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Bachelor Thesis

Green Marketing - The impact on consumer-based brand equity

*A quantitative study among the Swedish Generation
Y in the fashion clothing industry*



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Abstract

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Title: Green Marketing - The impact on consumer-based brand equity - Quantitative Study among the Swedish Generation Y in the fashion clothing industry.

Introduction: Recent trends have shown a steady growth regarding environmental concerns along with the pro-environmental attitudes among the consumers, yet a contradicting behaviour is observed in the purchase of environmentally friendly products, giving birth to the phenomena of attitude-behaviour gap. A fair amount of researchers have studied this attitude-behaviour gap over the recent years, investigating this very inconsistency in order to present a solution. This specific study is based on the findings of Davari & Strutton in relation to this attitude-behavior gap, where the researchers presented a simplified model of their study as an effort in overcoming this inconsistency. This specific study is based on the simplified model, where the research unearths the effect of green marketing mix elements on four dimensions of consumer-based brand equity with Swedish Generation Y and clothing fashion industry in perspective.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to explain the impact of green marketing mix elements (product, price, place and promotion) on dimensions of consumer-based brand equity (brand loyalty, brand association, brand trust and perceived brand quality).

Methodology: The research is based on quantitative approach designed in respect with the explanatory purpose. A closed-end online questionnaire was designed as the data collection method, resulting in 127 responses. The results were based on the multiple regression analysis, while the validity was tested against pearson's correlation method and reliability was tested through cronbach's alpha.

Conclusion: The study did not measure significant results, where green product stands out as the only element on the green marketing-mix having a positive relationship on one consumer-based brand equity dimension in this case, brand loyalty. Whereas the other elements were concluded as having no significance. Even though all the elements were perceived important by the Swedish Generation Y consumers.

Keywords: Green marketing-mix, Consumer-based brand equity, Attitude-behaviour gap, Generation Y.

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	5
1.1	Background	5
1.2	Problem Discussion.....	7
1.3	Purpose.....	8
2	Theoretical Framework.....	9
2.1	Green marketing mix.....	9
2.1.1	Green Product.....	9
2.1.2	Green Price	10
2.1.3	Green Place.....	11
2.1.4	Green Promotion.....	12
2.2	Consumer-based brand equity.....	13
2.2.1	Brand loyalty	14
2.2.2	Brand association.....	14
2.2.3	Brand trust	14
2.2.4	Perceived brand quality	15
2.3	Hypothesized relationships	15
3	Methodology.....	18
3.1	Research approach.....	18
3.1.1	Deductive research	18
3.1.2	Quantitative research	19
3.2	Research Design.....	19
3.3	Data sources	20
3.4	Data collection method.....	21
3.5	Data collection instrument	21
3.5.1	Operationalization	21
3.5.2	Questionnaire design	25
3.5.3	Pretesting	26
3.6	Sampling.....	27
3.6.1	Sampling frame.....	28
3.6.2	Sample selection	28
3.7	Data analysis method	29
3.7.2	Descriptive statistics	29
3.7.3	Correlation analysis	30
3.7.4	Regression analysis.....	30

3.8 Quality criteria.....	30
3.8.1 Content validity	31
3.8.2 Construct validity	31
3.8.3 Criterion validity.....	32
3.8.4 Reliability	32
3.9 Ethical considerations	33
4 Results.....	35
4.1 Descriptive statistics.....	35
4.2 Reliability	37
4.3 Validity.....	38
4.4 Hypothesis testing	39
4.4.1 Multiple linear regression.....	40
5 Discussion	44
5.1 Hypothesis 1	44
5.2 Hypothesis 2.....	45
5.3 Hypothesis 3.....	46
5.4 Hypothesis 4.....	47
5.5 Hypothesis 5.....	48
5.6 Hypothesis 6.....	48
5.7 Hypothesis 7.....	49
5.8 Hypothesis 8.....	50
5.9 Hypothesis 9.....	51
6 Conclusion	52
6.1 Theoretical implications.....	53
6.2 Managerial implications.....	54
6.3 Limitations and directions for further research.....	55
References.....	56
Appendix.....	66

1 Introduction

This chapter will include the introduction to concepts of corporate social responsibility, sustainability, green marketing and brand equity. This would lead to the discussion and problematization of these concepts and lastly land into the purpose of the study.

1.1 Background

Over the recent years, the growing concern regarding the environment has been observed not only as an important public issue but also a central topic in the academic research (Elham & Nabsiah Abdul, 2011). The consumers, interest groups and the governments are progressively critical to the companies to behave in a more socially responsible fashion. The organisations are more frequently expected to draw the decisions that does not only concern the organisation or the shareholders, but are also in best interest of the society on the whole (Grimmer & Woolley, 2014).

To be able to cater the changing needs and demands of the consumers, along with answering the arising request from the society on a richer social responsible behavior, an organization could enhance their approach on the development of an effective corporate social responsibility strategy. Shuili, Bhattacharya & Sankar (2011) explain the corporate social responsibility (CSR) as “...a firm’s commitment to maximize long-term economic, societal, and environmental well-being through business practices, policies, and resources” (p1528). The firms that are seen to be engaged in developing better CSR strategies are able to build a stronger customer bonding along with conveyance of a positive firm’s image (Lee et al., 2016). Du & Sen (2016) emphasize on the initiatives that are able to make a difference for the consumers, enables the firms to win the consumer's heart which is a key in building close and long-lasting ties with the firm. They further argue how these practices surpass the standard marketing mix which leads to an effective reshaping of the competitive game, resulting in an increment in both business and social value of a firm (Du & Sen, 2016).

Sustainability could be observed as one the key branches under the notion of CSR. The concept sustainability, is assumed to have made its impact in the marketing and strategy literature since the start of this century (Tollin, Christensen & Wilke, 2015). The concept Sustainability has been defined as “*the consumption of goods and services that meet basic needs and quality of*

life without jeopardizing the needs of future generations” (p143) (Gordon, Carrigan & Hastings, 2011). The authors Fuentes (2015) argue how the environmentally friendly products provide a set of solutions in regards to sustainability, and a way of transforming a complex process into a profitable one for the companies. They further argue on the notion of green marketing as adapting the traditional marketing techniques in line with the environmental issues. The authors Mishra & Sharma (2014) define the concept green marketing as “...*the process of developing products and services and promoting them to satisfy the customers who prefer products of good quality, performance and convenience at affordable cost, which at the same time do not have a detrimental impact on the environment*” (p79).

The concept green marketing has been explained from a different perspective, as the activities that are designed in order to create and promote any form of transaction that is intended to satisfy the human needs and wants, in a way that the process of satisfaction takes place with the least adverse effects on the natural environment (Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016). Keeping in view the different alterations of explanations available, the green marketing strategy could be viewed as, the desire of an organisation to foster actions that are designed to adjust the marketing and corporate objectives, while protecting the natural surroundings (Fraj, Martinez & Matute, 2011). The explanation is observed in line with the authors Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan (2013), as they conceptualized green marketing strategy that takes into consideration each marketing mix element. They further argue the notion as the Price, Product, Place and Promotion is to be designed and carried out in a way that does not cause an adverse effect on the natural environment.

As there is an increase in the levels of organisations competing with each other, globalization and with the steady growth of awareness among the consumers, the brand equity is considered as one of the firm’s greatest treasured asset (Girard et al, 2017). The authors further argues the importance of brand equity, as it has been evident from the recent trend of growing body in literature, housing this concept (Girard et al, 2017). The concept of brand equity in the marketing literature for years has been described “...*as the value added by the brand name to a product that does not possess a brand name*” (p5) (Davicik, da Silva & Hair, 2015).

1.2 Problem Discussion

According to Tan, Johnstone & Yang (2016) consumers awareness of environmental issues and positive attitudes increased over the years. Although the populations concerns for the environment are growing, consumers are not willing to purchase environmentally friendly products (Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Tan, Johnstone & Yan, 2016). Through that inconsistency a phenomena arises which is called “attitude-behavior gap” (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006; Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Tan, Johnstone & Yan, 2016). The gap represents the problem that consumers attitude towards the environment is positive but it does not transcribe into a real purchase behavior (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006; Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Tan, Johnstone & Yan, 2016). Several authors argue that the attitude-behavior gap is a social dilemma and therefore it creates the need to further investigate the inconsistency and originate a solution to close the gap (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006; Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Tan, Johnstone & Yan, 2016).

There are different explanations through the literature regarding reasons why consumers do not purchase environmentally friendly products, such as low perceived availability of environmentally friendly products, personal benefits, or also higher costs that are involved (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006; Davari & Strutton, 2014). That is where long-term green marketing strategies must be implemented in order to communicate the environmentally friendly aspect of the company to the consumer and thus establish the relationship with consumers in order to drive them to an actual purchase behavior, hence close the existing attitude-behavior gap (Davari & Strutton, 2014). The application of such a green marketing strategy implies the integration of the green marketing mix elements product, price, place and promotion into the strategy (Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013). Furthermore, Davari & Strutton (2014) argue that green marketing strategies are usually more rewarding if they establish brand loyalty, create positive brand associations, form more trust and encourage the perceptions of brand quality. Consequently, Davari & Strutton (2014) tested a model where they evaluated the influence of green marketing mix elements on the aforementioned aspects, namely brand loyalty, brand association, brand trust and brand quality, which are part of the consumer-based brand equity construct. Furthermore, the authors added two moderating variables to the model namely environmental concerns and consideration of consequences.

Through their findings Davari & Strutton (2014) were able to reject several relationships between green marketing mix and consumer-based brand equity. The influence of green price on brand association and perceived brand quality resulted as insignificant, further the impact

of green place on brand association and brand trust was denied and finally the effect of promotion on brand association, brand trust and perceived brand quality was not supported either. With respect to brand loyalty none of the hypotheses was rejected. Additionally, the influence of the moderating variable consideration of consequences was not supported, whereas the other moderating variable environmental concerns was significant. However, the authors argued that it is logical that consumers which are already interested in environmental topics, will probably react more favorably towards the impact of green marketing mix on consumer-based brand equity. Therefore, the findings from Davari & Strutton (2014) result in a simplified model with the need of being tested, which makes this research an extension study of the previous study (Berthon et al., 2002).

Despite the findings of Davari & Strutton (2014), the authors were not able to generate sufficient understanding about the topic in order to close the attitude-behavior gap, therefore more knowledge is needed concerning how strongly the green marketing mix elements influence consumer-based brand equity. Hence, the simplified model needs to be tested in order to create managerial implications explaining how marketers conveniently apply the green marketing mix and thus improve their green marketing strategies, so that consumers pro-environmental attitudes emanate into an actual purchase behavior. Furthermore, theoretical implications unearthing the relationship of green marketing mix when connected to consumer-based brand equity are needed, in order to add up to the poorly studied literature in this field (Davari & Strutton, 2014).

1.3 Purpose

This purpose is to explain the impact of green marketing mix elements (product, price, place and promotion) on dimensions of consumer-based brand equity (brand loyalty, brand association, brand trust and perceived brand quality).

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter would examine the current literature and discuss it to develop insights regarding the elements of green marketing mix and the selected dimensions of consumer-based brand equity. With the insights from the literature the hypotheses would be constructed and a model will be presented at the end of the chapter.

2.1 Green marketing mix

Developing the marketing mix is part of the whole marketing process of a company (Rex & Baumann, 2007). The difference between green marketing and conventional marketing is, that the marketing mix is green-oriented. Values are created to aim environmental and ethical commitments. In other words, green advertising includes environmental issues in their marketing mix (Rex & Baumann, 2007). Product development, the effectuation of pricing, promotional and supply chain strategies are elements of a green marketing mix (Kinoti, 2011). When implementing green products into their business, firms face substantial alterations. The market must be modified, the products need to be redefined, the benefits from its use have to be highlighted and the promotion must be adjusted in a way, that the consumer gets informed instead of getting impressed (Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016). How each element of the conventional marketing mix is applied on green marketing strategies is going to be presented in the next section.

2.1.1 Green Product

Tan, Johnstone & Yang (2016) explain green products as goods that are recognized as being environmentally-friendly. This can be due to several reasons, as the fabrication process, the components or substances used for the manufacturing and also the packaging. Whereas the green products are defined by Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan (2013) as the decisions and actions that are related to the products, based on the sole purpose of protection and interest of the natural environment by sustaining the energy and resources factor along with reduction of pollution and waste. The authors further stress on the two approaches with this program, being the tactical and strategical. The tactical scenario argues about how the products are packaged and labelled in a better environmentally friendly fashion, Where the strategical approach focuses on the design techniques, procedures and the manufacturing process in a more sustainable practice (Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013).

The description of Kinoti (2011) says that green goods are lasting, non-toxic and fabricated through the use of recycled materials or minimally packaged. Therefore green product strategies encompass recycling, reduced amount of packaging materials, sustainable raw materials, lasting products and safety for the disposal as well as use. However, according to Chockalingam & Isreal (2016) the green attributes of an eco-friendly product alone are not satisfying for a consumer. The product needs to be characterised as well by an additional profit like taste, disposal or safety. According to the authors the label of the products is of high significance. The use of environmental labelling schemes allow to inform and declare about the environmental qualities of the green product and therefore avoid the criticism from rival companies as well as consumer organizations and even legal regulatories (Rex & Baumann, 2007). The meaning must be clear to the consumer, it has to stand out from other labels that consumers are exposed to and the organization which certifies the product as green, must be trustworthy for the consumer (Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016).

2.1.2 Green Price

Most of the consumers automatically relate green products to a higher price class (Kinoti, 2011). Even though their speculations might represent the reality, eco-friendly goods are in fact not overpriced. When companies decide to go green, they face high costs (Eneizan et al., 2016). The acquirement of new technologies and equipment is necessary, people must be educated and the waste needs to be transformed into recyclable units. Therefore the price for green products is automatically a premium price. On the other hand, Kinoti (2011) states that eco-friendly goods are in fact not overpriced, instead conventional products are placed in a price range that is too low to be realistic. Socio-environmental costs of manufacturing, use of product and its disposal are ignored, which makes it possible to sell the product in this price category. Kinoti (2011) argues that firms must clarify the consumer about the environmental damage that the conventional products generate. Trying to compete with conventional products in terms of the price is not convertible. Therefore the only way to realize a change in consumers habits, is to nourish them with the benefits of green products. However, Eneizan et al. (2016) argues that through the withdrawal of packaging material the price could be reduced, and therefore it could be a more desirable option for the consumer. But they also state that anyway consumers must be motivated to pay for the premium price. According to the authors, consumers can be encouraged to pay the premium price if the product offers additional

attributes that complement certain facets of the product such as performance, function, design, and visual appeal which are perceived by the consumer as valuable.

The authors Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan (2013) explain the green pricing concept as, the practices that are accountable for both the economic and environmental costs incurred during the production and marketing process, while serving value to customers and profit to the firm. In tactical conditions the firms could either choose on rebates on the return of recyclable packaging, or induce a higher price for the environment unfriendly products. From a strategic point of view the techniques include life-cycle cost of the product from the research to disposal, which help in the pricing of products from a sustainable perspective (Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013).

2.1.3 Green Place

According to Davari & Strutton (2014) green place denotes distribution tactics from the production point of green products to the consumption point. Eneizan et al. (2016) states that green distribution relates to the selection of mediums which produce less environmental pollution. Therefore, collaborations with distribution partners are useful in order to establish arrangements for product reuse and disposal and additionally, to provide consumers with the facility to return recyclable materials (Eneizan et al., 2016). The authors argue that the recycling process is part of a two-way distribution system which allows them to strengthen the relationship with the consumers.

According to Tan, Johnstone & Yang (2016) the availability of a product is a significant condition for the purchase behavior of a consumer. If it is to challenging for consumers to access an eco-friendly product, they will be less willing to buy it. Consequently, how and where the product is accessible are key points within this marketing mix element (Mishra & Sharma, 2012). This argument is further strengthened by Eneizan et al. (2016) which states that the location and availability of the green product have an impact on the intentions of the consumer to purchase the product. Additionally, Tan, Johnstone & Yang (2016) argue that green consumers represent a niche market whereas the non-green consumers speak for the general society. This implies that firms should endeavor to enlarge eco-friendly product consumption within the non-green consumer market. The statement of Mishra & Sharma (2012) strengthens former mentioned point, where they discourage the use of niche market distribution techniques

for green products. They argue with the fact that it is more beneficial when consumers frequently encounter green goods over all the market.

The tactical strategies include, firms working conjointly with allies to establish product reuse and disposal layouts, and assuring the customers having the possibility to return the recyclable goods. While strategically organisations could construct policies that require the suppliers and distributors to take into considerations the environmental friendly standards in achieving their desired marketing roles (Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013).

2.1.4 Green Promotion

Green promotion refers to the action of advertising goods without creating a negative impact on the environment. Green promotion can also specify the publicity of an environmentally friendly lifestyle without demonstrating any product. Green promotion can also just mean the demonstration of corporate social responsibility (Banerjee, Gulas & Iyer, 1995). However, as with conventional products, the choice of the right communication channel plays a fundamental role in terms of how successful the impact of the green product will be on the market. The advertisement needs to convey an accurate message about the meaning and benefits of the product (Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016). On the other hand, Shrum, McCarty & Lowrey (1995) state that green advertisements are often applied to create and impact on the corporate image rather than the product itself.

According to Chockalingam & Isreal (2016) there is a relationship between green consumers and newspaper reading. Therefore printed media turns out to be a suitable medium. Carlson, Grove & Kangun (1993) approve that advertisements in form of printed media enhances the image of the company by relating the firm to a positive environmental cause. They further argue that the process of technology, production or disposal is thereby not the main focus of the advertisement. This declaration goes in line with Shrum, McCarty & Lowrey (1995) which explain that the advertisement underlines the environmentally friendly production of goods and emphasizes less on the disposal. However Chockalingam & Isreal (2016) also claim that for adolescent consumers the use of buzz marketing is more convenient. They argue that instead of forcing them to buy a certain product it is more fruitful to encourage consumers to speak about the environmental issues and the benefits of green products with their relatives. The formation of word of mouth messages in a face-to-face way or through social media is therefore

more effective for the establishment of brand trust than paid advertisement (Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016).

From a tactical point of view, the promotion process that take into consideration the actions that could reduce any adverse environmental impact, when it comes to an organisation's marketing communication efforts. From a more strategic perspective, promotion strategies that are developed to broadcast the environmental benefits in regards to the firm's products or services. This scenario could include advertising environmental claims, appeals and efforts on the packaging of a product (Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013).

2.2 Consumer-based brand equity

The concept of consumer-based brand equity is explained by Christodoulides, Cadogan, & Veloutsou (2015) as the idea that the consumer mind holds the strength of the brand, which the authors further describe as the “...*differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand*” (p309) (Christodoulides, Cadogan, & Veloutsou, 2015). The authors Davcik, da Silva & Hair (2015) shed light on the concept as the assets and liabilities that are attached to the brand, the name or the symbol which expands or diminishes the value supplied by a firm through products or services. While on the other hand brand equity is being argued as the word “equity” could be connected to the realm of finance, but the concepts foundation is laid on more subjective view which speaks for the intangible notions that are added and/or are of value to the consumer (Davcik, da Silva & Hair, 2015).

The concept of brand equity can be examined as a multidimensional concept, as observed from the steadily growing literature regarding the concept, the consumer-based brand equity is argued to bear distinct dimensions (Naresh & Ravi Shekhar, 2013). The study conducted by Girard et al. (2017), the authors referred to the brand image, perceived quality, brand awareness and brand loyalty as the dimensions that are connected to the consumer based brand equity. Keeping in view these dimensions (Naresh & Ravi Shekhar, 2013) also recognized brand trust as a dimension, that has been acknowledged as one of the key dimension by the researchers in this concept. However, the main focus of this study is to unearth the key antecedents that are in focus with the model of the study conducted by Davari & Strutton (2014), that fall in the consumer-based brand equity within green marketing strategy. Namely brand loyalty, brand association, brand trust and perceived brand quality.

2.2.1 Brand loyalty

According to Leckie, Nyadzayo & Johnson (2016) brand loyalty could be explained as the “...*degree of attachment a customer has for a particular brand*”(p563). The researchers further shed light on brand loyalty being the commitment that is observed from the consumer with the brand in focus, as well as the intention of repurchasing the product or service provided by the brand (Leckie, Nyadzayo & Johnson, 2016). The preceding statement is in line with the authors Yoo & Donthu (2001) where they explain the approach of brand loyalty, as the tendency of a consumer to be loyal to a specific brand, through demonstrating it with the intention of purchasing a brand as their principal choice.

2.2.2 Brand association

The concept is termed as one of the core component of consumer-based brand behavior, the term brand association is defined as the “...*knowledge of a brand that is stored in a consumer memory as individual pieces of brand information which are linked together to form a complex associative network of the brand*” (p1357) (Alan & Gareth, 2013). The researchers argue that this brand information is recollected from the memory of a consumer through an activation process, where one association is being linked and stimulated to another or others. This whole series of reaction administer the energy of the consumer that runs their cognition cycle (Alan & Gareth, 2013). The authors Van Osselaer & Janiszewski (2001) argue that the brand associations have an active role to play in consumers mind, when it comes to the evaluation and choice process. They further explain as the more the brand name arises with the aspect of benefit, whether it is by direct or indirect involvement, the more vigorous is the connection between the brand and the benefit (Van Osselaer & Janiszewski, 2001). Severi & Choon Ling (2013) add that besides benefits, attitudes can generate a connection to the brand name as well.

2.2.3 Brand trust

The approach brand trust from a consumer perspective, is created on the basis of cognitive beliefs and also the affective perceptions regarding a brand (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013). The notion is explained as the “...*beliefs that include expectations of brand reliability, consistency, competence, and/or predictability of performance across all products sold under that brand*” (p374) (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013). The author Chen (2010) shed light on the aspect of brand trust being the level of confidence, that the brand as it would behave in a way as it is expected by the consumer, also that it is the intention to accept the accountability

of a brand based on the positive expectations. The concept falls under the willingness and dependency on the brand, established on the expectations provided in regard with the brand reliability, ability and benevolence (Chen, 2010).

2.2.4 Perceived brand quality

The term perceived brand quality by the authors Erdogmus & Budeyri-Turan, 2012 is defined as “...*the consumer’s judgment about the superiority or excellence of a product which is based on the subjective perception*” (p404). It can be elaborated as the attitude, which is a result based on the comparison process of the consumer expectations distinguished with the actual performance of the product or service (Erdogmus & Budeyri-Turan, 2012). The explanation is observed to be in line with the author Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin (2017) that the perceived quality plays a vital role when it comes to the consumer purchase decision, this concept under the consumer-based brand equity is also considered to be of importance with a direct correlation to the brand proneness. Furthermore, Rao & Monroe (1989) argue that the brand name has a significant effect on the quality perceptions of consumers.

2.3 Hypothesized relationships

Because of the poorly studied field of green marketing, current literature focused on the effects of conventional marketing mix on brand equity (Yoo, Donthu & Lee, 2000; Aghaei et al., 2014). However, Yoo, Donthu & Lee (2000) and Aghaei (2014) analyzed the influence of the marketing mix elements on dimensions of brand equity namely, perceived brand quality, brand loyalty, brand associations and brand awareness. However, brand awareness is not focus of this study, and thus was disregarded. Even though the studies did not relate marketing mix to a green context and the dimensions of brand equity were not investigated separately, instead brand equity was analyzed as a whole construct, it still shows the relevance of testing those relationships given that both studies found a positive relationship. However, Davari & Strutton (2014) analyzed the relationship of green marketing mix elements on the aforementioned dimensions of brand equity, including the dimension of brand trust. Through their findings Davari & Strutton (2014) concluded that some elements of the green marketing mix do not practice any important effect on the consumer-based brand equity construct, which results in a simplified model with hypothesized relationships among green marketing mix and consumer-based brand equity that need to be tested. Due to the lack of the scientific literature available, only the hypotheses regarding brand loyalty could be further strengthened by additional

literature. For the remaining hypotheses, Davari & Strutton (2014) were the only researcher putting forward their contribution.

Davari & Strutton (2014) reveal in their findings that all four marketing mix elements are related to brand loyalty. However, they argue that green price is negatively associated with loyalty. The authors explain the phenomena through the fact that consumers automatically connect green products to higher prices without thinking about the larger value implemented in the product. Consequently, loyalty decreases if prices are high. Furthermore, Pourdehghan, (2015) indicated in his study, that product elements, distribution channels and promotional activities created a positive impact on brand loyalty, which strengthens the following four hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Green product is positively related to brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 2: Green price is negatively related to brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 3: Green place is positively related to brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 4: Green promotion is positively related to brand loyalty.

Davari & Strutton (2014) argue that only green product has a significant influence on brand association. In addition, the findings reveal that green price, place and promotion were not connected to brand association, which leads to the disclosure of the aforementioned elements resulting in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Green product is positively related to brand association.

Davari & Strutton (2014) reveal that green product and price are connected to brand trust. However, they argue that green price is negatively associated with trust. The authors reason that consumers automatically connect green products to higher prices ignoring the larger value implemented in the product, which results in a decrease of trust. Additionally, green place and promotion are not related to brand trust, which ends up with the two following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 6: Green product is positively related to brand trust.

Hypothesis 7: Green price is negatively related to brand trust.

Davari & Strutton (2014) state that only green product and place have an influence on the perceived brand quality. Whereas green price and green promotion did not result significant in relation to perceived brand quality, which ends up with the two following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 8: Green product is positively related to perceived brand quality.

Hypothesis 9: Green place is positively related to perceived brand quality.

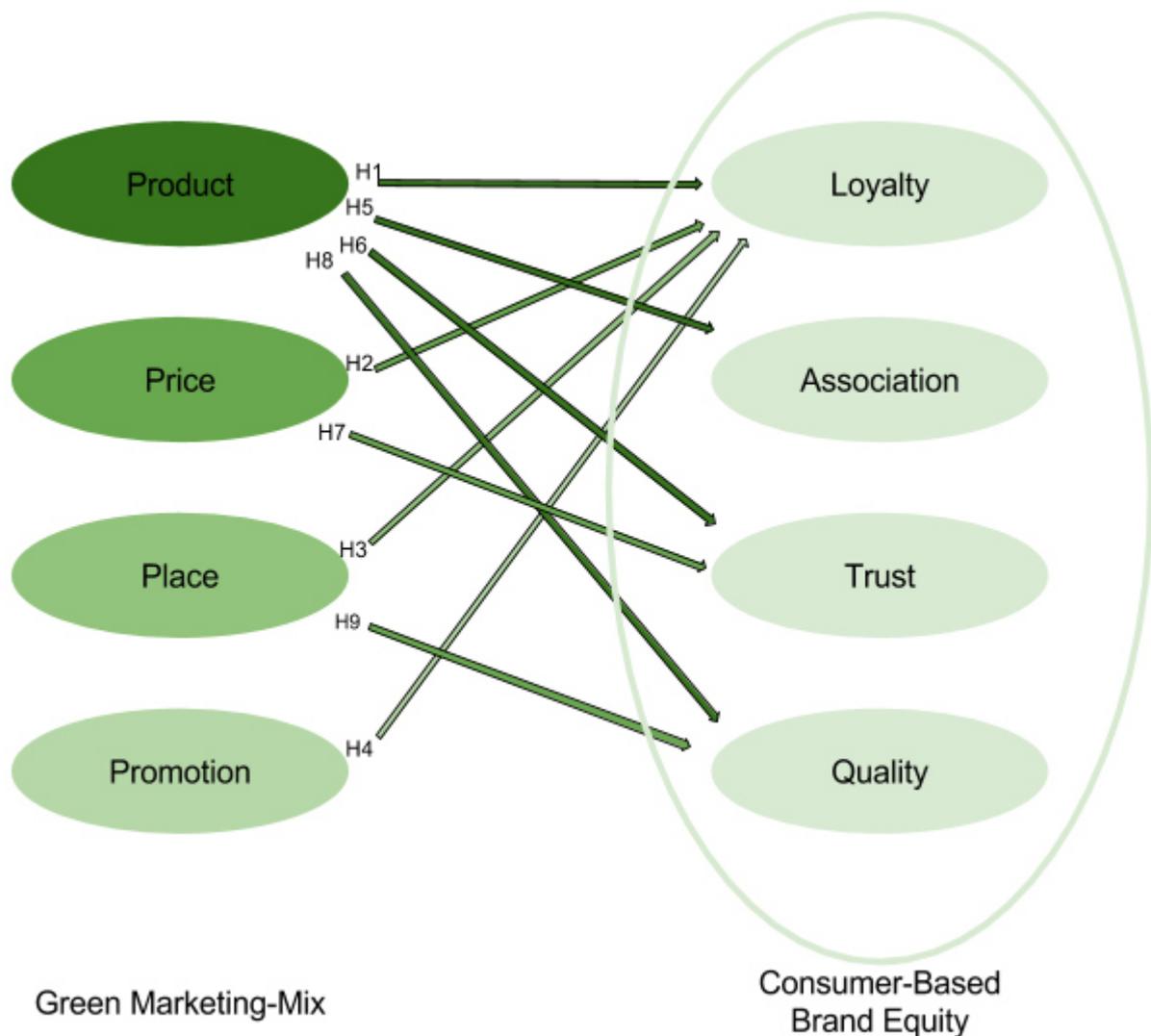


Figure 1: Theoretical model based on the study of Davari & Strutton (2014)

3 Methodology

This chapter justifies the methodology chosen for the study. The different choices were made so that the purpose of the study can be answered. The concepts in focus include research design, method for data collection, operationalization table, sampling, validity, reliability and at the end ethical considerations are presented.

3.1 Research approach

The research approach is a broad outline of how to conduct the research, which involves several aspects as the philosophical perspective, the research design that is connected to that belief and the different methods that enable such a study (Creswell, 2014).

3.1.1 Deductive research

In order to connect theory and empirical data there are two different research approaches namely deductive and inductive research as stated by Bryman & Bell (2011). The difference of a deductive and inductive approach lies in the philosophical belief and the way of gaining knowledge (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A deductive research aims to test theory, by formulating hypotheses based on the theory, which are tested later through the collection of data. This allows researchers to reject or approve the hypotheses and hence modify the theory. Furthermore, deductive research follows a structured nature in order to ensure future researchers to replicate the study and further test the theory (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Greener, 2008; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). On the other hand, inductive research leads the researcher to collect data and afterwards create a theory based on the analyzed results from that data (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

The research problem of the study leads the researcher to take in a specific philosophical orientation (Creswell, 2014). Therefore the logic of the research answers the question if a study should be conducted in a deductive or inductive way (Collis & Hussey, 2009). Since this study is a replication of a previous study, the research originates from existing theory. Therefore, the aim of this research is not to create theory, instead it is to further test theory, which makes a deductive research the most suitable approach.

3.1.2 Quantitative research

Knowing which philosophical orientation the study takes is not enough in order to realize the research (Creswell, 2014). Hence, quantitative and qualitative research methods are part of the research approach. Collis & Hussey (2009) explain that both quantitative and qualitative research approaches constitute the process of collecting and analyzing data. However, both approaches exhibit opposite characteristics in terms of that qualitative research uses words and open-ended questions rather than numbers and closed-ended questions as in the quantitative approach (Creswell, 2014; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Creswell (2014) explains quantitative research as an approach which measures the relationship between variables through numerical data in order to test theories. Whereas qualitative research explores the meanings that each human being or groups of persons assign to a social thing (Creswell, 2014). Even though it is rare, it is possible to relate an inductive approach to a quantitative research and also a qualitative research to a deductive approach (Greener, 2008; Bryman & Bell, 2011). However, both Bryman & Bell (2008) and Greener (2008) argue that quantitative research is most often used within a deductive approach in order to test theory with measurable data, whereas qualitative research is connected to an inductive approach which seeks to construct theory.

In the former chapter the philosophical nature of this thesis was explained, where it departs from a deductive approach. The purpose of this thesis implies theory as a foundation of research in order to break down the theory into measurable hypotheses which test then the relationship between green marketing mix and consumer-based brand equity. Thus the testing of hypotheses require the collection of numerical data in order to verify or falsify them. Therefore a quantitative approach is most suitable for this thesis.

3.2 Research Design

Malhotra & Birks (2006) state that with the appropriate research design, the task can be realized more efficiently. According to Collis & Hussey (2009) the research design answers the question why the research is executed. The authors further argue that the purpose of the study is the determinant for the most convenient research design. Pursuant to Bryman & Bell (2011) there are three different types of approaches namely exploratory, descriptive and explanatory.

The exploratory study is conducted when the topic of issue has not been studied that much before, so there is not much knowledge about it and thus new discoveries are needed. It deals

with the question of “what” (Neuman, 2003). Bryman and Bell (2011) explain that an exploratory nature is preferable in a qualitative research, since it is not associated with the testing of theory instead the researcher engages more with individuals in order to explore something. On the other hand, the descriptive research design is used to describe a phenomena (Collis & Hussey, 2009). It is more specific than the exploratory research, having its foundation on a precise issue in order to focus on generating information around this certain problem area in order to specify the particular issue. The research design seeks to answer the question of “how” and “who” (Collis & Hussey, 2009; Neuman, 2003). The descriptive research design is often used in a quantitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Finally, the explanatory study is characterized as being an extension of the descriptive and therefore also exploratory research. The reason “why” something occurs is investigated which implies that the research problem must be well-known in order to further examine it. The explanatory design seeks to focus on the relationships among different variables and identify the reason for the connection (Collis & Hussey, 2009; Neuman, 2003).

Since this research is replicating a previous study and therefore founded upon existing theory, an exploratory research design can be excluded from the beginning. However, there is still the need to clarify if a descriptive or explanatory research is more appropriate. Hence this research will explain the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, an explanatory research design was considered to be the most convenient.

3.3 Data sources

Data can be divided in two categories, primary and secondary data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The data that is collected explicitly for the sole purpose of research by the authors is termed as the primary data, while secondary data is a form of data that is easily accessible to the public (Zikmund et al., 2010). The use of secondary data was gathered during this study in order to conduct the literature review, which was crucial in constructing the theoretical framework. The primary data was used in order to collect information to the specific purpose of this study. This notion is argued by the author Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009), as the main objective of primary data is always connected with the collection of data that relates to a very specific purpose. The primary data is argued to include various methods in the collection of data including surveys, observations, interviews etc (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The authors of this research incorporated the primary data to observe the

deeper insights from the respondents related to the impact of the selected green marketing mix elements on the brand equity, as previously discussed in the paper.

3.4 Data collection method

According to Bryman & Bell (2011) there exist different research methods for the collection of data. Given that a quantitative approach was chosen, several methods are automatically removed as an option. Therefore four methods are left, namely structured interview, as well as observation, content analysis and survey questionnaire (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The content analysis is an approach more of the nature of studying documents and newspapers rather than a tool for generating data, therefore it drops out as a viable method for this study. The structured observation is hard to apply in the context of this paper which is why it falls away as well. In a direct comparison between the survey questionnaire and the structured interview, the former mentioned turns out to take much more time to administer, it implies interviewer effects which can generate a negative impact and lead to biases, and it is also less convenient for the respondents. Besides these mentioned points, which already deliver good reasons to choose survey questionnaire instead of structured interview, there is another significant aspect to take into consideration. The most important point for the decision to conduct a questionnaire is, that the survey allows to collect a big sample in a short time whereas the structured interview needs more time in case that a large sample is aimed. Given that the time frame for this study is short, the survey questionnaire turns out to be most convenient.

3.5 Data collection instrument

3.5.1 Operationalization

In order to formulate the concepts of green marketing mix and consumer-based brand equity, an operationalization must be constructed where the theory is broken down into measurable terms. Four dimensions of the consumer-based brand equity construct are used as the dependent variables. The independent variables are represented by the four green marketing mix elements.

Table 1: Operationalization

Green marketing mix (Independent Variables)			
Green Product	Environmentally-friendly attributes	Lasting and non-toxic attributes in a product are of significance in order to reduce environmental pollution and waste (Kinoti, 2011; Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013).	I prefer products that have a long product life.
			I prefer products that are non-toxic.
	Manufacturing process	Sustainable raw materials as well as recyclable materials are used for the fabrication process (Kinoti, 2011; Tan, Johnstone & Yang 2016)	I prefer products that are manufactured using recyclable materials.
	Packaging	Reduced amount of packaging material is used to make the product more environmentally-friendly (Kinoti, 2011; Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013)	I prefer products with reduced amount of packaging.
	Labelling	Clear, outstanding & trustworthy information about environmental qualities of the product (Rex & Baumann, 2007; Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016)	I prefer products where the label makes the qualities of the product stand out.
I prefer products where the label contains certification from a trustworthy organisation.			
Green Price	Premium price	Green products are more expensive than non-green alternatives (Kinoti, 2011; Eneizan et al., 2016)	I am willing to pay a higher price for environmentally friendly products.
	Valuable attributes	Price for green products is reasonable, whereas price of conventional products is too low because environmental aspects are ignored (Kinoti, 2011; Eneizan et al., 2016)	I believe a premium price for environmentally friendly products is justified by the additional value they give.
	Desirable option	Receiving a rebate for returning the recyclable packaging of the product (Leonidou, Katsikeas & Morgan, 2013)	I am willing to pay a higher price if I receive a discount for returning the recyclable packaging.

Green Promotion	Message	Accurate advertisement about meaning and benefits of the product (Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016)	I am positive towards accurate advertisement about the benefits of the product.
	Packaging	Environmental claims and appeals on the packaging of the product (Leonidou, Katiskeas & Morgan, 2013)	I am positive towards packaging of the product containing pro-environmental appeals.
	Printed media	Enhances the image of the company by relating the green product to a positive environmental cause (Carlson, Grove & Kangun, 1993)	I am positive towards information about environmentally friendly products in newspapers and magazines.
	Word of Mouth	Encourage consumers to speak about environmental issues and benefits from the product (Chockalingam & Isreal, 2016)	My family & friend's beliefs about environmentally friendly products is important for me.
I talk about environmentally friendly products with family & friends.			
Green Place	Collaborations	Arrangements with distribution partners allow for the disposal and return of recyclable materials (Leonidou, Katiskeas & Morgan, 2013; Eneizan et al., 2016)	It is important for me that the company provides me with a place for the disposal of recyclable materials.
	Location	The location of a product must be accessible (Mishra & Sharma, 2012; Eneizan et al., 2016)	It is important for me that environmentally friendly products are easily accessible.
	Availability	A product must be frequently encountered to be considered easily available (Mishra & Sharma, 2012; Tan, Johnstone & Yang, 2016)	It is important for me that environmentally friendly products are frequently available.
Consumer-based brand equity (Dependent Variables)			
Brand loyalty	Commitment	Commitment from the consumer with the brand (Leckie, Nyadzayo & Johnson, 2016)	I consider myself committed to brand X.

	Principal choice	Consumers demonstrate loyalty through the intention of purchasing a certain brand as principal choice (Yoo & Donthu 2001)	Brand X is my first choice even if other brands offer similar alternatives.
	Repurchasing	Loyalty is considered through the fact that consumers show the intention of repurchasing products provided by a certain brand (Leckie, Nyadzayo & Johnson, 2016)	I would consider repurchasing from brand X in the future even if other brands offer similar alternatives.
Brand association	Benefits	Strong connection between brand and its benefit (Van Osselaer & Janiszewski, 2001)	I connect myself with brand X due to the benefits they offer.
	Knowledge	Brand information stimulates the association (Alan & Gareth, 2013)	I am aware about the environmentally friendly activities of brand X.
	Attitudes	Relation between brand and its attitude (Severi & Choon Ling, 2013)	I connect myself to brand X due to their pro-environmental concerns.
Brand Trust	Beliefs	Brand trust is created through cognitive beliefs regarding a brand (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013)	I believe brand X is trustworthy.
	Expectations	Expectations provided in regard with the brand reliability, ability and benevolence (Chen, 2010)	I expect that brand X is reliable.
	Level of confidence	The level of confidence that the brand would behave as per the expectations of the consumer (Chen, 2010)	I am confident that brand X does what it promises regarding environmental friendliness.
Perceived brand quality	Judgement	Customers subjective judgement about the superiority and excellence of a product (Erdogmus & Budeyri-Turan, 2012)	I believe that the quality of brand X is superior.
	Comparison	Result of the comparison between consumer expectations and the actual performance of the product (Erdogmus & Budeyri-Turan, 2012)	I believe that the quality of brand X meets my expectations.

	Brand name	The name of a brand influences consumers perceptions (Rao & Monroe, 1989)	I believe that the name of brand X makes me perceive it as high quality.
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3.5.2 Questionnaire design

The authors Bryman & Bell (2011) argue that the data collection could vary considering the research strategy survey. There are two main types of data collection methods, one being the offline survey which includes pen and paper, in person or a telephone. The other method is the online survey which focuses on online mediums or email. According to Singh et al., (2009) due to the advancement in the web-building tools as well as the developing acceptance for the online surveys from the respondents, the researchers prefer online surveys for the scientific research over the traditional form of offline surveys.

The key advantages of an online questionnaire could be outlined as its user-friendliness, the security measures and the intuitive system that makes the complex procedure of compiling the results in a more easier and effective way. The analysis of the numeric data that is produced by the online survey, makes it manageable for the researchers to present the high-level of validity (Kalucy et al., 2008). The authors Kalucy et al., (2008) further argue the disadvantages of utilizing online surveys is having no power and possibility to overcome the complexity if the respondent fails to understand the question, as the researcher has no form of communication with the respondent.

Based on the aforementioned arguments the researchers utilized an online form of survey and developed an online questionnaire, in order to collect the specific empirical data which would be beneficial in achieving the purpose of this particular study. As this study is directed towards the Generation Y sample, which are mainly considered to have access to the internet, Google Forms was made use of in forming the online questionnaire, based on its user-friendliness and ease to the respondents. While designing the questionnaire control variables are included at the beginning of the questionnaire, in order to limit the research to only the generation Y sample and the context of this study, which in this case is Sweden. Also between the questions related to the independent and dependent variables, an additional control variable was placed, making

respondents think about a brand X in order to correctly fulfill the following questions regarding consumer-based brand equity.

The questionnaire for this specific research was designed using the Likert scale, the authors Malhotra & Birks (2006) explains the likert scale as a scale that allows the respondents to indicate the intensity of compliance with the series of questions or statements provided. According to (Dawes, 2008) the literature about the likert scale essentially portrays between a 5 or 7 point formats of the likert scale, where the 5-point scale compared to the 7-point is considered fairly straightforward with the range of scale descriptors. The 5-point scale is usually constructed ranging between strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, strongly agree (Dawes, 2008). Taking into consideration the ease and fairness of the 5-point likert scale, the authors of this research proceeded with incorporating the 5-point likert scale in the designed questionnaire.

3.5.3 Pretesting

The authors Bryman & Bell (2011) stresses on the construction of a pre-test before the collection of the relevant empirical data for the research. Hilton (2017) elaborates on the complexities that could arise with the questionnaire design, where the respondents frequently misinterpret the questions as this complication has been steadily observed in the past. The author further explains the concept of pretesting as a tool to investigate that the questions are being well understood among the respondents of the survey. This very method is considered adequate to diminish any sampling errors and increment in the questionnaire response rate (Hilton, 2017).

The first step of the pretesting involved the feedback from an expert in this specific theoretical field, where the researchers went through every single question and adjusted and structured as per the advice of the expert. The second phase of pre-test procedure was applied on fifteen respondents, and was put in line with the author Bolton (1991) arguments, where the questionnaire was pretested for the appropriate vocabulary, the order how the questions were presented, the interest of the respondent and well being of the respondent. The time and the skip patterns were also observed during the pretest method. The respondents were instructed to think out loud (Foddy, 1993) while they were asked to complete the questionnaire. After the feedback from the respondents the questionnaire was put through revision again, resulting in the correction of linguistic and structural aspects of the questions.

3.6 Sampling

When doing an extension study, Berthon et al. (2002) argue that researcher are allowed to change the context of the study in order to extend the previous research. McNeill & Moore (2015) describe the phenomena of the attitude-behavior gap within the fashion industry. This leads the authors of this thesis to change the context of the previous study from Davari & Strutton (2014) from the food industry to the fashion industry. Furthermore, in the previous study the data was collected within the United States, whereas Sweden is selected to be the context of this specific research due to its increasing competitive industry. Additionally, the country has been observed to have developed globally successful fashion retailers and producers. The swedish fashion industry is perceived to be one of the strongest industry and the most powerful industry within sweden, with its turnover of 11 billion US Dollars in 2016 (Lee-Youn & Ostberg, 2013). Furthermore, this research will be conducted on the Swedish Generation Y population. The term population according to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009) is not used in its real meaning, where they elaborate the term as the full set of cases or elements. The authors Lee and Lings (2008) define the term population as the one towards which the researchers wish to generalise the results. The researchers of this thesis found the Swedish Generation Y as the most relevant population for this specific study, as it is argued that this specific population results as an important target audience when it comes to retailers and the consumer product companies, considering the significance of the size and buying power of Generation Y (Parment, 2013; Valentine & Powers, 2013). Generation Y according to Brown (2017) also known as millennials are perceived to be born between the year 1982 and somewhere in the early 2000. The Generation Y is observed to be supportive towards the social causes as well as the social responsible companies, as they are inclined towards purchasing the products offered and the social message from the company (Brown, 2017; Valentine & Powers, 2013).

Since the population of this research is considered to be fairly large, it is rather difficult to gather the exact figures of individuals for this population. Considering the size of the population, certain limitations were put in order and a sample was thus considered as the representation of the population. Bryman & Bell (2011) explain the term sampling as the portion of the population that is being selected for the examination, which in other words mean a subdivision of a population. As argued by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009) an approach for the researchers to gather the data from an entire set of population with a manageable size -

census, however it is not deemed to provide better results than collection of data through a sample which represents the population.

3.6.1 Sampling frame

According to the authors Bryman & Bell (2011) the concept is explained as listing complete units within the population from which the sample is chosen. The authors Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009) argue that if the sampling frame is missing, the approach towards selecting a probability sample is unattainable. Due to time and cost constraints, the authors of this research can not attain a sampling frame, which leads them to utilize the non-probability sampling. The author further elaborates that within the context of business research due to the lack of sampling frame, the sample must be selected through a different approach. The authors of this thesis research opted the non-probability sampling, which provides different dimensions and alternatives in order to select a sample (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

3.6.2 Sample selection

The convenience sampling procedure was applied to gather the sample for this study. A convenience sample consists of people which are available for the researcher because it is effortless to access them (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Another aspect was kept in mind as, convenience sampling is the highest pertinent method utilized for non-probability sampling. Thus, the medium of social media named Facebook was used in order to create a sample of respondents because the procedure is uncomplicated. Additionally, it is a quite straightforward process because the authors of this thesis themselves form part of the Swedish Generation Y and therefore their friends and other connections on Facebook will most probably also make part of it. Thus it is a simple way of achieving responses from people belonging to the population.

Regarding the sample size there are no clear guidelines about what makes a sample statistically justified. However, the bigger the sample size the more it represents the population (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Despite of that fact, there are different factors to take into consideration when selecting a sample size, as the nature of research, the number of variables, the sample size of similar studies, or the resource constraints that the researcher faces (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The decision of conducting a non-probability and convenience sampling technique was influenced by time and cost aspects, therefore the sample size is influenced the same way. By using the rule of thumb ($n > 50 + 8m$), where “n” stand for the sample size and “m” stands for the

number of independent variables (Green, 1991) the authors of this thesis calculated a minimum sample size of 82. Therefore, this study collected answers from 127 respondents.

3.7 Data analysis method

3.7.2 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to summarize and characterize data in order to compare and describe variables from a numerical perspective (Zikmund et al., 2010; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Therefore two measures namely the central tendency and the dispersion are used to describe data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The central tendency is thereby usually expressed in terms of mean, median and mode showing the distribution of values. The mean represents the average value, whereas the median shows the middle value in a distribution of points, while the mode is the value that appears most regularly (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The dispersion serves as to display how the data is spread around the central tendency and can be measured with both the inter-quartile range or the standard deviation. The inter-quartile range includes a range between an upper and a lower quartile and the data is equal to the difference of that range (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The standard deviation is the number of variation around the mean expressed as an average value (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Furthermore, in order to evaluate the shape of distribution of the data, the skewness and kurtosis are used, where one should aim for a normal distribution (Hair et al., 2010). Whereas skewness represents the symmetry within the distribution, kurtosis demonstrates if the shape of the distribution is peaked or flat.

The skewness normally ranges from -1 to +1, where a negative value shows that the data is left skewed and a positive value demonstrates that the data is right skewed. The kurtosis regularly ranges from -3 to +3, where values outside this range are considered as extreme and therefore not normally distributed. Concerning the kurtosis, negative values imply a flatter distribution and thus fewer outliers. Hence positive values demonstrate a more peaked distribution which implies more extreme outliers. Hence, for both skewness and kurtosis values close to zero represent a normal distribution (Hair et al., 2010).

3.7.3 Correlation analysis

In order to assess the relationship between variables, the correlation analysis is used (Zikmund et al., 2010). This procedure is realized through measuring the Pearson correlation coefficient, which stands for the strength of the relationship between variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The correlation ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 means no relationship and 1 means a perfect correlation. Furthermore, the Pearson correlation coefficient can also result in a negative value, which in that case indicates a negative relationship between the variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011). However, a correlation coefficient of less than 0.3 is regarded as weak, whereas one above 0.9 is considered as extremely high. Therefore, a correlation between 0.3 and 0.9 demonstrates a moderate relationship (Dancey & Reidy, 2004).

3.7.4 Regression analysis

Regression analysis is employed to evaluate the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In other words, regression analysis simply measures the alteration of a dependent variable after changing the value of an independent variable. The bigger the size of the change, the more significant are the dependent and the independent variable in its relationship. According to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009) a multiple linear regression is conducted in case that there are several independent variables. The linear regression, denoted as R-square, shows how much of the variation of the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable (Malhotra and Birks, 2007; Zikmund et al., 2009). The values range from -1 to +1, where 1 means that the independent variable fully explains the variation of the dependent variable. The Beta value, is another measure of the linear regression, which represents how a change in the independent variable affects the dependent variable. Values above zero show a positive relationship whereas values below zero stand for a negative relationship (Bryman & Bell, 2011). However, Hair et al. (2011) explains that the R-squared values have to be reliable. In doing so, the statistical significance level 95% is employed, which implies $p < 0.005$, otherwise the hypothesis must be rejected (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Hair et al. 2011).

3.8 Quality criteria

The authors Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Bryman & Bell (2011) argue that the reliability and validity are the two quality criteria that are needed to be put in place, while conducting a research. Both these quality criteria are needed to be considered in a

quantitative research, while collecting the empirical data necessary for the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The validity and reliability criteria will be further presented and elaborated in the sub-chapters below, as to how the researchers of this thesis approached and assessed the quality criteria necessary for this quantitative study.

3.8.1 Content validity

According to the authors Rubio et al., (2003), the term content validity could be explained as the amount to which the elements on a measure assess the equivalent content or how strong the material of the content was sampled within the measure. Where the elements in this specific case could be observed as, everything that could cause an impact to the data. The authors (Sireci, 1998) elaborate the importance of the elements and tasks comprising of the test are able to represent the intended content domain, in order to validate the test for a specific testing purpose. The authors Rubio et al., (2003) further argue as, the content validity could be characterized as logical and the face validity. Where face validity illustrates as the measure appears as being valid, and the logical validity includes experts in the field of study gauging the content validity of the measure (Rubio et al., 2003).

The content validity approach provides the researchers with the insight about the clarity and representation of each element, and the experts evaluation of the elements provides the means of improving the measure, hence the revised measure could then be utilized in the pilot study (Rubio et al., 2003; Sireci, 1998). During this research the authors went through consultation process with an expert in the field, the expert then evaluated the questionnaire and the elements utilized in order to review the content validity, before it was sent out to the respondents to collect the primary data.

3.8.2 Construct validity

The term construct validity is being described as the measure of the operationalisation of the research concept, on how in depth and to which extent it measures the concept (Bagozzi et al., 1991). The authors Bagozzi et al., (1991) further stress on the importance of construct validity as, without the assessment of construct validity the researcher may thus reject or could be accept the hypothesis on the basis of excessive error in measuring the data, and not depending on the basis of theory utilized. Bryman & Bell (2011) argue correlation as the approach of measuring the construct validity.

The correlation between the two measured variables is usually estimated with the help of Pearson correlation coefficient, where the degree of the estimate depicts how vigorous the relation is between the two variables (Bryman & Bell 2011; Wiedermann & Hagemann, 2016). Bryman & Bell (2011) explain as the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient lies between 0 to 1, which could be denoted as the strength of relationship between the two variables. Where the 0 means no relationship and 1 meaning a perfect relationship. The authors further explain as closer the coefficient value is to 1 portrays the strong relationship, while if it is observed to be closer to 0 it is observed as a weak relationship. The Pearson correlation coefficient could also result as positive or negative value, which merely illustrates a negative or positive relationship between the variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

However considering the literature (Dancey & Reidy, 2004) for this specific research, the Pearson correlation coefficient for the sake of significance should lie between 0.3 to 0.9, as a value more than 0.9 would result in an extremely high similarity and 0.3 would compute a highly weak relationship between the variables.

3.8.3 Criterion validity

The term criterion validity denotes the ability of the questions in the developed questionnaire to produce definite predictions, meaning the questionnaire performs in a way it was expected to perform (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The authors Bryman & Bell (2011) divide the concept into two sub validity concepts namely, concurrent and predictive validity. The concurrent validity stands for, as to how far the operationalisation of the research could make predictions of the expected constructs, while the predictive validity explains where researcher utilizes the future criterion (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This thesis focuses on the concurrent validity aspect, where the questions have been put to evaluation for their credible nature and being in context with the concurrent theory, therefore the criterion validity has been established for this specific research.

3.8.4 Reliability

According to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009), reliability can be explained if the researcher is able to gather the same findings if the research design is to be replicated. Hence the findings produced are being consistent and are replicable in nature, if the research is being executed in a distinct time frame or being duplicated by some other researcher (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The authors Hendrickson et al., (1993) argue that the reliability could be

observed by examining the test of internal consistency, replication of the research incorporating different samples and the test and retest procedure of the same sample. Where the test and retest procedure checks for consistency with the same sample with changes and various administration in the instrument, that could be changes in the indicators and the items of variables utilized for the research.

When a multiple-item instrument is being constructed to grasp the underlying concept, an approach that is widely being used for the research purposes to examine the reliability is a statistic measurement called Cronbach's alpha (Kopalle & Lehmann, 1997). The concept measures the consistency between the responses generated from the questionnaire that are put together to form a scale in order to measure a precise concept (Bryman & Bell; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The value of the coefficient alpha or Cronbach's alpha ranges from the value between 0 to 1, where the value 0 means no correlation between the items meaning no reliability and 1 meaning high correlation and perfect reliability (Bryman & Bell; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Though it is observed that many researchers argued in the previous literatures for the reliable alpha value generated measuring cronbach's alpha, the lowest value of 0.65 is considered adequate for the research purposes (Kopalle & Lehmann, 1997). Taking that into consideration, the researchers considered the lowest value of cronbach's alpha to be 0.65 for this research.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The authors Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009) explain how the ethical concerns are developed during the design and construct of the research, while getting in contact with the individuals in order to manage and report the required data. These concerns include the consent and privacy of the respondents, harm to the individuals participating, any form of deception how the researchers present the study to the participants, making sure that the participants of the research have the full liberty to choose if they wish be part of the research or otherwise and lastly handling of the gathered data (Bryman & Bell 2011; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Ethical concerns are of a very sensitive nature and it is the researcher's task to establish that the study is conducted in the best possible way, assuring all the ethical guidelines are followed Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009).

During this specific research the questionnaire developed was posted and personally messaged to the participants using Facebook and Email, along with a small introduction about the nature of the research. Any response that resulted in an answer was viewed from the consent point as not every individual answered the questionnaire sent out. The researchers made sure that the anonymity and privacy of the respondents were remain intact as well as it was made sure the data gathered for the research would solely be used for research purposes. It was made sure that the participants are presented with a short and effective background of the study, in order to clear out any deceptive element regarding the research. Lastly the participants were motivated to give feedbacks if they found the questionnaire easy to understand as well as to identify any of the elements in the study make crosses their comfort.

4 Results

This chapter will present the findings which were calculated through the statistical programme SPSS and put into tables in order to describe them logically. Hence the results are presented in terms of descriptive statistics, reliability, validity and multiple regression testing. This research collected answers from 127 respondents. However, some respondents had to be removed from the actual sample because they did not fulfil the requirements of the control questions. Therefore the final sample size contains 119 respondents.

4.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Product1	1	5	4,40	0,785	-1,494	2,781
Product2	1	5	4,30	0,935	-1,592	2,656
Product3	1	5	3,70	0,926	-0,206	-0,205
Product4	1	5	3,79	0,929	-0,084	-0,760
Product5	1	5	3,71	0,967	-0,426	-0,239
Product6	1	5	3,99	0,916	-0,724	0,429
Price1	1	5	3,46	0,990	-0,400	-0,191
Price2	1	5	3,61	0,940	-0,584	0,202
Price3	1	5	3,94	0,959	-0,643	-0,222
Promotion1	1	5	4,08	0,819	-0,816	0,927
Promotion2	2	5	4,03	0,727	-0,188	-0,675
Promotion3	1	5	3,87	0,892	-0,775	0,755

Promotion4	1	5	3,24	1,010	-0,140	-0,234
Promotion5	1	5	3,03	1,205	-0,036	-0,868
Place1	1	5	3,65	0,946	-0,235	-0,277
Place2	2	5	3,98	0,837	-0,324	-0,725
Place3	2	5	3,96	0,855	-0,423	-0,515
Loyalty1	1	5	3,25	1,062	-0,334	-0,246
Loyalty2	1	5	3,03	1,121	-0,051	-0,869
Loyalty3	1	5	3,47	1,052	-0,492	-0,020
Association1	1	5	3,38	1,029	-0,153	-0,478
Association2	1	5	3,23	1,143	-0,287	-0,675
Association3	1	5	2,92	1,095	0,074	-0,404
Trust1	1	5	3,55	1,034	-0,468	-0,300
Trust2	1	5	3,64	1,017	-0,673	-0,033
Trust3	1	5	3,42	1,105	-0,210	-0,678
Quality1	1	5	3,24	1,130	-0,084	-0,636
Quality2	1	5	3,78	0,926	-0,663	0,293
Quality3	1	5	3,14	1,056	-0,028	-0,485

Table 2 shows information regarding descriptive statistics for each question of the survey. Thereby each variable of the theoretical model of this study is displayed on the first column of table 2. Between 3 and 6 questions were asked for each of the different variables. The questionnaire was based on a likert scale with the ratio 1 to 5, 1 representing the lowest answer

and 5 representing the highest answer. Therefore the column named minimum shows always the lowest answer of all respondents regarding that question, whereas the next column called maximum presents the highest answer of all respondents concerning that question.

The next column displays the mean, which represents the average of the answers. For almost all questions the mean ranges between 3 and 4. Just within the dimension of product and promotion there are means above 4 and within the dimension of association there exists one mean below 3. Looking at the next column, the standard deviation is displayed, which explains the degree of variation of the answer from the mean. In this results the standard deviation ranges from the lowest 0.727 to the highest 1.205.

The last two columns represent the skewness and kurtosis. In order to get regularly distributed responses the skewness and kurtosis should be within the range of -1 to +1 and the kurtosis should be within the range of -3 to +3. Regarding the skewness, just two questions of product lie below -1, which can be explained by the extremely high means regarding those questions. However, the values for skewness are not extreme thus it implies a normal distribution. Regarding the kurtosis, all responses lie between the range, hence the results are regularly distributed.

4.2 Reliability

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha

	Cronbach's alpha	Items
Product	0,703	6
Price	0,747	3
Promotion	0,654	5
Place	0,764	3
Loyalty	0,857	3
Association	0,702	3
Trust	0,917	3
Quality	0,837	3

To be able to measure the reliability of the questions developed, the Cronbach's alpha was calculated so that the internal consistency of the questions can be ensured. In other words, whether the questions measure the same concept or not. As shown in the table 3 the column to the left represents each concept, both independent and dependent variables. In the middle column the cronbach's alpha is represented and the column to the right shows the number of items, in this case questions, were included in each variable. As described earlier the value of cronbach's alpha ranges between 0 to 1, where 0 represents no reliability and 1 denotes perfect reliability (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Thus the lowest value of 0.65 is considered adequate for this specific research (Kopalle & Lehmann, 1997). An example could be observed from the table 3, where the Cronbach's alpha for product is 0.703, which is greater than the lowest adequate value for this research. Since all the values measured surpass the minimum value of alpha regarded for this research, hence deemed reliable.

4.3 Validity

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	Product	Price	Promotion	Place
Product	1	0,524	0,624	0,531
Price	0,524	1	0,522	0,331
Promotion	0,624	0,522	1	0,524
Place	0,531	0,331	0,524	1

To be able to assess the construct validity the Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated. As seen from the values presented in the table 4 above, a positive correlation could be observed between the four variables and measuring above the significant level of 0.01 in every presented value. The positive correlation meaning the positive relationship between the two variables. Taking an example from the table 4, the correlation coefficient between the product and price is 0.524 at a significance level of 0.01, which depicts a positive relationship between product and price, concluding that if there is an increment in the notion of product, the notion of price would also increase. As according to Bryman & Bell, (2011), the closer the coefficient value

is to 1, the stronger the relationship is recognized. However, as stated earlier, this specific research measures the correlation coefficient ranging between 0.3 to 0.9. As observed from the table all the correlation coefficient values among the variables fall between 0.331 being the lowest and 0.624 being the highest, hence the construct validity could be deemed substantial.

4.4 Hypothesis testing

In order to test the below stated hypothesis for this specific research, the linear regression approach was utilized, in order to evaluate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Since the approach merely denotes the change of dependent variable, when changing the value of independent variable. The table 5 showing the summary of the hypothesis results, the Hypothesis H1, H2, H3, H4, H6, H7, H8 and H9 are rejected, while the hypothesis H5 is accepted. Where the scale is being set, as the acceptable confidence interval value of 95% is considered to bear the p-value 0.05. So in this specific case study Hypothesis H1, H2, H3, H4, H6, H7, H8 and H9 compute a significance p-value greater than 0.05. (> 0.05) and were therefore deemed rejected. While Hypothesis H5 computes the significance p-value of 0.039 which is less than 0.05 (< 0.05) and henceforth H5 is accepted.

Table 5: Summary of hypotheses results

Hypothesis	Significance	Results
H1 - Green product is positively related to brand loyalty.	0.732	Rejected
H2 - Green price is negatively related to brand loyalty.	0.706	Rejected
H3 - Green place is positively related to brand loyalty.	0.826	Rejected
H4 - Green promotion is positively related to brand loyalty.	0.467	Rejected
H5 - Green product is positively related to brand association.	0.039	Accepted
H6 - Green product is positively related to brand trust.	0.891	Rejected
H7 - Green price is negatively related to brand trust.	0.412	Rejected
H8 - Green product is positively related to perceived brand quality.	0.627	Rejected
H9 - Green place is positively related to perceived brand quality.	0.801	Rejected

4.4.1 Multiple linear regression

As mentioned above, a multiple linear regression analysis has been conducted, in order to test the different hypotheses. Given that this study's purpose is involving four dependent variables, it was considered to create a separate table for each dependent variable in order to make it easier for the reader. The control variables of the study were disclaimed in these tables, because they just depict the requirements to be able to fulfill the questionnaire and thus not influence the hypotheses or the dependent variable.

Each of the tables is build on the same basis, where the left column represents the intercept of the whole model, the different hypotheses with the corresponding independent variables, followed by the adjusted R-square and the standard Error of the Estimates. The following column represents if the relationship between the independent and dependent variable is expected to be positive or negative. Then depending on how many hypotheses will be analyzed on each dependent variable, there will be between 1 to 5 columns representing the different models. Within the cells the first number is the beta-value and the second number within parenthesis represents the standard error of the independent variable. Next to the beta-value, a star (*) will be placed if the hypothesis is considered to be statistically significant with a 95% confidence interval. Next to the beta-value of the intercept-row, two stars (**) will be placed if the intercept of the model is considered to be statistically significant with a 99% confidence interval. However, the last model of the table is the one that always represents the cause and effect that all the independent variables have on the dependent variable. Whereas the previous columns represent just the cause and effect of one independent variable on the dependent variable. The last column will summarize if the hypothesis is rejected or accepted. Regarding the adjusted R-square, the values will show how much of the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable.

Table 6: Multiple linear regression for the dependent variable: Brand loyalty

	Expected sign	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Hypothesis
Intercept		2.991** (0.616)	2.968** (0.422)	2.868** (0.533)	2.783** (0.483)	2.751** (0.674)	
H1 - Green Product	+	0.39 (0.153)				-0.045 (0.218)	Rejected
H2 - Green Price	-		0.62 (0.112)			0.044 (0.140)	Rejected
H3 - Green Promotion	+			0.067 (0.144)		0.029 (0.024)	Rejected
H4 - Green Place	+				0.090 (0.123)	0.085 (0.153)	Rejected
Adjusted R-square		-0.007	-0.005	-0.004	0.000	-0.025	
Std. Error of the Estimates		0.955	0.953	0.953	0.956	0.967	

**p<0.001, N=119

The intercept of the five models are all regarded to be statistically significant with a 99% confidence interval and thus were marked with two stars (**). However, hypotheses 1 to 4 are not considered to be statistically significant, as their significance value falls above $p>0.05$ (table 5). The beta values support the extremely weak correlation between the variables. Looking at H1 and H2 on its own, one can see that the beta value is slightly higher (0.39 and 0.62), but still too low to be significant. Furthermore, the adjusted R-square values are so close to zero and therefore very low, which implies that the independent variables explain almost nothing of the dependent variable. This notion could be seen in line regarding the fact that all four hypotheses were rejected.

Table 7: Multiple linear regression for the dependent variable: Brand association

	Expected sign	Model 1	Hypothesis
Intercept		2.045** (0.549)	
H5 - Green Product	+	0.190* (0.136)	Accepted
Adjusted R-square		0.028	
Std. Error of the Estimates		0.850	

*p<0.05; **p<0.001, N=119

The intercept of the model is regarded to be statistically significant with a 99% confidence interval and thus was marked with two stars (**). Hypothesis 5 is considered to be statistically significant with a 95% confidence interval, as its significance value falls below $p<0.05$ (table 5), thus was marked with a star (*). The beta value (0.190) shows that the correlation between

the variables is weak. This is supported by the adjusted R-square with a value of 0.028. In other words, 2.8% of the change in brand association is explained by the independent variable green product. Whereas the other 97.2% of the change in brand association is explained by other influencers. Therefore, the value for the adjusted R-square and beta value is very low even though the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 8: Multiple linear regression for the dependent variable: Brand trust

	Expected sign	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Hypothesis
Intercept		3.125** (0.631)	3.095** (0.431)	3.030** (0.642)	
H6 - Green Product	+	0.062 (0.157)		0.015 (0.184)	Rejected
H7 - Green Price	-		0.097 (0.115)	0.090 (0.135)	Rejected
Adjusted R-square		-0.005	0.001	-0.008	
Std. Error of the Estimates		0.978	0.975	0.979	

**p<0.001, N=119

The intercept of the three models are all regarded to be statistically significant with a 99% confidence interval and thus were marked with two stars (**). However, hypotheses 6 and 7 are not considered to be statistically significant, as their significance value falls above $p>0.05$ (table 5). The beta values support the extremely weak correlation between the variables. Looking at H6 and H7 on its own, one can see that the beta value is still extremely low (0.062 and 0.097), thus too low to be significant. Furthermore, the adjusted R-square values are so close to zero and therefore very low, which implies that the independent variables explain almost nothing of the dependent variable. This notion could be seen in line regarding the fact that both hypotheses were rejected.

Table 9: Multiple linear regression for the dependent variable: Brand quality

	Expected sign	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Hypothesis
Intercept		3.016** (0.585)	3.108** (0.459)	2.908** (0.617)	
H8 - Green Product	+	0.059 (0.145)		0.054 (0.174)	Rejected
H9 - Green Place	+		0.056 (0.117)	0.028 (0.138)	Rejected
Adjusted R-square		-0.005	-0.005	-0.012	
Std. Error of the Estimates		0.906	0.908	0.911	

**p<0.001, N=119

The intercept of the three models are all regarded to be statistically significant with a 99% confidence interval and thus were marked with two stars (**). However, hypotheses 8 and 9 are not considered to be statistically significant, as their significance value falls above $p > 0.05$ (table 5). The beta values support the extremely weak correlation between the variables. Looking at H8 and H9 on its own, one can see that the beta value is still extremely low (0.059 and 0.056), thus too low to be significant. Furthermore, the adjusted R-square values are so close to zero and therefore very low, which implies that the independent variables explain almost nothing of the dependent variable. This notion could be seen in line regarding the fact that both hypotheses were rejected.

5 Discussion

This chapter presents a discussion regarding the results from the previous section. Where theory is connected to the results, in order to try to explain the outcome of the statistical analysis. The chapter would include the discussion revolving around the rejection and acceptance of the designed hypothesis.

5.1 Hypothesis 1

The hypothesis H1 tested if green product is positively related to brand loyalty. Even though in terms of the previous study conducted by Davari & Strutton (2014) the positive relationship between the variables was accepted, the findings of this thesis oppose the previous findings and reject H1 based on the significance level of 0.732 (table 5) gained through the regression analysis. However, the information does not necessarily imply that the product has no relationship with the brand loyalty, considering a different set of research, which may include a different sample and research instrument could reveal contrasting results than the findings of this specific study.

Taking the insights from the previous studies conducted in regards to product and brand loyalty relationship. The previous research depicts the link between product and brand loyalty seems to lack the concept's empirical depth in the literature (Quester & Lin, 2003). The authors LeClerc & Little, (1997) puts the concept into perspective where they shed light on the fact that the high-involvement products are considered to be linked with brand loyalty. From this concept, one could argue if the consumers perceive the product as an high-involvement product, which in this case of the study, it could be observed that the consumer's do not specifically consider a green fashion clothing product a high-involvement product and hence is not considered related to the brand loyalty. From looking at the findings from a different perspective, the notion of green product being related to the brand loyalty could be described under the concept presented by (Quester & Lin, 2003), as brand loyalty could be observed to have an attachment to the individual's ego. The consumers that show a fairly less involvement to a product, are seen to have a large set of considerations involved which results in a low commitment to the brand, hence diminishing effect on the brand loyalty. Henceforth one can portray, the opposition of green product having a positive impact on brand loyalty, could be connected to the literature already presented previously. Though keeping in view this research

was specific to the sample of generation Y (18 to 35 years). Based on the characteristics of young generation, it could be argued that the Generation Y look at green product like any other product available hence falling in the trap of showing less commitment to the product, caused on the basis of peer pressure or the sense of belonging. In regards to this, one could argue that the results could have varied if the older generation was selected for the research purpose.

Looking at the descriptive statistics from table 2, the responses in relation to the green product resulted all in a high mean value, (Environmentally-Friendly attributes) 4.40 & 4.30, (Manufacturing Process) 3.70, (Packaging) 3.79 and (Labelling) 3.71 & 3.99 respectively. An interesting aspect could be observed looking at the measure's of the mean, one could argue the importance of the marketing mix element green product for the Generation Y.

5.2 Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 sought to test if green price is negatively related to brand loyalty, which results in H2 being rejected. This finding contradicts with the result from the previous study of Davari & Strutton (2014), which supports the aforementioned relationship. The findings of this thesis proved to be different, through the regression analysis where the significance level measured 0.706 for H2, shown in in table 5. However, another study conducted by Kim & Hyun (2011) reported that the expected positive influence of price on brand loyalty was not supported either. Even though the study is not conducted in a green context, general implications can be inferred to the green context. Therefore it shows that price does not influence brand loyalty neither in a positive nor in a negative way. Regarding that fact, Abratt (1986) argues that the importance of price regarding the brand choice decision is regarded as little. This fact might explain why brand loyalty is not significantly affected by green price.

Despite this finding, it does not imply that price has no relationship with brand loyalty. Considering that the theories used for the elaboration of the questionnaire of this study differ from previous studies, the answers probably vary as well, which in turn affect the final results. Furthermore, the sample of this study contained people from the Generation Y. It would be interesting to see, when conducting the research on an older generation, if price would be related to brand loyalty or not. Especially due to that an older generation is perceived to be in a more stable state of life, which implies more wealth. Eventually they would rather accept the premium price and would also show more willingness to pay a higher price, which could result

in a higher degree of brand loyalty. Analyzing it from another perspective, one could start question why price did not have a negative relation towards brand loyalty as expected. If the eventually unstable state of life of Generation Y impede them to pay the premium price, then it seems logical that higher price would end up decreasing their brand loyalty, which in turn would lead to a negative relation between green price and brand loyalty.

Although H2 was not supported, it does not imply that green price is not an important aspect. Looking at the descriptive statistics from table 2, the responses regarding two constructs related to the green price resulted all in a high mean value (value attributes) 3.61 and (desirable option) 3.94, which shows that price executes a certain importance for the respondents and therefore it should not be disregarded.

5.3 Hypothesis 3

The Hypothesis 3, which investigates that green place has a positive relation to brand loyalty, in this specific study was rejected. The study conducted earlier by Davari and Strutton (2014) constructed a positive relationship between green place and brand loyalty, this specific research did not conclude the expected notion from the previous study, based on the regression analysis with the significance level of 0.826 shown in table 5. The rejection is followed even though the study presented by Jang et al., (2015) have concluded, that the consumers show their loyalty towards the green place, where the disposal and recycling of products, location and availability of green products is known to the consumers. Having the perspective of this study, the thought of green place having a positive relationship with the brand loyalty emerges in the picture. The notion is further argued by the authors Sylvia et al., (2016) as, having a positive experience of consumers on the place they visit, leads to a development of favorability and memories, hence adding to the brand loyalty. Keeping in mind the previous studies, and this study rejecting the positive relationship, one can not state, considering the significance level from table 5, that place does not relate positively to the brand loyalty. Hence the change in the sample selection and the instrument utilized may lead to a different result than this study identifies.

Although the Hypothesis H3 is being rejected by the researchers of this study, as it shows a rather weak correlation between the green place and brand loyalty, A compelling facet could be noted, considering the mean measured and reported in table 2 containing the descriptive statistics. One could observe the mean of the responses related to green place, where it

measured (Collaboration) 3.65, (Location) 3.98 and (Availability) 3.96 respectively. Hence, these concepts are indeed of importance to the respondents, even though the relationship between the two variables was considered as not significant. Thus green place could be seen as of significance to the consumers, therefore should be considered.

5.4 Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 evaluates if green promotion is positively related to brand loyalty, which results in H4 being rejected. Regarding the previous study of Davari & Strutton (2014), green promotion was considered to be positively related to brand loyalty and therefore their finding is not in line with the results from this research. The findings of this thesis were not significant in this regard, as the confidence interval of 0.467 was measured through the regression analysis, as observed from table 5. This contradiction might be due to several reasons. However, the sample of respondents consisting of people from the Generation Y could be one of the explanations. Generation Y is a population which supports very strongly social causes and socially responsible companies (Valentine & Powers, 2013), which eventually might results in the fact that they put even more attention to the message delivered by companies. Furthermore, this generation is strongly influenced by technology and the internet, which makes it a difficult population to target because they are not as receptive to traditional media as more mature generations (Valentine & Powers, 2013). Therefore the constructs (message, packaging, printed media and word of mouth) derived from the theory about green promotion, might not be adequate in order to catch the attention of this generation. It would be interesting to investigate, if the results would be affected through the inclusion of digital promotion into the questionnaire. However, regarding three questions related to green promotion, the responses indicated with a mean of (message) 4.08, (packaging) 4.03 & (printed media) 3.87 that the respondents were quite positive towards the constructs message, packaging and printed media. Therefore the meaning of green promotion is definitely significant and should not be disregarded even though it was not found to be positively related to brand loyalty.

All in all, according to Valentine & Powers (2013) Generation Y is not a brand loyal population, which might be an argument for the fact that none of the four green marketing mix elements was found to be related to brand loyalty.

5.5 Hypothesis 5

The hypothesis H5 puts into investigation the relationship between green product and brand association as positive, assuming that the consumer belonging to Generation Y who thinks green product is of importance also associates himself or herself to the brand of the product. The very notion is proved to be of significance and the hypothesis H5 is accepted. The findings of this specific study are in line with the study concluded by Davari & Strutton (2014), where the authors disclosed the positive relationship between green product and brand association. In this case the authors accepted the relationship based on the regression analysis which computed a significance level of 0.039 as shown in the Table 5. The concluding results of this hypothesis test, goes in line with the findings of Keller (1993). The author argues that all the attributes related to the product, may it be functional, symbolic or experiential in nature, could be positively connected from a consumer point of view to the brand association. This could be seen as a way, where marketers should focus on labelling, packaging, environmentally friendly attributes and manufacturing processes of the green products. Since looking at the measurements of the high mean values and the strong correlation between product and brand association, reveals the importance of this notion in the eyes of the consumers.

5.6 Hypothesis 6

The hypothesis H6 examines the positive relation of green product with the brand trust, However the results did not conclude as expected and hence the H6 is rejected for this specific study. The results surprisingly oppose the study conducted by Davari & Strutton (2014), where the authors observed the significant relation between the green product and the brand trust. The table 5 which shows significance level of 0.891 based on the regression analysis, lead to the rejection of the hypothesis H6 for this research. The result seems unanticipated considering the studies conducted by Yu-Shan and Ching-Hsun (2013), the authors argue on the fact, that if a product fulfills and cater the requirements of the consumer such as environmental concerns, and also delivers the satisfying outcome with a product of a brand, the notion contributes to a higher level of brand trust. Based on the mentioned study before one could argue for the positive relationship between a green product and brand trust. But taking a look from an interesting point of view, the study presented by Kalafitis & Pollard, (1999) states that brands that overemphasize the environmental characteristics, attributes and value of their products, leads to the development of mistrust from the consumer towards the brand. Hence this notion

could be taken into consideration, when compared to the results generated by the Generation Y sample for this study. As this might be the case where the consumer sample of this study perceive the brand as, exaggerating the environmentally friendly aspects related to the product, hence not adding towards the brand trust in this case.

Shown in table 2 of descriptive statistics the responses generated a mean of (Environmentally-Friendly attributes) 4.40 & 4.30, (Manufacturing Process) 3.70, (Packaging) 3.79 and (Labelling) 3.71 & 3.99 respectively. One could argue on the fact that green product is considerably valued by the consumers, even though the relationship between green product and brand trust is not significant. However this could be a result of the notion presented by Kalafitis & Pollard (1999), where brands overstating their green products to the consumers, are returned with distrust towards the brand.

5.7 Hypothesis 7

Hypothesis H7, which investigates the relationship of the green price being negative in nature when related with brand trust. The notion did not hold when it was put to test as H7 is rejected in this specific study. Davari & Strutton (2014) presented a negative relationship between the two concepts, and discussed that green price is a negative significant influencer on the brand trust. This study presented the results based on the regression analysis, as seen from table 5, H7 shows a significance level of 0.412 and therefore deemed rejected. As discussed by Alhaddad (2015), the author argues that in order for a company to develop brand trust, it should be consistent when it comes to price of a product. The concept can be discussed as, if the price of a product is fluctuating the consumer would have a hard time trusting the brand, denoting higher price would lead to lower brand trust. This concept is in line with the research presented by Davari & Strutton (2014). Considering the findings from a different point of view, the study conducted by the authors Elliot & Yannopoulou (2007), the researchers argue that if the price of a product is considerably high the brand trust needs to be inspired to the consumers, so the brand wins the preference of the consumer and higher price is being accepted. From this study, one could argue as, in order to justify the higher price for the environmentally friendly products, the brand trust needs to be raised as well. Taking into consideration the high means of the responses related to two components of green price, (value attributes) 3.61 and (desirable option) 3.94 (table 2), it could be argued that green price plays an important role for the respondents and therefore it should be considered.

5.8 Hypothesis 8

The Hypothesis H8 investigates if green product is positively related to perceived brand quality, which results in H8 being rejected. This discovery surprisingly counters the result from Davari & Strutton (2014), where the same hypothesis was approved. This specific research found different findings contradicting the expected results, where the regression analysis measured the significance level of 0.627 shown in table 5, hence deemed rejected. This contradiction might be due to the study context. Hoffman (2007) argues that fashion trends are getting replaced by a new trend in a very short time. This is further strengthened by Bhardwaj & Fairhurst (2010), mentioning that the consumer is changing towards a more demanding way, where they change their product wishes much quicker. Therefore fashion retailers are urged to yield faster in order to meet consumer expectations, which results in a throwaway or so called fast fashion industry (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2009). Crewe & Davenport (1991) argues how this fast fashion concept differs within different generations, due to that the members of Generation Y are more likely to support this throwaway philosophy, compared to their parents generation known as Baby Boomers. Therefore, given that the respondents eventually follow this fast fashion idea, as shopping depicts to be part of Generation Y's lifestyle according to Bakewell & Mitchell (2003), one could argue that the quality aspects of the brand does not matter enough to the respondents to base their purchase intention on. They might rather consider style and price as determinants to buy the product as emphasized by Davis (1987). Eventually the fast fashion concept counters the brand quality dimension, hence following this philosophy could make it difficult to demand for quality at the same time.

Furthermore, observing it from this fashion perspective, the theory used in order to derive the questionnaire was general and therefore it might not have been absolutely appropriate in order to capture the fashion context of the study. Considering the means within green product, the theoretical components packaging and labelling received lower values even though they are still above average (3.79, 3.71 & 3.99) compared to the other theoretical components that compose green product. Therefore one could argue that packaging eventually does not play such an important role when it comes to clothing. Also the two questions regarding labelling might emphasize too much on the qualities of the product. As already mentioned in the paragraph above, the qualities of the brand and product are not considered significant in the fast fashion industry.

5.9 Hypothesis 9

Hypothesis H9 evaluates if green place is positively related to perceived brand quality, which results in H9 being rejected, although Davari & Strutton (2014) found a positive connection between those variables. The results for the regression analysis revealed 0.801 significance level as seen in table 5, hence based on the significance level the hypothesis is rejected. This contradiction is surprising, given that the previous study was replicated so similar findings were expected. However, Jacoby, Olson & Haddock (1971) introduce pertinent factors when forming brand quality. Price, product compositions, manufacturer, store image, advertising and past purchase experience all create impressions of quality, while price performs as the most influential component because it is concrete and measurable (Jacoby, Olson & Haddock, 1971). Hence, manufacturer and store image obviously represent the marketing mix element place. Thus it supports the results from Davari & Strutton (2014) even though it is not inferred to a green context. Despite of that, one could also argue that place might not be the most influential aspect in order to increase the perceived brand quality as price takes a more prominent role (Jacoby, Olson & Haddock 1971).

Even though green place was not considered to have a positive relation to brand quality, the importance of green place should not be disregarded. As already mentioned before, the mean values for the questions (Collaborations) 3.65, (Location) 3.98 and (Availability) 3.96 concerning green place were high, hence it is seen as a significant element for the respondents. However, Davari & Strutton (2014) argue that green distributors might be an aspect of green place which allows companies to take advance in regards to the competitors which eventually do not provide green distributors and thus companies should communicate the additional value resulting out of it. Therefore, one could argue that the green distributors should be included in the theory and thus derive the concept to the questionnaire in order to eventually get different results.

6 Conclusion

Based on the recent trends, positive attitudes towards environmental issues increased. However, consumers pro-environmental attitudes do not emanate in a purchasing behavior. Hence this attitude-behavior gap emerged as a popular field to study within the literature. This specific research sought to replicate a previous study of Davari & Strutton (2014) where the traditional marketing mix elements put in a green context, were proven to have a significant relation to four dimensions of the consumer-based brand equity construct namely brand loyalty, brand association, brand trust and perceived brand quality. Even though the researchers Davari & Strutton (2014) were not able to generate enough insights in order to close the attitude-behavior gap, they could establish a simplified model. Therefore, this study consequently intended to test this new model while aiming for the development of theoretical and practical implications regarding the poorly studied green marketing mix. Thus the adequate application of a green marketing mix would result in an increase of consumer-based brand equity, which in turn would lead consumers positive attitudes to emanate in an actual purchase behavior, hence close the attitude-behavior gap.

The purpose of this study was to explain the impact of green marketing mix elements (product, price, place and promotion) on dimensions of consumer-based brand equity (brand loyalty, brand association, brand trust and perceived brand quality). Through the empirical research it is possible to present a positive relation of green product to brand association. However, the multiple linear regression showed that green product only explains 2.8% of brand association, which questions the real impact that green product performs on brand association. The remaining hypotheses were rejected, even though these findings contradict other previous studies, which actually provide a stronger relation between the relevant green marketing mix elements and the consumer-based brand equity dimensions. Even though the green marketing mix did not influence consumer-based brand equity, the results still indicate that the green marketing mix is considered as important for the respondents. In which green product emerged to have the highest significance, green place is subsequent, green price comes after, while tightly followed by green promotion.

6.1 Theoretical implications

The steady advancement in the field of green marketing has aroused the interest of researchers towards this concept of study. The focus is caused on the basis of awareness depicted by the consumers in this matter, as their concern regarding the environment are growing, yet the purchasing habits are not in line with the positive attitudes depicted by the consumers (Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Tan, Johnstone & Yang, 2016; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). There is a fair amount of concern and arguments observed in the literature, where the researchers have pointed towards the relatively few studies concerning in this regard being actually carried out, despite the concept being a major factor in the field of marketing (Fuentes, C 2015). From a different viewpoint the authors Chockalingam & Israel (2016) argue that the vacuum exists in the scientific research regarding the green marketing mix for turning the non-purchasers into purchasers of the environmentally products.

Therefore the researchers of this thesis planned to crack this nutshell, to gather insights and empirical findings in order to make their contribution in this developing field of green attitude and behaviour. The influence of this specific research is motivated by the study constructed by Davari & Strutton (2014), where they look into this significant gap between the pro-environmental beliefs and the contradicting consumption attitude among the consumers and presented a simplified model. In regards to the previous study, the simplified model was tested for the first time by the researchers of this thesis, adding their contribution to the literature through finding and adding credibility to the simplified model presented.

This specific research contributes with the insights of green product being one of the element of the green marketing mix having a positive relationship with the brand association, as the study concluded on the fact that green product is perceived to have influence and adds a sense of association towards a specific brand. In regards to the other elements within the green marketing mix, no significant relationship was observed in regards to the four dimensions of consumer-based brand equity. This specific study could also be seen as a contribution towards the lacking literature in this field, as it could be termed as one of the few explanatory researches. Unearthing the relationship of green marketing mix elements when brought in contact with the consumer-based brand equity dimensions, to develop insights within the attitude-behavior gap notion.

6.2 Managerial implications

Subsequent several managerial implications will be derived from the outcome of this study. Thereby green product emerged to have the highest significance within the green marketing mix elements. Green place arose to have the second most influential impact, green price coming after, while tightly followed by green promotion. Each implication reveals how managers best implement the green marketing mix in order to change consumers beliefs to actual purchases and therefore close the attitude-behavior gap.

Green product is the only element of the marketing mix which has statistically proven to influence consumer-based brand equity. Therefore, it definitely depicts as an important aspect for consumers, where the product attributes make consumers associate themselves with the brand. Hence, in order to engage consumers with the brand and therefore encourage them to purchase, managers should emphasize on the environmentally friendly attributes, the manufacturing process, the packaging and labelling of the product, which all proved to be significant factors. By disclosing a certification from a well-known organization regarding the environmentally friendliness of the product, consumers engagement with the product and brand might be enhanced.

Even though green place, price and promotion did not achieve statistical significance concerning the relation towards consumer-based brand equity, they still emerged as being important for the respondents through the achievement of high means (3.86, 3.67 and 3.65). Therefore, managers should still take the elements of the mix into consideration regardless of their statistical insignificance towards consumer-based brand equity. Regarding green place, the location and availability of products build up to the consumer engagement with environmentally friendly brands and thus it might help encourage consumers to purchase. Also the collaboration with green distributors in order to facilitate the disposal could encourage consumers. Concerning the green price aspect, lowering the premium price is not possible regarding the additional costs implied. Therefore, managers should communicate a justification for the higher price of their environmentally friendly products demonstrating the additional value of their products and highlighting the dark sides of the cheap conventional alternatives. Highlighting the reasons for the cheap prices from competitors will hopefully create a change in consumers mind and convince them that the green alternative is a more desirable option. Finally, with respect to green promotion, managers should focus on delivering an accurate

message through the packaging of the product. This will most probably attract the attention of consumers. Furthermore, the communication through digital medium might emphasize the awareness about environmentally friendly products and thus lead consumers to engage much more with them, with the hope to emanate in a purchase behavior.

6.3 Limitations and directions for further research

As any other quantitative research allows, the idea behind is generalizing the results with the assessment of findings through the views and responses from the selected sample. The sample for this specific research was Generation Y and a non-probability sampling approach was utilized, the findings could have resulted in a not truly generalizable as it could have been demarcated to a specific group of respondents. Considering this notion, a probability sampling could have resulted in different findings of the study. Keeping in mind the results may also vary, if a different sample other than the Swedish Generation Y was regarded for this study. Based on the lack of resources and time, the study could also not be conducted on a large sample, which would have provided more insights to the study conducted.

Another limitation could be seen as the closed end questionnaire designed by the researchers, where the respondents are limited to very specific answers provided to them leaving very little room for their responses. The responses for the study were gathered based on the fashion context, where the responses could have varied based on different respondents viewing fashion in their own context. Lastly, due to the lack of theory in the terrain of green marketing, the limited literature utilized to construct the measurement items might not have suffice to extract the expected outcome adequately. Another approach to look at the research would be to segment the target sample, one segment could be where the consumers that show environmental concern, and the second segment where the consumers are not environmentally concerned at all. Hence if the research would treat these segments differently, this might have revealed different implications regarding marketing strategies that eventually work for one segment but not for the other group. Therefore one could conclude that, these limitations should be considered in the future research in order to gather truly generalizable results.

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Appendix

Hello! We are two students studying at Linnaeus University and currently writing our bachelor thesis about green marketing. We are conducting our study on the fashion clothing industry and thereby analyzing the Swedish Generation Y.

We would be very grateful if you could take 5 minutes of your precious time to help us develop our project. All responses will be treated anonymously and will not be utilized in any way beyond research purpose.

Thank you very much!

Green marketing in the fashion clothing industry

Green marketing refers to the process of selling products and/or services based on their environmental benefits. Green marketing is typically practiced by companies that are committed to sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.

1. *I am between 18 - 35 years old.*

Yes No

2. *I am currently living in Sweden.*

Yes No

3. *I prefer products that have a long product life.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

4. *I prefer products that are non-toxic.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

5. *I prefer products that are manufactured using recyclable materials.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

6. *I prefer products with reduced amount of packaging*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

7. *I prefer products where the label makes the qualities of the product stand out.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

8. *I prefer products where the label contains certification from a trustworthy organisation.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
9. *I am willing to pay a higher price for environmentally friendly products.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
10. *I believe a premium price for environmentally friendly products is justified by the additional value they give.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
11. *I am willing to pay a higher price if I receive a discount for returning the recyclable packaging.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
12. *I am positive towards accurate advertisement about the benefits of the product.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
13. *I am positive towards packaging of the product containing pro-environmental appeals.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
14. *I am positive towards information about environmentally friendly products in newspapers and magazines.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
15. *My family & friend's beliefs about environmentally friendly products is important for me.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
16. *I talk about environmentally friendly products with family & friends.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
17. *It is important for me that the company provides me with a place for the disposal of recyclable materials.*
- Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

18. *It is important for me that the location of environmentally friendly products are easily accessible.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

19. *It is important for me that environmentally friendly products are frequently available.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

20. *Think about a brand X which stands out for environmentally friendly products and have it in mind, when you answer the following questions (In case you don't recall any brand X, here you see some examples of brands which stand for environmentally friendly products H&M, Dressmann, Lindex, Jack&Jones, NUDIE JEANS, Filippa K, ASOS).*

21. *I consider myself committed to brand X.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

22. *Brand X is my first choice even if other brands offer similar alternatives*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

23. *I would consider repurchasing from brand X in the future even if other brands offer similar alternatives.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

24. *I connect myself with brand X due to the benefits they offer.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

25. *I am aware about the environmentally friendly activities of brand X.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

26. *I connect myself to brand X due to their pro-environmental concerns.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

27. *I believe brand X is trustworthy.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

28. *I expect that brand X is reliable.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

29. *I am confident that brand X does what it promises regarding environmental friendliness.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

30. *I believe that the quality of brand X is superior.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

31. *I believe that the quality of brand X meets my expectations.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

32. *I believe that the name of brand X makes me perceive it as high quality.*

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

END

Thank you very much for your participation!