consumption but we have also seen that habits can have a grey-zone consisting of limitations. This more dynamic view of habits needs to be further elaborated in future research. Then we have the aspect of win-win, which we argue is the most important motivational factor for future studies to explore. Win-win is complex and much more can be done in order to understand its implications for ethical consumption. It is also an opportunity for future research to connect win-win in ethical consumption with paradoxical theory, to further elaborate on this relation. In addition, the influence of guilt within win-win needs to be further explored in order to understand its importance in ethical consumption.

Secondly, more studies in general is needed in the mainstream consumer segment in regard of ethical consumption. This study, together with Davies and Gutsche (2016), is one of few studies that handles ethical consumption in relation to the mainstream consumer segment and therefore we are just at the starting point in the field. Also, the mainstream consumer segment is vast and diversified, consisting of many sub-segments. At some point, research needs to start dig into these sub-segments in order to understand potential differences between them.

Thirdly, due to our inductive approach our goal of this study has been to create new conceptual models reflecting the empirical findings. The created conceptual models, as can been seen in chapter 6, lay the foundation for proposition that can be tested by future studies with a more deductive quantitative approach. This especially applies to the conceptual model of the motivation for ethical consumption as can be seen in section 6.1. However, we think that the conceptual model found in section 6.7, which handles the level of morality in ethical consumption, also has elements that can be tested through a larger sample. In general though, we see potential for future research to embrace ethical theories in relation to ethical consumption. The synergistic effect between them is too eminent to overlook.
8. Quality criterium

In this final chapter, relevant quality criteria will be discussed in relation to this study. First we will start with external and internal reliability before we continue with external and internal validity. These quality criteria help to ensure the reader that the study has been carried out in a scientifically correct manner.

For research to be considered as valuable and contributing, the result must be creditable (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 31). The most commonly used measurements for quality in research is reliability and validity (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 31). Even though the use of these two main terms has received criticism in regard of qualitative research, there are still those who argue that they are useful in these types of studies as well (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 51; Saunders et al., 2016, p. 205). The general idea behind it is that all research, regardless of it being qualitative or quantitative, needs to be reliable and valid (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 205). Therefore, the terms is important to be able to show the quality of qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 205). With this in hand, we feel comfortable in using these terms in order to assess the quality of our research. Reliability and validity can be divided into two perspectives, external and internal, and both will be covered in the coming sections.

8.1 Reliability

External reliability handles the question whether another independent research would be able to get the same result if they conducted a study within a similar context (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 32). Further, the authors argue that this might be challenging due to the unique context of qualitative studies (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 32). We argue that the context of our study is not that unique. Everyone can access mainstream consumers at mainstream outlets. However we will still describe how we relate to the five basic aspects needed to ensure the external reliability. The first aspect regard the researchers social role within context he or she is researching, and the challenge that other researchers will have to adapt the same role to reach to the same result (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 37). In our case we do not see a problem with this first aspect. This since we did not have to adapt a special social role to get in contact with our respondents. We just kept an open mind and asked open question to respondents that could have been accessed by anyone. Therefore we believe that other researchers could easily replicate our research from this aspect.

The second aspect handles information about respondents. In other words how researchers describe their respondents and how they selected these respondents (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 38). In section 4.2 we give a detailed view of our sampling strategy and section 5.1 gives an overview of our respondents. From this aspect, we have been extra careful to give important information about our respondents without jeopardizing the anonymity of our respondents.

The third aspect deal with the context where the data is collected. Depending on the place of the interview, the respondent might be affected share more or less information (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 38). Therefore, it is beneficial to conduct interviews at a location where the respondent feel comfortable (Jacobsen, 2010, s. 175). Once our respondents accepted to participate in our study, we gave them a choice, either we could do the interview right away at the store cafeteria or later over the phone. We conducted 8
physical interviews at the cafeteria. It might not be the most ideal location for an interview but since these 8 respondents were given the chance to do the interview by phone we argue they were comfortable enough at the cafeteria. We also placed our self at the most remote and quiet area of the cafeteria to ensure that our respondents could be as relaxed as possible. When it comes to the interviews conducted over phone, our respondents could choose a place they were comfortable with.

Finally we have the fourth and the fifth aspect and these aspects are related to the study’s construction, definitions, data collection and method of analysis (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 39-40). All of this has been discussed and further elaborated on in chapter 3 and 4. All together we believe that our descriptions in those chapters is enough to ensure the external reliability of this study.

The second part of the reliability is the internal reliability. The main concern of the internal reliability is how the collected data and the phenomenon is interpreted by different researchers (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, s. 41). In other words, different researchers should be able to draw the same conclusions from the data (Bryman & Bell, 2012, s. 390). One way of improving the internal reliability is to be several researchers present, in this way they can discuss and conclude together. We have had the advantage of writing this study in pairs. Due to this we have had the possibility to discuss our ideas and thoughts with each other. Thanks to this we have tried to ensure the internal reliability by always verifying our subjective interpretation with each other.

8.2 Validity

External validity refers to the degree the result can be compared and generalized to a larger population (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32; Jacobsen, 2010, p. 171). The term generalizability should however be used with caution within qualitative research. This is because the purpose of qualitative research is not to generalize but to understand a phenomenon in depth (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 171). However, even though the generalizability is in general low for qualitative research, researcher could still explore the opportunity of discussing the implications of findings in different settings (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 173).

We embrace this matter but we do not want to use the term generalizability, instead we highlight the term transferability. Inspiration for this is taken from Morgan (2007, p. 72) who argues that we cannot assume that research methods and approaches makes the result a matter of extremes of either context-bound or generalizability. Instead, Morgan (2007, p. 72) argues that one should discuss if the knowledge gained could be transferred to another setting. Thus, one has to ask oneself, how much of our knowledge can be useful for a new set of circumstances (Morgan, 2007, p. 72). We truly believe that much of the knowledge created by this study could be transferred to a large part of the Swedish grocery industry. Of course, there could be regional differences which might not be grasped by the scope of this study. However, the exploratory nature of this study still highlights patterns of ethical consumption for mainstream consumers in Sweden that could be of interest for the industry. We also see the potential for the knowledge created to be transferred to other Scandinavian countries due to similar country characteristics. Of course, this needs to be further explored by future studies but we still believe that the patterns discovered could work as fruitful intelligence for these countries as well. Furthermore, the potential implications of the findings for other ethical products outside
the scope of groceries should be noted. We believe that especially the win-win factor of ethical consumption has a high level of transferability to other product categories. For example, imagine the purchase of an electric car. It would not be unreasonable to assume that buyers of these cars are driven by both altruistic and egoistic, and therefore by win-win motives.

Then we have the aspect of internal validity, which refers to the degree the study is a truthful representation of the reality (LeComte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32). Jacobsen (2010) presents four aspects that can be used to evaluate the level of internal validity. In the first aspects, one should question if the right respondents have been used in the study (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 164). Our aim was to include a diversified set of respondents which could work as a fairly representative sample of the large and diversified mainstream consumer segment. In section 5.1 this diversity can be seen and we argue that even though diversity in the sample is not perfect, it still holds as fairly good representation. Furthermore, we wanted to include consumer who frequently bought organic products in order to study their behavior. We set a minimum of 10% of their purchases being organic and all of respondents fulfilled this criterion.

The second aspect refers to the level of proximity that the respondents have to the topic and asks the question if the information is based on the respondents own experience or if they refer to other people’s stories (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 165). Based on the answers provided by the respondents we have reason to believe that the information was in fact based on their own experience. The respondents talked from their own feelings, thoughts and experiences to a high degree, which Jacobsen (2010, p. 166) argues is beneficial for the internal validity.

Then we have the third aspect, which handles the matter of the respondents willingness to speak the truth (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 166). It is not uncommon for respondents to give distorted information and therefore it is important to reflect on it (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 166). One aspect that we suspect that some respondent exaggerated was the percentage of organic being bought where the average for our 14 respondents were 26%. This is significantly higher than the Swedish average of 10%. However, this potentially exaggerated percentage is not that much of importance because it is just a way of showing that they are frequent buyer of organic groceries. Otherwise, we believe that our respondents have been truthful to a high degree where we did not get the perception that they wanted to distort their answers. We cannot be 100% sure about it though, but we still feel comfortable with assuming that they have presented a fairly truthful reality.

Finally we have the fourth aspect which refers to the importance of having several independent respondents (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 167). The aspect of independence among respondents is important because otherwise the reality can be twisted (Jacobsen, 2010, p. 167). Even though we made a non-probability sample by subjectively choosing who to include in the study, we have strived for including respondents who are independent from each other.
Reference list


Cornish, L.S. (2013) Ethical Consumption or Consumption of Ethical Products? An Exploratory Analysis of Motivations behind the Purchase of Ethical Products. *Advances in Consumer Research, 41*, 337-341


## Appendix 1: Interview guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Theory section</th>
<th>Key source</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Initial question</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Do you frequently buy organic groceries? (supermarket, online and Systembolaget)</td>
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<td>2. Why do you choose to buy organic groceries?</td>
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<td><strong>Altruistic</strong></td>
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<td><em>If yes, in what way?</em></td>
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<td><em>If no, why not?</em></td>
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<td>4. How important is the welfare others in your purchasing decision?</td>
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<td>5. What personal interest are you ready to sacrifices in order to benefit the interest of other when buying organic groceries?</td>
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<td><strong>Egoistic</strong></td>
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<td>10. In what why do you connect product quality with organic groceries?</td>
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<td>Non-value-based</td>
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Appendix 2: Ethical framework

- Is there any additional information that you would like to have before we start the interview? This is because we want to make sure that you have fully understood what the study is about and what it means to participate.
- You have the right to stop the interview at any time and you have the right to not answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with.
- The information that you provided will only be used in this study and you are going to be anonymous.
- In order to enable transcription we would like to record the interview, is that okay for you? This is for us to be able to fully understand what has been said in the interview.
- If there is some parts of the interview that you would like us to not record, then let us know so that we can stop the recording for a moment.