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The Impact of Ethical Labeling on Purchasing Behavior in the Chocolate Market:
An experimental Study on Consumers Willingness to Buy in Germany

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Abstract

This Study investigates the influence of Price, emotional packaging, and ethical labeling on consumers' Willingness to Buy Chocolate in Germany. Using an online within-subjects experiment (N = 184), conducted via Microsoft Forms, participants currently living in Germany evaluated 12 systematically varied Chocolate bar images in a 3 (Price: low, medium, high) $\times$ 2 (Emotion: No Emotion vs. Emotion) $\times$ 2 (Label: No Label vs. Label) design. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested, using a Repeated Measures ANOVA and Linear Mixed Models, to account for individual differences and interaction effects. The findings show that ethical labeling has a strong positive influence on Willingness to Buy and that integrating clear information about working conditions on Chocolate can help align everyday purchases with social responsibility, even in a product category with low purchase commitment.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Purchasing Decisions, German Chocolate Market, Child Labor, Food Labels

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List of Abbreviations

CSR.....	Corporate Social Responsibility
LMM.....	Linear Mixed Model
TBL.....	Triple Bottom Line
RM.....	Repeated Measures

1. Introduction

“Honor the hands that harvest your crops.”

This quote by Dolores Huerta, a lifelong advocate for labor and farmworkers' rights, highlights the insufficient awareness on labor conditions and injustices hidden behind consumer products such as Chocolate (Education for Justice 2015).

In Germany, Chocolate is an everyday treat which is bought frequently, often on impulse and with little reflection. At the same time, cocoa harvesting and production are associated with severe social issues, including poverty, unsafe or exploitative working conditions and the use of Child Labor in producing countries (Berlan 2009). Globally, around 160 million children are involved in Child Labor and about 1.56 million boys and girls in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire worked in the cocoa sector in 2021. Many of them perform hazardous tasks, such as carrying cocoa sacks weighing up to 70 kilograms. Against this backdrop, it is striking that only about 16 percent of the cocoa used for Chocolate sold in German supermarkets comes from fair production, meaning that for most products there is no assurance that exploitative labor practices have been avoided (Oro Verde Die Tropenwaldstiftung 2025).

This tension between a quick moment of enjoyment at the supermarket shelf and the hidden realities of global Supply Chains forms the starting point of this academic thesis. In recent years, societal expectations of companies have shifted. Firms are now expected not only to generate profits but also to take responsibility for how their operations affect society and the natural environment (White, Habib and Hardisty 2019). In the cocoa industry, this is evident in public discussions on Child Labor and broader human-rights issues, alongside new regulations and voluntary sustainability programs (Djafarova and Foots 2022).

From a consumer's perspective, many people claim that fair and ethical production is important to them and that they want to support responsible companies. In practice, however, daily Purchasing Decisions continue to be strongly influenced by Price, habits, and emotional factors

such as brand image or seasonal packaging (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006). This discrepancy between attitude and behavior is particularly evident in categories with low purchase loyalty, such as Chocolate, and forms the basis for this academic research. Food Labels are amongst the most important tools for connecting these two sides. By providing information directly on the product, Labels can make issues visible directly at the point of sale (Rousseau 2015).

Nevertheless, there is still little evidence on how Labels, that explicitly address labor exploitation, for example by indicating the non-use of Child Labor, influence Purchasing Decisions in a category with low purchase loyalty. It remains unclear how such ethical information interacts with marketing factors such as Price and emotional packaging in the German Chocolate market.

This thesis addresses this gap by focusing on the following research question: **“How do food Labels about Child Labor in cocoa production affect consumer Purchasing Decisions for Chocolate products in Germany?”**

Based on the literature and the characteristics of the German Chocolate market, three hypotheses were formulated:

- **Hypothesis 1: A lower Price leads to a higher Willingness to Buy compared to a higher Price.**
- **Hypothesis 2: An Emotional packaging design increases consumers' Willingness to Buy compared to a neutral design.**
- **Hypothesis 3: The presence of an ethical Label increases consumers' Willingness to Buy compared to products without a Label.**

The main objective of the thesis is to understand how each of the three factors (Price, Emotion and Label) shape consumers' Willingness to Buy in the German Chocolate market. More specifically, the Study (1) analyses the extent to which labor exploitation Labels influence Willingness to Buy and (2) compares how these effects vary across socio-demographic groups.

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Furthermore, it (3) explores whether ethical labeling interacts with emotional and habitual aspects of Chocolate consumption and under which conditions ethical information can interrupt routine and price-driven decision patterns. In doing so, the thesis contributes to the discussion on ethical consumption, Corporate Social Responsibility and Food labeling, and offers practical implications for companies seeking to align Chocolate marketing with social responsibility.

At the same time, some limitations must be considered at an early stage. The data is based on an online convenience sample, which may not be fully representative of residents in Germany.

The dependent variable is self-reported Willingness to Buy for fictional products rather than actual purchasing behavior and the experimental design simplifies real shopping situations, in which brand awareness, time pressure, and placement in the store also play a role.

These limitations are explained in more detail in the final chapter but should be considered when interpreting the results. Following this introductory section, Chapter 2 defines the key concepts of the Study and develops the contextual framework. First, Corporate Social Responsibility and its social dimension are presented, followed by a discussion of working conditions in cocoa production, Food labeling, ethical consumption and consumer decision-making in the German Chocolate market. On this basis, Chapter 3 presents the research design and questionnaire.

It explains how the experimental stimuli were constructed, how Price, Emotion and Label were operationalized, and how Willingness to Buy was measured in the Studies. Chapter 4 forms the empirical core of the work and reports the results of the analyses, including descriptive findings and tests of the three hypotheses on Price, Emotion, and Label effects. Finally, the last Chapter summarizes the results in a broader discussion, highlights the main contributions and limitations of the Study, derives practical implications for companies, and outlines directions for future research.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Background

2.1 Definition and Dimensions of CSR

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is generally interpreted as the dedication of an organization toward ethical practices, which foster economic development and at the same time enhance the living conditions of employees, local communities, and the wider society. It is a multidimensional concept, encompassing both external (targeting different stakeholders, namely communities, customers or the environment) and internal initiatives (focusing on employee welfare, work-life-balance, occupational safety and development) (Tang, et al. 2025). At the same time, CSR can be understood in several different ways. A narrower, more traditional view suggests that a company's predominant responsibility is to create jobs and pay taxes, while a broader perspective views CSR either as a moral duty to address social problems or as a form of “enlightened self-interest” that contributes to building reputation and employee engagement. In this sense, CSR can be seen as an unwritten social contract: society grants companies legitimacy and power, but expects them to act in accordance with social norms and values, and this legitimacy can be compromised if these responsibilities are ignored (Moir 2001). CSR also serves as a bridging force, as responsible practices can generate spillover effects along Supply Chains and influence the sustainability performance of partner organizations through mechanisms such as knowledge transfer, joint innovation, and convergence of environmental values (Shi, et al. 2025). These dimensions highlight CSR as both a strategic tool for value creation and a cooperative driver of sustainable development across interconnected business ecosystems.

2.1.1 The Triple Bottom Line (People, Planet, Profit)

To make CSR practically applicable, a model was developed that builds on this logic, namely the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), which integrates financial, societal and ecological goals into

corporate strategy. As a practical framework, the TBL encourages managers to translate the three dimensions “people, planet, and profit” into concrete objectives, performance indicators, and reporting practices. Economic performance refers to traditional financial results and long-term value creation, the environmental dimension captures impact on natural resources and ecosystems and the social dimension covers matters including working conditions, fundamental rights and community welfare (Henriques and Richardson 2004). Although many companies such as Microsoft and Apple now invoke TBL in their reports, the reporting often serves image-building rather than leading to substantive change, as business models and supply-chain power relations frequently remain unchanged. Evidence suggests that profit remains the dominant focus and concrete behavioral change is limited. The TBL agenda, however, requires firms to account not only for economic performance but also for the social value they create or destroy, driven by shifting societal values, demands for transparency, and new expectations of corporate governance (Russ-Eft and Alizadeh 2024; Henriques and Richardson 2004). Because social performance is difficult to quantify, social disclosures often lag behind, leaving issues such as farmers’ incomes, working conditions and Child Labor underreported (Brown, Dillard and Marshall 2006). Therefore, it is important to examine the social dimension in more detail.

2.1.2 The social dimension of CSR

To further understand how CSR can be translated into corporate strategy, it is essential to examine its underlying dimensions. Within this multidimensional framework, the social part represents a core component of both CSR and the TBL model. It focuses on how business practices affect people both within and beyond organizational boundaries and addresses issues such as working conditions, workplace health and safety, diversity and inclusion, and the protection of human rights (Caroll 2021). Recent research also points to human resource development as one way to embed the social aspect of CSR, for example through leadership

development, diversity initiatives, and ethics training (Miller and Akdere 2019). In addition, the social dimension also extends to community engagement, including investments in education, health, and local infrastructure. Such activities not only improve social well-being but also enhance a company's social acceptance (Jang and Ardichvili 2020).

Beyond internal stakeholders and local communities, the social dimension of CSR is increasingly shaped by consumers, since they expect companies to take responsibility for the impact their Supply Chains have on people. Socially oriented CSR practices therefore influence how consumers evaluate brands, build trust, and develop long-term relationships. Transparent communication about labor standards, fair sourcing practices and support for disadvantaged groups can strengthen a company's perceived integrity and foster loyalty in the consumers' decision making process, while social misbehavior can lead to boycotts or negative word of mouth (Rodrigues and Borges 2015).

2.2 Decision making process of consumers

As the social dimension is integral to corporate strategy, it likewise influences how consumers evaluate firms and choose between them.

People often base their decisions on what they expect to feel, what they experience and how they remember it. Yet these three things don't always match. External influences such as advertising, information overload and cognitive shortcuts can complicate decision-making. Plenty of choices can lead to stress, impulsive behavior, or dissatisfaction with the final outcome. Moreover, the final decision making differs between two types of decision-makers: "choosers" and "pickers". Choosers take time to reflect on their values and carefully consider the consequences of their choices. They think critically about what a decision says about them and how it aligns with their goals. Pickers, on the other hand, select options quickly, often without much reflection. They tend to respond to external pressure or decision fatigue by simply

picking something that seems acceptable in the moment. This distinction illustrates how an overwhelming number of options can reduce the quality of decisions by pushing people into reactive rather than reflective behavior (Schwartz 2016). This distinction also reflects a broader gap between everyday consumption practices, such as buying groceries, which is strongly driven by convenience and habits, and non-routine decisions, such as buying a car, which typically involves deliberate reflection and conscious evaluation. In Consumer Behavior theory, this divide is often framed as the difference between low- and high-involvement decisions. While low-involvement choices usually concern routine, low-risk products that require little effort or research, high-involvement decisions relate to costly or risky purchases that demand extensive information search, evaluation of alternatives, and careful consideration before commitment (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006). In this context, information such as Food Labels play a crucial role, as they can either support reflective, value-based decision-making or, if poorly designed, reinforce habitual and less conscious decisions.

2.3 Studies on Food Labels

Consumers' interest in and awareness of food products, as well as their ecological consequences are increasing, which pressures companies to act sustainably and transparently. Food labeling serves as a means of communicating in a transparent, authentic, and socially responsible manner. It also influences consumer preferences. Clear and trustworthy Food labeling shapes consumer preferences by helping consumers choose products aligned with their health needs, diets, and values. This can build trust, strengthen loyalty, and increase demand, supporting long-term growth. Understanding Consumer Behavior and preferences is therefore important for creating messages that connect with the target group and build lasting engagement (Biswas 2025).

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Market data showed a significant increase in demand for ethically labeled Food and beverage products, with vegan (+13%), Rainforest Alliance (+12.9%), and Fairtrade (+5.2%) among the Labels that experienced notable sales growth throughout Europe from 2015 to 2020 (FoodNavigator-USA.com 2016). Research shows that women, highly educated people and those following certain diets are generally more likely to check food Labels than other consumers, which suggests that health concerns are a main motivation for Label reading.

However, many consumers face challenges in understanding the provided information. Some perceive Label reading as too time-consuming or complicated, while others lack the interest or knowledge to use the information effectively. Many focus only on specific, easily understandable parts of the Label. A Study found that a lack of information and knowledge can cause uncertainty in the Food market, with only 23 percent of participants feeling well-informed enough to make suitable Food choices (Wandel 1997). In today's market, where consumer awareness is rising, inaccurate labeling can damage brand reputation, while clear and accurate labeling helps building trust and strengthen brand image.

In the future, Food labeling is expected to move beyond static information and become more dynamic, interactive and technology driven (Pathade and Shete 2024). Advances in smart packaging and digital tools will allow consumers to instantly access detailed product information, while innovations such as blockchain, AI, IoT, and automation are expected to increase supply-chain transparency. This increased traceability can strengthen consumer trust, support informed decision-making, and enhance the credibility of sustainability claims (Debasish, Debarun and Atanu 2025). These developments in Food labeling and traceability are particularly relevant for products with complex global Supply Chains, such as Chocolate, where social and environmental risks in the production phase are largely invisible to the end consumer.

2.4 Chocolate industry

2.4.1 Supply Chain in the Chocolate industry

The Chocolate Supply Chain reaches from cocoa cultivation to final retail, involving many actors and control mechanisms. Sustainability is promoted through formal tools such as contracts, certifications, and audits, and informal practices such as trust-based relationships and knowledge sharing (Keller, Jung and Lasch 2022).

Throughout West Africa, around 90 to 95 percent of cocoa is grown by small farmers, typically managing only two to five hectares each. Most of these farming families live below the international poverty line, earning on average about EUR 0.97 per person per day (far less than the World Bank's threshold of roughly USD 2.15 ($\approx$ EUR 2.00) per person per day). This poverty increases reliance on cheap or unfree labor, contributing directly to challenges including Child Labor, deforestation and breaches of human rights across the Supply Chain (Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao 2025). After cultivation, cocoa beans are harvested, quality-checked by exporters and shipped to processing facilities, where they are turned into intermediate products such as cocoa mass, butter and powder. These inputs are then refined, blended and packaged by manufacturers before reaching consumers via wholesalers, retailers and direct sales channels. Effective coordination across stages is essential for quality, traceability and sustainability (Sparacino, et al. 2024). Life cycle analyses show that cultivation, fermentation and primary processing have the greatest environmental implications, most prominently related to emissions of greenhouse gases and the use of land, as well as energy requirements, while downstream activities contribute proportionally less, although they remain relevant for comprehensive sustainability (Recanati, Marveggio and Dotelli 2018).

Beyond environmental aspects, global trade flows in cocoa continue to shape the industry. Countries in West Africa, especially Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, dominate global production, with beans being exported via international traders before reaching the European and US

markets. On the demand side, for example Malaysia, the US and Germany are amongst the leading importers, reflecting the geographical imbalance between producer regions in the Global South and consumption in the North. This imbalance underscores the importance of efficient logistics and risk management in the Supply Chain (UN Comtrade 2025). Germany remains one of the biggest importers of cocoa beans worldwide, with a total worth of \$867M USD imported in 2023 alone. Primarily the beans are imported from the Netherlands, however, this is followed directly by Ghana, Ecuador and Côte d'Ivoire. The Netherlands are amongst the main exporting countries, while importing the beans mostly from Cote d'Ivoire themselves (The Observatory of Economic Complexity 2024).

Furthermore, research shows that cultivation practices such as fermentation, drying and variety selection directly affect bean quality and Chocolate taste. However, information on these practices rarely reaches manufacturers due to numerous intermediaries, so producers rely on heterogeneous blends and adjust processing mainly based on origin and basic quality indicators rather than farm-level data (Saltini, Akkerman and Frosch 2013). This underscores the value of robust traceability systems to improve consistency, optimize production and support quality and sustainability. Given the dispersed, intermediary-heavy Supply Chain and the imbalance between production and consumption, CSR and regulation are crucial to address social and environmental risks in the Chocolate industry.

2.4.2 CSR in the Chocolate industry

In Germany, the introduction of the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act has made CSR legally binding in the cocoa and Chocolate sector. The law requires companies to identify human rights risks, introduce preventive and corrective measures and report annually. However, the actual impact on small farmers in cocoa-growing regions is still uncertain and is only expected to be felt in the long term (Kraft, Quayson and Kellner 2024). Major German Chocolate brands such

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as Ritter Sport publicly report on standards for traceability, codes of conduct for suppliers and long-term procurement relationships. However, scientific studies warn that certification Labels including Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance are often insufficient to eliminate Child Labor, due to the existence of deeply embedded structural problems such as poverty and weak enforcement (Oya, Schaefer and Skolidou 2018).

These findings suggest that, while the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act creates a necessary legal basis for corporate responsibility, significant progress in working conditions within the cocoa Supply Chain in Germany will depend on combining compliance with independent audits, the involvement of stakeholders and targeted measures at the farm level that are geared more toward sustainability performance than marketing. At the same time, these regulatory and corporate initiatives can only be fully understood in the context of the actual working and living conditions on cocoa farms, where many of the human rights risks originate.

2.4.3 Labor conditions in the Chocolate industry

Working conditions within the global Chocolate sector are characterized by very unequal power relations along the cocoa value chain, with small farmers and wage workers in West Africa bearing the greatest risks while receiving only a limited share of the final market value of Chocolate items. Studies show that low producer Prices, income fluctuations, and weak occupational safety measures contribute to widespread precarious employment conditions, excessive working hours, health risks in the workplace and systematic violations of basic labor standards in cocoa-growing regions (Kissi and Herzig 2023).

Throughout the West African cocoa sector, which is dominated by smallholder farmers, work is organized through traditional and largely informal agreements, most notably “Abunu” (“share-in-two,” typically granting lease rights) and “Abusa” (“share-in-three,” usually a lease with a maintenance obligation), as well as through day labor and contract work. These

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agreements determine pay, length of employment, and workers' bargaining power (LeBaron and Gore 2019). Field research in Ghana shows persistent power imbalances between workers and farmers: Employed workers and “Abusa” tenants report irregular incomes, few written contracts, and limited rights to speak up (Kissi and Herzig 2023). Poverty is therefore a central challenge in the cocoa sector and is closely linked to other problems, including abusive Child Labor, but also deforestation caused by cocoa cultivation (Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao 2025, Mintel 2016). Furthermore, seasonal dependence on cocoa harvests increases insecurity, with incomes dropping by up to 60 percent in the off-season, pushing families into debt (International 2022). New private employment agencies may professionalize the hiring process of workers and improve some conditions, but tensions and restrictions remain persistent (Kissi and Herzig 2023).

Empirical evidence shows widespread exploitation of workers, including non-payment or underpayment, wage deductions, debt bondage, economic pressure through food withdrawal and involuntary overtime, with reports of verbal/physical abuse and in worst case even sexual violence. These risks are gender-specific, as women face barriers to accessing land and lease agreements, are often paid through their husbands and have limited access to legal remedies due to male-dominated community structures, which further intensifies their vulnerability (LeBaron and Gore 2019). Women contribute up to 45 percent of labor on cocoa farms but own less than a quarter of the land (FAO 2011). They are frequently forced to unpaid family labor or low-paid casual work such as pod-breaking, fermenting, and drying, while having limited influence in decision-making structures. Occupational risks, such as exposure to agrochemicals, heavy loads and heat compound these vulnerabilities, as less than 20 percent of workers report using gloves, masks, or boots and rural health infrastructure remains inadequate, meaning injuries and chronic illnesses often go untreated (UNICEF 2022). Altogether, these findings

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show that cocoa production is characterized by deeply entrenched and precarious working conditions, which also shape the way children are involved in work on cocoa farms.

2.4.4 Child Labor in the Chocolate industry

Within this broader context, Child Labor continues to be highly prevalent in agriculture and often embedded within family structures. In 2024, an estimated 160 million children worldwide were involved in Child Labor, 79 million of whom were engaged in tasks considered hazardous to their health. Boys are more frequently affected than girls across all age groups and approximately 70 percent of Child Labor occurs in agriculture, with 72 percent of it being performed as “family assistance” (ILO, UNICEF 2025). In cocoa production, the prevalence of Child Labor is particularly acute. In West Africa alone, approximately 1.56 million boys and girls, living in Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, were involved in cocoa farming in 2021. Other studies estimate that more than 90 percent of children working in cocoa production in this region perform dangerous tasks, including climbing tall cocoa trees with machetes, clearing land with fire or chemicals, spraying pesticides without protective equipment and carrying bags of beans weighing up to 70 kilograms. These activities expose children to immediate risks, including cuts, sprains, and in extreme cases amputations, while also leaving them vulnerable to chronic health problems from chemical exposure and untreated injuries (Mull 2005, Oro Verde Die Tropenwaldstiftung 2025). In Côte d’Ivoire alone, around 790,000 children from the age of 5 to 17 were working in the cocoa industry before the pandemic and approximately 770,000 of them were involved in hazardous activities (UNICEF 2022).

The involvement of children in cocoa cultivation is often shaped by broader patterns of inequality. Research highlights that, similar to adults, children face gendered inequalities in task allocation, pay, and working conditions. Early exploitative work has severe long-term effects by limiting education and social mobility, reinforcing intergenerational poverty, and

deepening household dependence on unpaid or low-paid family labor (LeBaron and Gore 2019). A recent analysis by UNICEF stresses that family-based child work is rarely harmless: it is frequently harmful and exacerbated by socioeconomic conditions such as poverty, lack of affordable schooling and entrenched social norms. Addressing the problem therefore requires not only the removal of children from dangerous work but also cross-sectoral strategies that tackle its root causes through poverty reduction, improved access to education and gender-sensitive social policies (UNICEF 2022). The persistence of Child Labor in cocoa production thus not only reflects structural inequalities in producing countries but also encourages critical examination of the extent to which demand in affluent consumer markets contributes to maintaining or changing these conditions.

2.5 Ethical and Sustainable consumption

The social, environmental and labor issues which are evident in the global Chocolate industry demonstrate that consumption is never "neutral". Ethical and sustainable consumption is therefore becoming an increasingly important perspective for understanding the consequences of everyday Purchasing Decisions. In this context, "ethical" highlights the moral dimension of consumption, including concerns such as fairness, workers' rights and safety, and environmental protection (Berki-Kiss and Menrad 2022) while "sustainable" denotes meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations Environment Programme 2025).

However, people do not always consume ethically or sustainably in daily life. Everyday decisions are often driven by habits, convenience, or social norms, which are difficult to change. Nevertheless, change can be possible through knowledge and an understanding of matters including social justice, animal wellbeing, human rights and labor conditions. In this context, it is important to distinguish between the reflexive and the ethical consumer. The reflexive

consumer critically reflects on cultural norms and makes individualized decisions but is not necessarily an ethical consumer. The ethical consumer, in contrast, specifically considers the social and environmental consequences of consumption and acts out of a sense of responsibility. This is also comparable with the “chooser” and “picker” concept, as previously explained in 2.3 (Schwartz 2016). Thus, ethical consumption is characterized not only by reflection but also by a commitment to responsible and sustainable choices (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006). Sustainable consumption applies to both durable products and everyday goods such as food and beverages. In the food industry, particularly in markets like Germany, environmental responsibility is becoming increasingly important as consumer trends shift toward more sustainable choices.

2.5.1 Sustainable Food Consumption Trends in Germany

Looking at Germany generally lifestyle-oriented consumers (Lifestyle of health and sustainability) stand out with almost 90 percent willing to pay more for high quality, 87 percent prefer regional products, and about 76 percent are ready to pay more for eco-friendly or organic goods (IfD Allensbach 2024). Furthermore, a clear trend emerges in sustainable consumption patterns, as more consumers adopt vegan or vegetarian diets. The production of vegetarian and vegan meat alternatives has more than doubled, increasing from 60.4 thousand tons in 2019 to over 126 thousand tons in 2024 (Statista 2025).

These developments highlight the growing relevance of sustainable food consumption in Germany, particularly regarding environmental concerns and supply chain issues, which are key motivators for consumers to adopt plant-based diets. Among German consumers, organic products have long become mainstream, with sales revenues remaining consistently high at around €15–16 billion between 2021 and 2023.

Fair trade products, on the other hand, are not yet fully established in the German market, although their sales revenues still rose from €1.95 billion in 2021 to €2.34 billion in 2023 (HDE 2024). However, these encouraging developments are occurring alongside persistent environmental, social and health challenges, that continue to complicate the transition to more sustainable food systems.

2.5.2 Drivers and challenges of Sustainable and Ethical consumption in Germany

Food consumption in general faces several major challenges. First, there are environmental challenges, including global warming, water contamination and declining biodiversity. Second, resource pressure is rising because of a steadily increasing global populace and rising needs for food, water and energy. Another challenge is inequality, as around 800 million people worldwide still suffer from hunger while, paradoxically, around one to one and a half billion people are overweight. Finally, health-related problems are becoming more prominent, as diet- and lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes type 2 and cardiovascular illnesses are increasingly widespread (Reisch, Eberle and Lorek 2017). In Germany, ethical consumption has become an increasingly important topic in both research and practice, driven by consumer interest in sustainability, fair working conditions, and environmental protection. However, actual purchasing behavior is limited by affordability and convenience (Djafarova and Foots 2022). From a marketing perspective, this gap reflects the broader “attitude–behavior gap”. Although many consumers claim that sustainability or ethical standards matter to them, Price sensitivity, convenience and entrenched habits still dominate decision-making (Bray, Johns and Kilburn 2010). Research suggests several drivers that can foster more sustainable and ethical Consumer Behavior. First, social influence plays an important role, as visible signals can make sustainable and ethical behavior appear common and desirable. Second, habit formation can be encouraged through nudges, default options, or feedback mechanisms that render sustainable

choices automatically. Third, strengthening the connection to consumers' self-identity and values is crucial, so that sustainability and ethical standards become part of how individuals define themselves. Finally, appeal to both Emotions and rational cognition, for example through storytelling, positive framing of health and quality benefits, or by highlighting measurable environmental impacts and cost savings, can further motivate sustainable behavior. Addressing these challenges is crucial for translating consumers' growing interest in sustainability into consistent behavioral change (White, Habib and Hardisty 2019).

Furthermore, German consumers often identify with sustainability and ethical values and demand transparency from companies, but as in other Western markets, intentions often do not lead to consistent action, as Price sensitivity, brand loyalty and skepticism toward corporate statements interfere (Bray, Johns and Kilburn 2010). This makes Germany a prime example of the paradox that sustainable and ethical consumption can lead to moral licensing. Buying organic or fair-trade products creates a "moral credit" that justifies subsequent less ethical decisions. For CSR strategies in Germany, this raises the question of whether the promotion of "green" or "fair" products by companies drives systemic change, or whether it primarily enables consumers to ease their guilty conscience while maintaining their existing consumption habits (Djafarova and Foots 2022). These tensions are especially prevalent in the German Chocolate industry, where Consumer Behavior is shaped by a combination of strong emotional motives, habitual Purchasing Decisions, and growing ethical concerns.

2.5.3 Consumer Behavior in German Chocolate industry

Germany ranks among the leading Chocolate markets both in terms of per capita consumption and overall revenue. In 2015, German consumers recorded the second highest per capita Chocolate consumption worldwide (8.4 kg), while by 2025 Germany represents the third largest Chocolate confectionery market globally with revenues of USD 9 billion, only slightly behind

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the United Kingdom and far ahead of other major markets such as Russia and China. These figures highlight not only the central role of Chocolate in German consumer habits but also the country's global relevance (Mintel 2016). Chocolate consumption in Germany illustrates the characteristics of a low-involvement product, as around 35 percent of consumers eat Chocolate several times a week and more than 10 percent even daily, reflecting habitual and routine behavior (Lindt and Sprüngli 2023). At the same time, emotional drivers play a central role as taste is by far the most important purchase criterion, cited by 93 percent of consumers, which underlines the role of Chocolate as a reward and source of pleasure rather than a rationally evaluated good (Vivani 2023).

Chocolate consumption is tightly bound to Emotion as people often reach for it to reward themselves, eliciting pleasure and comfort but sometimes guilt which makes many Chocolate choices quick and impulsive rather than deliberative (Siddiqui, et al. 2024). In addition, the amount of Fairtrade-certified Chocolate sold in Germany has risen significantly, reaching 4.490 tons in 2024 compared to only 480 tons in 2005 (TransFair 2025). This trend indicates a growing consumer demand for ethically produced Chocolate.

At the same time, survey data show that Milka remained the most popular Chocolate brand in Germany up until 2020, ahead of Ritter Sport and Lindt (Vuma 2020). However, despite its popularity, Milka has faced criticism regarding human rights violations in its cocoa Supply Chain and is not certified as Fairtrade. Reports highlight concerns about Child Labor and inadequate monitoring practices, which stand in contrast to the increasing consumer focus on sustainability and ethical sourcing (Greenpeace 2021). Moreover, German consumers increasingly discuss Chocolate not only in terms of taste but also consistency, which evokes the most positive Emotions, while at the same time Chocolate is more often associated with health, protein, and lifestyle-oriented diets (Vogl 2021). Health consciousness is driving demand for low-sugar, organic, and plant-based options, while sustainability concerns increase pressure on

brands to use ethically sourced cocoa and eco-friendly packaging. At the same time, consumption patterns remain strongly seasonal, with shopping peaks during Christmas, Easter, and other cultural events, where emotional triggers in festive packaging further intensify purchasing behavior. In fact, the digital transformation of retail Chocolate in Germany is accelerating, supported by a 93 percent internet penetration rate and innovations such as on-demand delivery and click-and-collect services (Strategy Helix Group 2025).

Furthermore, general demand in the German Chocolate sector is increasing, particularly for dark Chocolate, which is perceived as a healthier option. This trend reflects the growing health consciousness among consumers (Insights 2025). Overall, Consumer Behavior is shifting from a focus on quantity alone toward values of health, sustainability, and convenience.

2.6 Identified research gap

The examined literature provides a robust basis for understanding Consumer Behavior in relation to CSR, food labeling, and sustainable consumption. Studies have investigated the role of nutritional Labels, organic certifications, and Fairtrade seals in shaping consumer preferences, highlighting both the increasing awareness of sustainability and the persistence of the “attitude–behavior gap”.

Research indicates that, although consumers frequently express concerns about ethical problems such as Child Labor and unfavorable working conditions in cocoa production, their actual purchase behavior remains predominantly shaped by Price, convenience and brand loyalty.

However, limited attention has been given to how Labels specifically addressing labor exploitation in cocoa production influence consumer choices, particularly in the context of the German Chocolate market. Although Germany is a major market for both Chocolate consumption and cocoa imports, research that evaluates the impact of these Labels in the

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German setting remains surprisingly scarce. Much of the existing research focuses on broader sustainability certifications (e.g., organic, Fairtrade) or nutritional aspects (e.g., sugar content), leaving a gap in understanding whether and how consumers respond to explicit information about labor exploitation in Supply Chains. Previous research often isolates consumer attitudes and overlooks socio-demographic differences and emotional motives, such as Chocolate being consumed as a reward or source of pleasure.

As a result, it remains unclear whether ethical Labels can effectively influence decisions in a low-involvement category like Chocolate, where purchases are mostly habitual and impulsive. To close this gap, this study seeks to explore the way consumers in Germany respond to food Labels highlighting labor exploitation in cocoa production, and whether such Labels can bridge the “attitude–behavior gap”. Specifically, it seeks to (1) analyze the extent to which labor exploitation Labels influence Willingness to Buy, (2) compares how these effects vary across socio-demographic groups, and (3) explores whether ethical labeling interacts with emotional and habitual aspects of Chocolate consumption and under which conditions ethical information can interrupt routine, price-driven decision patterns. In doing so, this Study contributes to a better understanding of the potential and limitations of food Labels as tools to promote ethical consumption in one of the world’s most significant Chocolate markets.

3. General Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The thorough evaluation of the existing literature and previous Studies, revealed that an experimental approach, using a survey was the most suitable methodology for researching on CSR in the Chocolate sector (Boegman, et al. 2023). Therefore, an online survey was created using Microsoft Forms to ensure accessibility, clarity, and convenience for participants. The questionnaire was available from October 6, 2025, for a period of 25 days and was distributed digitally through various social media channels, targeting participants currently living in Germany. As noted in the literature review, Germany ranks among the leading global importers of cocoa, which not only highlights Germany as a major consumption market but also positions it as a pivotal jurisdiction concerning Supply Chain governance. Furthermore, the mandatory requirements established by the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act provide a unique legislative context, making the country a critical test case for assessing the perception and effectiveness of mandatory corporate responsibility measures (UN Comtrade 2025). Therefore, surveying individuals residing in Germany allows for a direct examination of the societal implications of demand-side policies in a major global actor. Since the survey focused on people currently living in Germany, and not exclusively on German citizens, the questionnaire was drafted in English to make it accessible to a wider range of respondents. However, the product images used in the survey were presented in German, as products in Germany are usually displayed in the local language at the point of sale (Gronkvist 2024). A total of 184 valid responses were collected (110 women, 73 men and 1 who preferred not to specify gender (*Appendix B: Respondent Demographics and Characteristics*)). Each participant received the same introduction explaining the purpose of the research, participation criteria, and data protection policy. Before proceeding, participants confirmed their consent to voluntarily take part in the Study.

3.2 Questionnaire

As displayed in *Appendix A.1: Survey Structure*, the survey consisted of two main parts, combining general demographic questions with an experimental stimuli section. The first part included demographic and behavioral questions regarding participants' gender, education level, household income, Chocolate consumption habits, preferred brands, and typical purchasing behavior. These questions served to describe the sample and control for potential background influences. Because the hypotheses focus on the effects of Price, emotional packaging and ethical labeling, background variables are limited to those closely related to these mechanisms (income, gender, and education). As outlined in the literature review, Wandel (1997) found that women and highly educated consumers tend to read and use label information more frequently. In addition, higher income was considered particularly relevant for Price manipulation, as consumers with greater financial resources are more likely to be able to pay higher Prices. Based on these considerations, only these three socio-demographic variables were included, whereas age was not considered central to the research questions and was therefore excluded to keep the questionnaire concise.

The second part presented twelve systematically varying images of Chocolate bars, which participants evaluated individually in terms of their Willingness to Buy (rated from "1 = not willing at all" to "5 = very willing"). The stimuli were created on Canva and systematically varied across three key experimental factors: Price, emotional packaging design, and ethical labeling. Each participant rated all twelve versions, creating a within-subjects dataset suitable for Repeated Measures analysis. The Study focused exclusively on participants currently living in Germany, as it examined the German Chocolate market context, and data collection was conducted entirely online to ensure anonymity and voluntary participation.

3.3 Experimental Factors

The main experimental factors (Price, Emotion, and Label) were selected, as prior research has revealed that Price perception and emotional design strongly influence routine and impulse buying behavior for low-involvement products such as Chocolate (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006). Adding a Label factor (“This Chocolate was produced without Child Labor”) allowed for testing how ethical information affects purchase decisions compared to emotional or price-based stimuli. Although greater transparency and more detailed information about ethical standards within the production process would make the Label more credible, a short and explicit Label was chosen. The literature revealed that Labels solely work if the message is clearly understandable and direct (Wandel 1997). Therefore, rather than testing transparency in detail, the research investigates the impact of a direct and concise ethical claim. The factors Price, Emotion and Label were particularly important with regards to the previously discussed “attitude-behavior gap”. Consumers often pledge concerns for ethical and social issues, while still making decisions based on Price, convenience and habits (Bray, Johns and Kilburn 2010). The factor “brand” was deliberately excluded, despite its influence on Chocolate purchases, because the aim was to isolate the effects of universal and controllable design elements rather than brand-specific perceptions, which could introduce strong prior biases.

3.4 Data Analysis

After closing the survey, all responses were compiled in Excel and furthermore analyzed in Jamovi, as it provides a user-friendly interface for both Repeated Measures ANOVA and LMM analysis, while allowing to visualize results and check model assumptions (e.g., normality, homoscedasticity). A RM ANOVA was conducted, as each participant evaluated multiple Chocolate products under different experimental conditions, meaning that the same individuals provided responses for all combinations of Price, Emotion, and Label. A regular one-way

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ANOVA would not have been suitable, since it assumes independent samples and does not account for the repeated nature of the data. To complement the RM ANOVA results and confirm the robustness of our findings, an additional Linear Mixed Model (LMM) was integrated, including participant ID as a random intercept to account for individual differences in Willingness to Buy. The model included Price (Low, Medium, High), Emotion (No Emotion vs. Emotion), and Label (No Label vs. Label) as fixed effects and their two- and three-way interactions:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Willingness}_{ij} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Price}_{1ij} + \beta_2 \text{Price}_{2ij} + \beta_3 \text{Emotion}_{ij} + \beta_4 \text{Label}_{ij} + \beta_5 (\text{Price}_{1ij} \times \text{Emotion}_{ij}) \\ & + \beta_6 (\text{Price}_{2ij} \times \text{Emotion}_{ij}) + \beta_7 (\text{Price}_{1ij} \times \text{Label}_{ij}) + \beta_8 (\text{Price}_{2ij} \times \text{Label}_{ij}) + \beta_9 (\text{Emotion}_{ij} \times \text{Label}_{ij}) \\ & + \beta_{10} (\text{Price}_{1ij} \times \text{Emotion}_{ij} \times \text{Label}_{ij}) + \beta_{11} (\text{Price}_{2ij} \times \text{Emotion}_{ij} \times \text{Label}_{ij}) + u_{0j} + \varepsilon_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Equation 1: Linear Mixed Model Equation

Where i refers to the individual observations, j refers to the participants, u_{0j} represents the random intercept for each participant, and ε_{ij} denotes the residual error term. The LMM allowed to include participant ID as a random effect, controlling for individual differences in Willingness to Buy. This model also handles potential violations of sphericity and missing data more flexibly, providing a more reliable interpretation of the interaction effects between Price, Emotion, and Label. In summary, these analyses helped to determine which factors and combinations most strongly influence consumers' Willingness to Buy Chocolate products, based on emotional design elements, labeling, and Price levels shown in the product images (*Appendix A: Experimental Survey Design*).

4. Studies

The following results are derived from the survey data obtained in this research. Descriptive analyses were conducted to summarize sociodemographic characteristics and general purchasing patterns, while inferential statistics were performed using RM ANOVA and LMM as described in the methodology section. The analyses included Price, Emotion, and Label as within-subject factors and examined their effects on Willingness to Buy.

For clarity, the results are presented thematically according to the hypotheses, first focusing on the effects of Price and Emotion (*Study 1: The Impact of Price & Emotion on Consumer Purchasing Behavior*), then on the impact of labeling (*Study 2: The impact of Labels on Consumer Purchasing Behavior*), and finally on their combined effects (*Combined impact of Price, Emotion and Label*).

4.1 Study 2: The impact of Labels on Consumer Purchasing Behavior

4.1.1 Introduction

Over the past few years, growing awareness for social and environmental issues has fundamentally changed the way consumers evaluate products and brands. CSR has shifted from being a voluntary commitment to a fundamental requirement, that shapes consumer trust and Purchasing Decisions (Caroll 2021). In this context, Food labeling has emerged as an effective means of communication for converting ethical values into visible product features. Labels can signal compliance with sustainability standards, fair labor practices, or environmental responsibility, providing consumers with concrete information for more informed and responsible decisions (Debasish, Debarun and Atanu 2025).

In the Chocolate industry, where Supply Chains are often associated with complex social challenges, labeling is becoming increasingly important (Oya, Schaefer and Skalidou 2018). Despite these developments, there remains an “attitude-behavior gap” in the German Chocolate

market, as consumers express concerns about ethical issues, but often prioritize Price, taste, or habit over sustainability when making actual purchases (Bray, Johns and Kilburn 2010). Labels that communicate ethical standards related to sustainability may play a key part in bridging this gap by reducing information asymmetry. In the context of Chocolate consumption, which is both habitual and emotionally charged, ethical labeling introduces a new level of reflection into an otherwise uninvolved Purchasing Decision. Labels that emphasize the absence of Child Labor, for example, can activate moral considerations that compete with affective motivations such as enjoyment and taste. Understanding whether these ethical signals can effectively influence consumer decisions in the German market is crucial for assessing the potential of CSR communication in everyday consumption contexts. Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated: **Hypothesis 3: The presence of an ethical Label increases consumers' Willingness to Buy compared to products without a Label.** By examining this relationship, the present research tends to enhance insight into how ethical information influences Consumer Behavior in a product category with low purchase involvement.

4.1.2 Results

In the overall RM analysis (*Appendix C.2: Repeated Measures ANOVA*) the Label factor showed a highly significant main effect on Willingness to Buy, $F(1.00, 183.00) = 205.73, p < .001$, indicating that participants' purchase intentions differed substantially between labeled and unlabeled Chocolates. Participants expressed considerably higher Willingness to Buy when the Chocolate packaging included an ethical Label compared to when no Label was shown. This effect is visualized in *Appendix C.13: Mean Willingness to Buy for Label* and *Appendix C.1: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Label* by displaying the mean Willingness to Buy ratings for labeled and unlabeled Chocolate packages. As shown in the figure, Willingness to Buy was substantially higher in the Label condition ($M = 3.52$) compared to the No Label

condition ($M = 2.60$). The visual pattern aligns with the statistical results and illustrates the strong positive influence of ethical labeling on consumers' purchase intentions (*Appendix C.1: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Label*).

The LMM (*Appendix C.3: LMM Regression Model*) confirmed this pattern. The fixed-effect estimate for Label (Label1: $\beta = -0.9239$, $SE = 0.0381$, $p < .001$), was negative because the contrast was coded as No Label – Label, indicating that Willingness to Buy was significantly higher in the Label condition. Therefore, the presence of an ethical Label was associated with almost one scale point higher Willingness to Buy in comparison to the unlabeled condition. This indicated that, after controlling individual differences across participants, the presence of the ethical Label consistently increased the Willingness to Buy. This effect was considerably larger than those observed for Price and Emotion, suggesting that labeling played a dominant role in shaping purchase behavior. Model assumption checks supported the robustness of these results: residuals were approximately normally distributed ($p = .155$) and homoscedastic ($p = .511$) (*Appendix C.14: Assumption Checks*).

4.1.3 Discussion

The obtained findings in Study 2 confirm that ethical Labels have a particularly strong influence on consumers' purchasing intentions when it comes to Chocolate. When the packaging included the Label “Produced without Child Labor,” participants indicated a significantly increased Willingness to Buy compared to the version without a Label. This result shows that moral and trust-based information can become a decisive purchasing motive even in a product category with low purchase loyalty such as Chocolate.

Referring to the theoretical background discussed earlier, these results empirically support the assumption that visible ethical communication can reduce the persistent gap between attitude and behavior in sustainable consumption (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006). By presenting clear and

credible information, the Label transformed moral attitudes into actual purchase motivation. The explicit reference to the absence of Child Labor provided an easily interpretable signal that reduced information asymmetry and strengthened the perception of responsibility and fairness. It thus offered consumers a concrete opportunity to act in accordance with their ethical values without expending increased cognitive effort. This mechanism is consistent with Carroll's (2021) understanding of CSR as a key expectation that shapes consumer trust.

By translating abstract CSR commitments into concrete product features, labeling becomes a crucial bridge between corporate behavior and consumer perception. Biswas, Chakraborty, and Manna (2026) also emphasize that clear labeling increases credibility and signals a sense of accountability. The strength of the ethical Label in the German market, where public awareness of Supply Chain issues such as Child Labor has increased, suggests that consumers are sensitive to such moral assurances, when they are presented in a simple and trustworthy manner (Oya, Schaefer and Skolidou 2018).

The findings indicate the strategic importance of credible and transparent communication for companies operating in the German Chocolate market. Consumers appear to be willing to reward brands that are visibly committed to social responsibility. It is therefore essential that ethical messages are both authentic and verifiable. Rather than viewing labeling as a short-term marketing tool, companies should embed it in a broader responsibility strategy, that includes traceable Supply Chains and consistent external communication. Such consistency between message and practice not only builds trust but can also act as a durable source of competitive distinction in a highly competitive market.

4.1.4 Conclusion

The conducted analysis and evaluation of the LMM and RM ANOVA in Study 2, shows that ethical Labels significantly increase consumers' Willingness to Buy Chocolate in Germany. By making social responsibility visible through a simple and credible statement, the Label

succeeded in transforming moral awareness into concrete purchasing motivation, turning abstract ethical concerns into a tangible reason to choose one product over another. The results show that clear communication of ethical standards can effectively reduce the gap between attitude and behavior identified in previous studies and strengthen consumer confidence in a brand's integrity, particularly in markets where trust and transparency are increasingly valued. Even though this academic research featured a Label without providing in-depth information on Supply Chain processes, the effect on Willingness to Buy was very significant. For companies, this underscores the importance of transparent and verifiable CSR practices that are consistently communicated at the product level.

4.2 Combined impact of Price, Emotion and Label

In addition to the main effects, the analysis also revealed several significant interaction effects between the three factors. The interaction between Price $\times$ Emotion in the RM ANOVA (*Appendix C.2: Repeated Measures ANOVA*) was not significant ($F(1.76, 405.45) = 2.26, p = .113$), indicating that the effect of Price changes on Willingness to Buy did not depend on the emotional design. The corresponding LMM confirmed this non-significant interaction (low vs. high: $\beta = 0.0707, p = .449$; medium vs. high: $\beta = 0.0652, p = .484$), suggesting that emotional cues did not moderate the effect of Price on Willingness to Buy. Participants' Price sensitivity remained stable regardless of the emotional design.

Other combinations showed significant effects in the RM ANOVA. The significant Price $\times$ Label interaction ($F(1.82, 333.42) = 91.50, p < .001$) suggests that the influence of Price on Willingness to Buy was affected by the presence of an ethical Label. Inspection of the descriptive means (*Appendix C.8: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Price $\times$ Label*) indicated that Willingness to Buy was highest when low-priced Chocolates also carried an ethical Label, indicating that labeling amplified the positive effect of affordable pricing. In the

LMM, however, the Price $\times$ Label effect was not statistically significant (low vs. high: $\beta = 0.1630$, $p = .080$; medium vs. high: $\beta = -0.0489$, $p = .600$). This means that, once individual-level variability was controlled for, the interaction between Price and labeling no longer reached significance. Nevertheless, the pattern remained consistent with the descriptive means of the RM ANOVA, showing numerically higher Willingness to Buy for low-priced labeled Chocolates.

It also showed a highly significant Emotion $\times$ Label interaction, $F(1, 183) = 157.87$, $p < .001$, indicating that mean Willingness to Buy depended on the specific combination of emotional content and ethical labeling. It shows that emotional packaging further amplified the impact of ethical labeling on Willingness to Buy. According to the descriptive means (*Appendix C.7: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion x Label*) participants reported the highest purchase intentions when emotionally designed Chocolates also carried an ethical Label, suggesting a significant interaction effect between emotional and ethical cues. This finding was confirmed by the LMM, where the interaction contrast No Emotion – Emotion $\times$ No Label – Label (Emotion1 $\times$ Label1) was statistically significant ($\beta = -0.1957$, $SE = 0.0761$, $p = 0.010$, as displayed in *Appendix C.3: LMM Regression Model*, indicating that the combination of no emotional packaging and no Label results in slightly decreased Willingness to Buy ratings in comparison to the fully featured condition with emotional packaging and labeling, suggesting that removing both cues jointly reduces perceived product attractiveness.

Finally, the RM ANOVA suggests a significant three-way interaction (Price $\times$ Emotion $\times$ Label), suggesting that the combined effects of these factors on Willingness to Buy differed across conditions ($F(1.40, 255.82) = 89.83$, $p < .001$).

The descriptive means (*Appendix C.7: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion x Label*) suggested that the combination of emotional packaging and ethical labeling produced the strongest purchase intentions, particularly when paired with low-priced Chocolates. These

findings highlight that consumers' Willingness to Buy Chocolate is not driven by isolated cues but by the combination of emotional and ethical stimuli. Emotional packaging and ethical information reinforced each other, producing the highest levels of purchase intention, particularly when combined with an affordable Price.

In the LMM, none of the three-way interaction terms between Price, emotion, and labeling were statistically significant (Price1 $\times$ Emotion1 $\times$ Label1: $\beta = -0.1087$, $p = 0.5600$; Price2 $\times$ Emotion1 $\times$ Label1: $\beta = -0.0217$, $p = 0.9070$; see *Appendix C.3: LMM Regression Model* for full model estimates). This indicates that the way in which emotional packaging and ethical labeling combine to influence Willingness to Buy does not systematically differ across Price levels once random effects are taken into account and suggests that the combined influence of Price, Emotion, and labeling was not robust once random effects were modeled.

Finally, the conducted assumption checks showed that the model residuals were normally distributed (Shapiro–Wilk = 0.9989, $p = 0.155$) and indicated no signs of heteroskedasticity, supporting the validity of the model estimates (*Appendix C.4: Normality Tests*).

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary of results

This academic paper seeks to investigate the effect of ethical labeling on consumer's Willingness to Buy alongside other influential factors, namely Price and Emotion. This was achieved by conducting an experimental Study, in which respondents rated fictional Chocolate bars that differed systematically in terms of Price level, presence or absence of emotional packaging design elements, and presence or absence of an ethical Label. Altogether, this study gives a comprehensive picture of how economic, emotional, and ethical factors influence consumers' purchase intentions, allowing for a more accurate examination of the "attitude–behavior gap". In line with the literature, the findings suggest that Chocolate represents a low-involvement purchase context in which consumers primarily rely on simple cues such as price, which helps explain why ethical attitudes do not consistently translate into buying intentions (Reisch, Eberle and Lorek 2017). The first finding is that the analyses consistently show that lower Prices lead to significantly higher purchase intentions than higher Prices. Under all conditions, participants clearly preferred the low-priced and mid-priced Chocolate bars over the high-priced alternative. This supports **Hypothesis 1: A lower Price leads to a higher Willingness to Buy compared to a higher Price** and underscores the role of Price as a simple but effective determinant in low-involvement decisions, where consumers want to minimize both effort and financial risk. This pattern is consistent with findings in the literature review, showing that affordable Prices for everyday foods are primarily interpreted as an opportunity for immediate gratification rather than as a sign of inferior quality (Mowen 1988).

Compared to the strong impact of Price on Willingness to Buy, emotional packaging only resulted in moderate, yet positive, influence on purchase intentions. The descriptive means of the RM Anova indicated slightly higher purchase intentions for Chocolate bars with emotional packaging. Furthermore, the LMM yielded a small, but negative coefficient for Emotion, based

on the No Emotion-Emotion coding. This demonstrates that Willingness to Buy for Chocolate with emotional packaging is slightly higher than without. **Hypothesis 2: An emotional packaging design increases consumers' Willingness to Buy compared to a neutral design,** is therefore supported, although the magnitude of this effect is weaker than that of Price. The discrepancy in effect size between the analytical approaches, together with the relatively small LMM coefficient, suggests that responses to emotional stimuli are dependent on the individual and shaped by personal associations with seasonal or affective imagery.

Study 2 draws a significantly different picture for ethical information. The presence of the Label “Produced without Child Labor” led to a significantly increased Willingness to Buy in relation to the identical product lacking the Label, and this effect remained large and statistically robust.

Hypothesis 3: The presence of an ethical Label increases consumers' Willingness to Buy compared to products without a Label is therefore strongly supported. Compared to Price and Emotion, the ethical Label proved to be the most influential factor, suggesting that moral and trust-based considerations can be decisive even in a product category that is typically purchased out of habit and with low brand loyalty. These results support the theoretical assumption that visible and credible ethical communication can help bridge the persistent gap between consumers' views on sustainability and their concrete buying behavior (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006).

Overall, the results point to a purchasing process in which consumers primarily use Price as a clear indicator of value, while clear and specific ethical Labels can interrupt routine behavior and direct decisions toward socially responsible options. This supports previous findings that distinctive ethical cues are necessary to overcome habitual, price-oriented behavior in food consumption (Bray, Johns and Kilburn 2010). On a broader level, such consumer research highlights how everyday Purchasing Decisions arise from the interaction of habits, situational cues, and fundamental moral beliefs. Decisions in the food and confectionery market are

influenced by the three tested factors, but also external cues such as limited attention, time pressure, and the desire for cognitive ease, leading people to rely on simple and familiar behavior patterns. At the same time, growing awareness of social and environmental issues means that many consumers feel a conflict between their values and their actual purchasing behavior. Experimental studies in this area can therefore fulfill an important function: by isolating certain aspects of the decision-making situation and observing their effects on expressed intentions, they help to clarify under what conditions everyday buying behavior can be steered in a more responsible direction.

5.2 Limitations

5.2.1 Sample Characteristics and Generalizability

Although this Study provides useful insights into Chocolate purchasing behavior in the German market, there are some limitations to consider.

Firstly, the sample is subject to general selection bias. As the survey was conducted online and distributed mainly via digital channels, it might not represent the entire diversity of the German population. Even though age was not asked in the survey, there might also be potential for bias due to age differences. The survey was distributed to many university colleagues that are in a certain age range, with educational degrees (*Appendix B.2: Frequency Statistics for Education*), which likely implies greater familiarity with sustainability debates and possibly different purchasing habits than older consumers or individuals with different educational or socioeconomic backgrounds. This constrains the applicability of the findings to the broader German market. The structure and size of the sample further limited the depth of the analysis. Although the total number of respondents was sufficient for the planned analyses, it did not allow for an in-depth examination of more detailed subgroups, such as regional differences

within Germany. Consequently, potentially meaningful heterogeneity in the responses could not be fully explored.

5.2.2 Measurement of Behavior

A second limitation concerns the measurement of behavior. The dependent variable in both studies was self-reported Willingness to Buy, rather than actual purchasing behavior, which might be biased, as consumers might not be answering truthfully. Furthermore, the topic of Child Labor and ethical consumption is morally sensitive, which increases the risk of bias due to social desirability. Respondents may have exaggerated their willingness to support ethically labeled products or downplayed their preference for cheaper, non-ethical options in order to present themselves in a more favorable light. As a result, the extent of the observed effects on purchase intentions may not be fully transferable to actual purchase decisions at the point of sale.

5.2.3 Experimental Design and Validity

Furthermore, the experimental design itself included simplifications. The studies were based on a fictional Chocolate brand and a limited number of variations in price and emotional design. While this approach ensured experimental control and comparability, it inevitably reduced the complexity of actual market conditions, in which consumers are confronted with a wide range of brands, price points, packaging formats, and advertising activities.

Similarly, ethical information was summarized in a single brief statement, without further details on certification systems, Supply Chain transparency, or other aspects of environmental and social sustainability. Consumers may respond differently to well-known third-party certifications, detailed reports on farmers, or comprehensive corporate sustainability reports. In this context, the validity of the stimuli is limited. The products were presented as static images

in an online questionnaire rather than in a realistic shelf environment. Respondents were not exposed to the strategic retail layout, where customers are misled by typical in-store influences such as time pressure, competing products on neighboring shelves, in-store promotions, or the social context (e.g., shopping with family or friends). Since participation took place in an uncontrolled online environment, distractions and multitasking may also have reduced attention and engagement with the stimuli.

5.2.4 Ethical Aspects and Timing

The cross-sectional nature of the data represents a further limitation: the studies capture a single point in time and therefore do not allow conclusions to be drawn about the stability of the observed effects over longer periods or under changing economic circumstances, for instance rising inflation, recessions or fluctuations in public attention to social issues.

Furthermore, the ethical framework focused exclusively on Child Labor. Other important dimensions of corporate responsibility, such as environmental impact, animal welfare, or fair prices for farmers were not taken into account. It is possible that different ethical issues, or combinations thereof, would generate different responses in terms of trust, emotional attachment, or Willingness to pay a premium.

Finally, general timing of the data collection may also have influenced participants' responses to the Christmas designs. Their emotional responses to Christmas images or their sensitivity to seasonal products might have been different if the survey had been conducted closer to December, when Christmas stimuli are more present in everyday life and the intention to purchase Christmas Chocolate is more immediate.

Overall, these limitations suggest that the results should be interpreted with caution and viewed primarily as a first step toward understanding the combined effects of price, emotional design, and ethical information on consumer responses in the Chocolate market.

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Appendix A: Experimental Survey Design

Appendix A.1: Survey Structure

Introduction

Patterns in everyday chocolate consumption

Welcome, chocolate enthusiasts! 🍫

This survey asks about your everyday experiences with chocolate and typical purchasing choices.

Your participation is voluntary, and the survey is anonymous – no personal information will be collected. It will take about 5–10 minutes to complete this survey.

By proceeding, you confirm that:

- You have read and understood the information above
- You participate voluntarily
- You are at least 18 years old
- You currently live in Germany

Thank you very much for your time and participation. Your responses provide valuable insights and strengthen the quality of our academic research.

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

Question 1:

Do you consent to participate in this survey?

- Yes
- No

Demographic and Behavioral Questions

Question 2:

Which gender best describes you?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

Question 3:

Highest completed education

- Lower secondary (Haupt-/ Realschule)
- Upper secondary (Abitur/ Fachabitur)
- Vocational training / apprenticeship (Ausbildung)
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's / Diplom / Staatsexamen
- Doctorate (PhD/Dr.)
- Prefer not say

Question 4:

Approximate monthly net household income? (in €)

- Under 1500
- 1500-3000
- 3000-4500
- above 4500
- Prefer not to say

Question 5:

How often to you buy chocolate?

- Several times a week
- Weekly
- At least monthly

Question 6:

Which brands do you buy most often?

- Milka
- Ritter Sport
- Lindt
- Tony chocolonely
- Grocery store brands
- Other:

Question 7:

Which chocolate type do you usually prefer?

- Milk
- Dark
- White
- Nut (e.g., hazelnut/almond)
- Filled (e.g., nougat/caramel)
- Flavoured (e.g., mint/orange)
- Vegan/ dairy-free

Question 8:

Buying chocolate is something I do

- Automatically
- Without thinking
- As part of my routine
- With careful consideration

Question 9: Low Price – No Emotion – No Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 10: Low Price – Emotion – Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 11: Low Price – Emotion – No Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 12: Low Price – No Emotion – Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 13: Medium Price – No Emotion – No Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 14: Medium Price – Emotion – No Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 15: Medium Price – No Emotion – Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 16: Medium Price – Emotion – Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 17: High Price – Emotion – Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 18: High Price – No Emotion – Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 19: High Price – Emotion – No Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Question 20: High Price – No Emotion – No Label

Please indicate your willingness to buy this chocolate bar. (1 = not at all willing; 5 = Very willing)



Thank you very much!

Appendix B: Respondent Demographics and Characteristics

Appendix B.1: Frequency Statistics for Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	110	59,78%
Male	73	39,67%
Prefer not to	1	0,54%
Grand Total	184	100,00%

Table 1: Frequency Statistics for Gender Distribution

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.2: Frequency Statistics for Education

Education	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's degree	66	35,87%
Doctorate (PhD/Dr.)	13	7,07%
Lower secondary (Haupt-/ Realschule)	13	7,07%
Master's / Diplom / Staatsexamen	43	23,37%
Prefer not say	1	0,54%
Upper secondary (Abitur/ Fachabitur)	30	16,30%
Vocational training / apprenticeship (Ausbildung)	18	9,78%
Grand Total	184	100,00%

Table 2: Frequency Statistics for Education

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.3: Frequency Statistics for Income

Income	Frequency	Percent
1500-3000	61	33,15%
3000-4500	54	29,35%
above 4500	22	11,96%
Prefer not to say	7	3,80%
Under 1500	40	21,74%
Grand Total	184	100,00%

Table 3: Frequency Statistics for Income

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.4: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Style

Purchase Style	Frequency	Percent
as part of of my routine	38	20,65%
automatically	25	13,59%
with careful consideration	63	34,24%
without thinking	58	31,52%
Grand Total	184	100,00%

Table 4: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Style

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.5: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Frequency

Purchase Frequency	Frequency	Percent
At least monthly	76	41,30%
Several times a week	29	15,76%
Weekly	79	42,93%
Grand Total	184	100,00%

Table 5: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Frequency

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.6: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Style x Gender

Purchase Style x Gender	Female	Male
as part of my routine	16	21
automatically	16	9
with careful consideration	41	22
without thinking	37	21
Grand Total	110	73

Table 6: Purchase Style x Gender

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.7: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Style x Income

Purchase Style x Income	under 1500	1500-3000	3000-4500	above 4500	prefer not to say
as part of my routine	6	11	13	6	1
automatically	4	7	8	3	0
with careful consideration	17	14	10	10	5
without thinking	12	13	23	3	2
Grand Total	39	45	54	22	8

Table 7: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Style x Income

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.8: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Style x Education

Purchase Style x Education	Bachelor	PhD/Dr.	Lower secondary	Master / Diplom	Upper secondary	apprenticeship	prefer not to say
as part of my routine	9	13	2	13	8	2	0
automatically	7	3	4	3	6	2	0
with careful consideration	32	6	0	13	5	5	0
without thinking	16	1	6	13	10	9	1
Grand Total	64	23	12	42	29	18	1

Table 8: Frequency Statistics for Purchase Style x Education

Source: Own Illustration

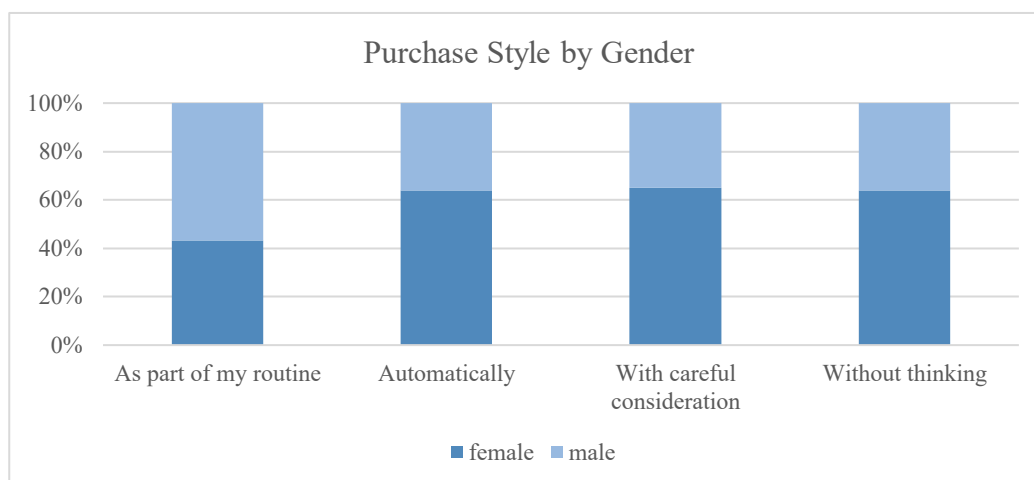
Appendix B.9: Frequency Statistics for Brand

Chocolate Brand Favour	Frequency	Percent
Cadbury;Ritter Sport;	1	0.54%
Ferrero;	1	0.54%
Grocery store brands;	9	4.83%
Grocery store brands;Ferrero;	1	0.54%
Grocery store brands;Milka;	1	0.54%
Kinder, reeses ;	1	0.54%
Kinder;	1	0.54%
Lindt;	16	8.70%
Lindt;Grocery store brands;	5	2.72%
Lindt;Milka;	7	3.80%
Lindt;Ritter Sport;	5	2.72%
Lindt; Tony chocolonely;	4	2.17%
Milka;	27	14.67%
Milka;Grocery store brands;	3	1.63%
Milka;Kinder;	1	0.54%
Milka;Lindt;	12	6.52%
Milka;Lindt; Ritter Sport;	1	0.54%
Milka;Lindt; Ritter Sport; Tony chocolonely;	1	0.54%
Milka;Ritter Sport;	8	4.35%
Milka;Ritter Sport;Grocery store brands;	2	1.09%
Milka;Ritter Sport;Lindt;	3	1.63%
Milka;Ritter Sport; Tony chocolonely;	1	0.54%
Milka;Tony chocolonely;	7	3.80%
No name ;	1	0.54%
Pantagrue!;Lindt;	1	0.54%
Ritter Sport;	17	9.24%
Ritter Sport;Grocery store brands;	2	1.09%
Ritter Sport;Lindt;	5	2.72%
Ritter Sport;Lindt; Tony chocolonely;	2	1.09%
Ritter Sport;Lindt; Tony chocolonely;Grocery store b	1	0.54%
Ritter Sport;Milka;	6	3.26%
Ritter Sport;Milka; Tony chocolonely;	1	0.54%
Ritter Sport; Tony chocolonely;	2	1.09%
Tony chocolonely;	11	5.98%
Tony chocolonely;Grocery store brands;	3	1.63%
Tony chocolonely;Lindt;	2	1.09%
Tony chocolonely;Milka;	9	4.83%
Tony chocolonely;Milka;Lindt;	1	0.54%
Tony chocolonely;Ritter Sport;	1	0.54%
Tony chocolonely;Ritter Sport;Milka;	1	0.54%
Grand Total	184	100%

Table 9: Frequency Statistics for Brand

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.10: Purchase Style by Gender



Graph 1: Purchase Style by Gender

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.11: Chocolate Buying Frequency x Income (%)

Chocolate Buying Frequency x Income (%)	1500-3000	3000-4500	above 4500	Prefer not to say	Under 1500	Grand Total
At least monthly	47.54%	29.63%	36.36%	71.43%	45.00%	41.30%
Several times a week	14.75%	18.52%	0.00%	14.29%	22.50%	15.76%
Weekly	37.70%	51.85%	63.64%	14.29%	32.50%	42.93%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 10: Chocolate Buying Frequency x Income (%)

Source: Own Illustration

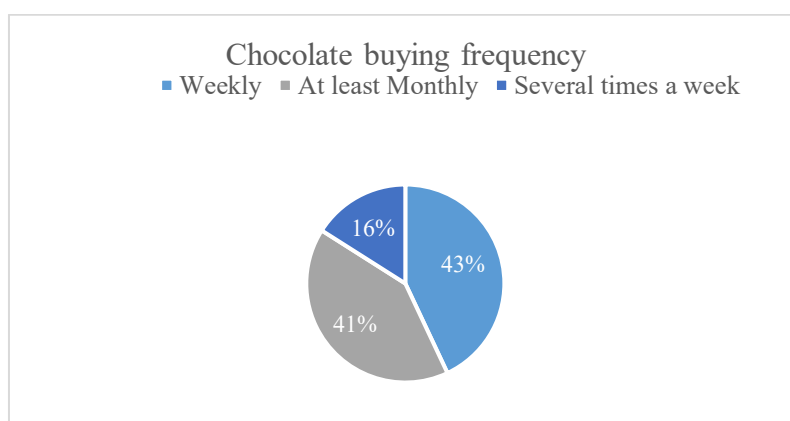
Appendix B.12: Chocolate Buying Frequency x Gender

Chocolate Buying Frequency x Gender	Female Frequency	Female Percentage	Male Frequency	Male Percentage	Pnts Frequency	Pnts Percentage	Total Count	Total Percentage
At least monthly	53	48.18%	23	31.51%	0	0	76	41.30%
Several times a week	12	10.91%	16	21.92%	1	100%	29	15.76%
Weekly	45	40.91%	34	46.58%	0	0	79	42.93%
Grand Total	110	100%	73	100%	1	100%	184	100%

Table 11: Chocolate Buying Frequency x Gender

Source: Own Illustration

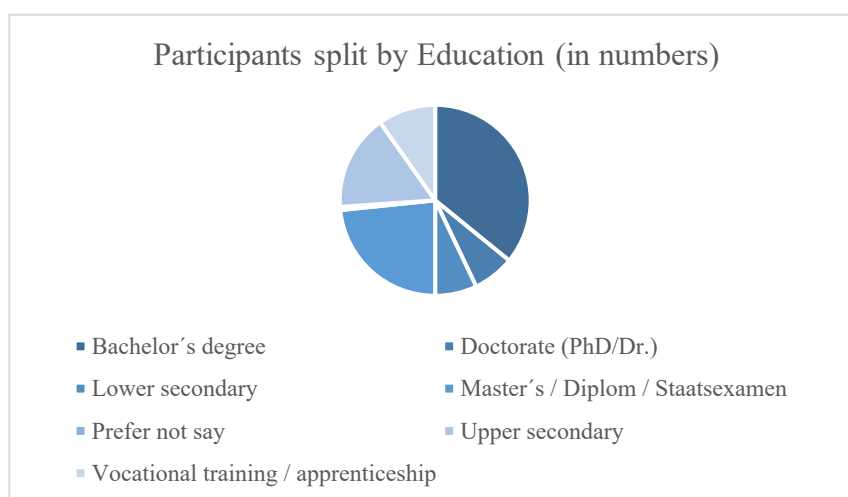
Appendix B.13: Chocolate Buying Frequency



Graph 2: Chocolate Buying Frequency

Source: Own Illustration

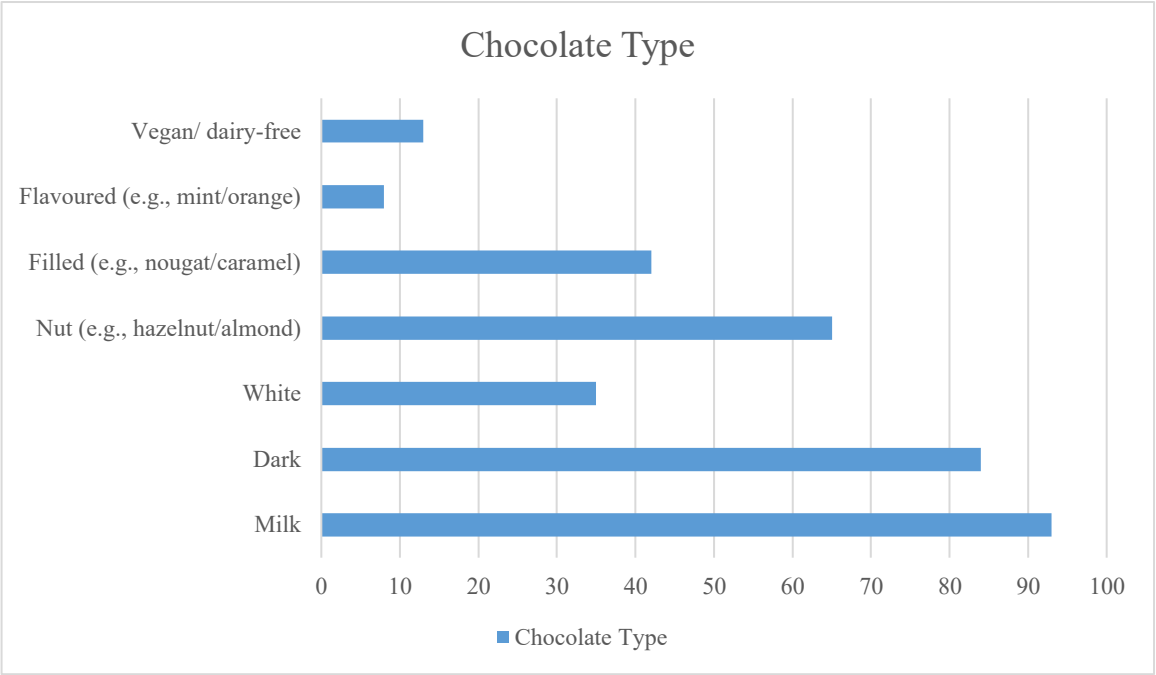
Appendix B.14: Participants split by Education



Graph 3: Participants split by Education

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix B.15: Participants preferred Chocolate Type



Graph 4: Participants preferred Chocolate Type

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C: Results Studies

Appendix C.1: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Label

	Label	Willingness to buy
N	Label	1104
	No Label	1104
Missing	Label	0
	No Label	0
Mean	Label	3,52
	No Label	2,60
Median	Label	4,00
	No Label	2,00
Standard Dev	Label	1,35
	No Label	1,24
Minimum	Label	1
	No Label	1
Maximum	Label	5
	No Label	5

Table 12: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Label

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.2: Repeated Measures ANOVA

Within Subject Effects							
	Spherity Correction	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	
Price	Greenhouse-Geisser	260,952	1.30	200,926	62.08	<.001	
Residual	Greenhouse-Geisser	769,215	237.67	3,236			
Emotion	Greenhouse-Geisser	20,741	1.00	20,741	30.92	<.001	
Residual	Greenhouse-Geisser	122,759	183.00	0.671			
Label	Greenhouse-Geisser	218,132	1.00	218,132	205.73	<.001	
Residual	Greenhouse-Geisser	194,034	183.00	1,060			
Price x Emotion	Greenhouse-Geisser	0.713	1.76	0.405	2.26	<.001	
Residual	Greenhouse-Geisser	57,787	321.96	0.179			
Price x Label	Greenhouse-Geisser	88,610	1.82	48,661	91.50	<.001	
Residual	Greenhouse-Geisser	177,224	333.24	0.532			
Emotion x Label	Greenhouse-Geisser	84,552	1.00	84,522	157.87	<.001	
Residual	Greenhouse-Geisser	97,978	183.00	0.535			
Price x Emotion x Label	Greenhouse-Geisser	90,052	1.40	64,418	89.83	<.001	
Residual	Greenhouse-Geisser	183,448	255.82	0.717			

Table 13: Repeated Measures ANOVA

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.3: LMM Regression Model

Fixed Effects Parameters Estimates		95% Confidence Interval						
Names	Effects	Estimate	SE	Lower	Upper	df	t	p
(Intercept)	(Intercept)	30,589	0.0669	2.9278	3.1900	183	45,726	<.001
Price1	Low - High	0.8288	0.0466	0.7374	0.9202	2013	17,781	<.001
Price2	Medium - High	0.5788	0.0466	0.4874	0.6702	2013	12,417	<.001
Emotion1	No Emotion - Emotion	-0.1938	0.0381	-0.2684	-0.1192	2013	-5,093	<.001
Label1	No Label - Label	-0.9239	0.0381	-0.9985	-0.8493	2013	-24,276	<.001
Emotion1 x Label1	No Emotion - Emotion x No Label - Label	-0.1957	0.0761	-0.3448	-0.0465	2013	-2,570	0.010
Price1 x Emotion1	Low - High x No Emotion - Emotion	0.0707	0.0932	-0.1121	0.2534	2013	0.758	0.449
Price2 x Emotion1	Medium - High x No Emotion - Emotion	0.0652	0.0932	-0.1175	0.2479	2013	0.700	0.484
Price1 x Label1	Low - High x No Label - Label	0.1630	0.0932	-0.0197	0.3458	2013	1,749	0.080
Price2 x Label1	Medium - High x No Label - Label	-0.0489	0.0932	-0.2316	0.1338	2013	-0.525	0.600
Price1 x Emotion1 x Label1	Low - High x No Emotion - Emotion x No Label - Label	-0.1087	0.1864	-0.4741	0.2567	2013	-0.583	0.560
Price2 x Emotion1 x Label1	Medium - High x No Emotion - Emotion x No Label - Label	-0.0217	0.1864	-0.3872	0.3437	2013	-0.117	0.907

Table 14: LMM Regression Model

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.4: Normality Tests

Test of Normality of residuals		
Test	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.023	0.191
Shapiro-Wilk	0.9989	0.155

Table 15: Normality Tests

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.5: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion

	Emotion	Willingness to buy
N	Emotion	1104
	No Emotion	1104
Missing	Emotion	0
	No Emotion	0
Mean	Emotion	3,16
	No Emotion	2,96
Median	Emotion	3
	No Emotion	3
Standard Dev	Emotion	1,36
	No Emotion	1,39
Minimum	Emotion	1
	No Emotion	1
Maximum	Emotion	5
	No Emotion	5

Table 16: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.6: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Price

	Price	Willingness to buy
N	High	736
	Low	736
	Medium	736
Missing	High	0
	Low	0
	Medium	0
Mean	High	2,59
	Low	3,42
	Medium	3,17
Median	High	2.00
	Low	4.00
	Medium	3.00
Standard Dev	High	1,36
	Low	1,38
	Medium	1,26
Minimum	High	1
	Low	1
	Medium	1
Maximum	High	5
	Low	5
	Medium	5

Table 17: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Price

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.7: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion x Label

	Emotion	Label	Willingness to buy
N	Emotion	Label	552
		No Label	552
	No Emotion	Label	552
		No Label	552
Missing	Emotion	Label	0
		No Label	0
	No Emotion	Label	0
		No Label	0
Mean	Emotion	Label	3,57
		No Label	2,74
	No Emotion	Label	3,47
		No Label	2,45
Median	Emotion	Label	4
		No Label	3
	No Emotion	Label	4
		No Label	2
Standard Dev	Emotion	Label	1,34
		No Label	1,25
	No Emotion	Label	1,36
		No Label	1,21
Minimum	Emotion	Label	1
		No Label	1
	No Emotion	Label	1
		No Label	1
Maximum	Emotion	Label	5
		No Label	5
	No Emotion	Label	5
		No Label	5

Table 18: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion x Label

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.8: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Price x Label

	Price	Label	Willingness to Buy
N	High	Label	368
		No Label	368
	Low	Label	368
		No Label	368
	Medium	Label	368
		No Label	368
Missing	High	Label	0
		No Label	0
	Low	Label	0
		No Label	0
	Medium	Label	0
		No Label	0
Mean	High	Label	3,07
		No Label	2,11
	Low	Label	3,82
		No Label	3,02
	Medium	Label	3,67
		No Label	2,66
Median	High	Label	3
		No Label	2
	Low	Label	4
		No Label	3
	Medium	Label	4
		No Label	3
Standard Dev	High	Label	1,42
		No Label	1,11
	Low	Label	1,30
		No Label	1,33
	Medium	Label	1,22
		No Label	1,09
Minimum	High	Label	1
		No Label	1
	Low	Label	1
		No Label	1
	Medium	Label	1
		No Label	1
Maximum	High	Label	5
		No Label	5
	Low	Label	5
		No Label	5
	Medium	Label	5
		No Label	5

Table 19: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Price x Label

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.9: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion x Label

	Emotion	Label	Willingness to buy
N	Emotion	Label	552
		No Label	552
	No Emotion	Label	552
		No Label	552
Missing	Emotion	Label	0
		No Label	0
	No Emotion	Label	0
		No Label	0
Mean	Emotion	Label	3,57
		No Label	2,74
	No Emotion	Label	3,47
		No Label	2,45
Median	Emotion	Label	4
		No Label	3
	No Emotion	Label	4
		No Label	2
Standard Dev	Emotion	Label	1,34
		No Label	1,25
	No Emotion	Label	1,36
		No Label	1,21
Minimum	Emotion	Label	1
		No Label	1
	No Emotion	Label	1
		No Label	1
Maximum	Emotion	Label	5
		No Label	5
	No Emotion	Label	5
		No Label	5

Table 20: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Emotion x Label

Source: Own Illustration

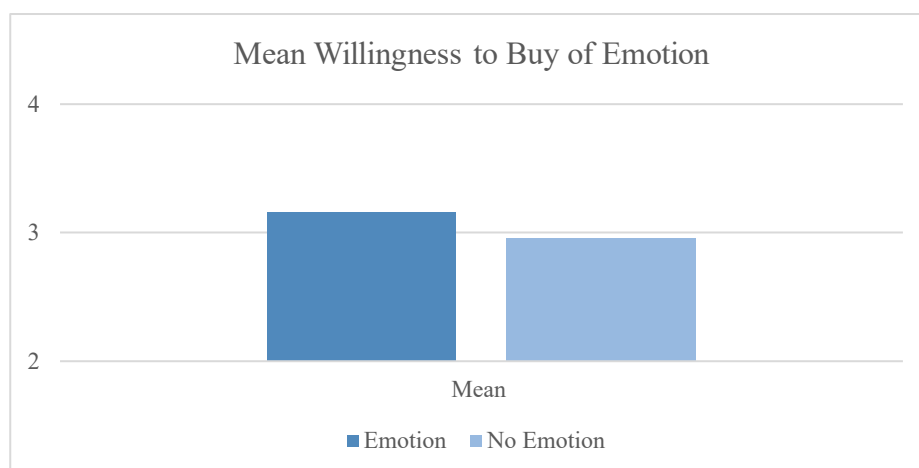
Appendix C.10: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy (Price x Emotion x Label)

	Price	Emotion	Label	Willingness to buy		Price	Emotion	Label	Willingness to buy
N	High	Emotion	Label	184	Standard Dev	High	Emotion	Label	1,42
			No Label	184				No Label	1,15
		No Emotion	Label	184			No Emotion	Label	1,41
			No Label	184				No Label	1,05
	Low	Emotion	Label	184		Low	Emotion	Label	1,30
			No Label	184				No Label	1,31
		No Emotion	Label	184			No Emotion	Label	1,31
			No Label	184				No Label	1,34
	Medium	Emotion	Label	184		Medium	Emotion	Label	1,21
			No Label	184				No Label	1,13
		No Emotion	Label	184			No Emotion	Label	1,22
			No Label	184				No Label	1,04
Missing	High	Emotion	Label	0	Minimum	High	Emotion	Label	1
			No Label	0				No Label	1
		No Emotion	Label	0			No Emotion	Label	1
			No Label	0				No Label	1
	Low	Emotion	Label	0		Low	Emotion	Label	1
			No Label	0				No Label	1
		No Emotion	Label	0			No Emotion	Label	1
			No Label	0				No Label	1
	Medium	Emotion	Label	0		Medium	Emotion	Label	1
			No Label	0				No Label	1
		No Emotion	Label	0			No Emotion	Label	1
			No Label	0				No Label	1
Mean	High	Emotion	Label	3,15	Maximum	High	Emotion	Label	5
			No Label	2,27				No Label	5
		No Emotion	Label	2,99			No Emotion	Label	5
			No Label	1,95				No Label	5
	Low	Emotion	Label	3,84		Low	Emotion	Label	5
			No Label	3,17				No Label	5
		No Emotion	Label	3,80			No Emotion	Label	5
			No Label	2,87				No Label	5
	Medium	Emotion	Label	3,72		Medium	Emotion	Label	5
			No Label	2,79				No Label	5
		No Emotion	Label	3,63			No Emotion	Label	5
			No Label	2,53				No Label	5
Median	High	Emotion	Label	3					
			No Label	2					
		No Emotion	Label	3					
			No Label	2					
	Low	Emotion	Label	4					
			No Label	3					
		No Emotion	Label	4					
			No Label	3					
	Medium	Emotion	Label	4					
			No Label	3					
		No Emotion	Label	4					
			No Label	3					

Table 21: Descriptives of Willingness to Buy split by Price x Emotion x Label

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.11: Mean Willingness to Buy for Emotion



Graph 5: Mean Willingness to Buy for Emotion

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.12: Mean Willingness to Buy for Price



Graph 6: Mean Willingness to Buy for Price

Source: Own Illustration

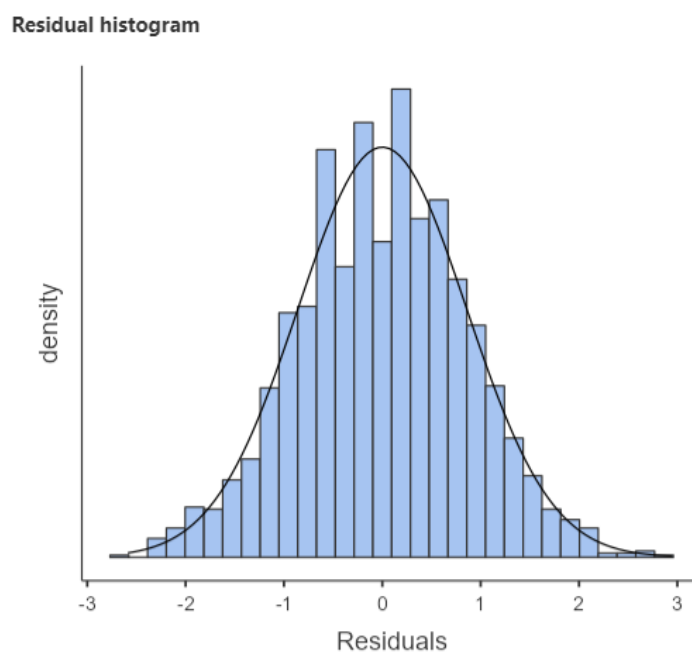
Appendix C.13: Mean Willingness to Buy for Label



Graph 7: Mean Willingness to Buy depending on Label

Source: Own Illustration

Appendix C.14: Assumption Checks



Graph 8: Assumption Checks

Source: Own Illustration